

# Sudanese Continue Demonstrations One Year After the Latest Military Coup

Tens of thousands take to the streets as the regime seeks to remain in power with the support of the West and its allies

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*It has been one year since the latest military seizure of power in the Republic of Sudan where a committed movement continues to protest against the suppression of civilian democracy in one of Africa's most oil-rich states.*

In the Republic of Sudan since December 2018, mass demonstrations and civil unrest has wracked the country which is a gateway between northern, central and east Africa.

During April 2019, due to the uncertainty caused by the mass demonstrations, strikes and rebellions, the former administration of **President Omar Hassan al-Bashir** was overthrown by a group of high-ranking military officers. Just two months later, as thousands of youth and workers occupied Khartoum in the area near the ministry of defense, the protesters were attacked leaving many dead and even more injured.

The most recent military coup grew out of the failure of a African Union (AU) brokered peace agreement to establish a transitional regime which would after more than three years result in the election of a civilian government. On October 25, 2021, the Transitional Military Council (TMC) led by **General Abdel-Fattah Burhan** and **General Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo** abolished the first Sovereign Council which was ostensibly the transitional ruling body of the country. An interim **Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok** was detained by the TMC as people once again engaged in mass demonstrations and civil disobedience.

Several weeks after the October 25 putsch, Hamdok would emerge saying he had reached agreement with the TMC leaders and that the youth should leave the streets and support this undemocratic initiative. Despite all of this, Hamdok would later resign and go into obscurity leaving the Sudanese workers and youth to their own devices in the quest for democratic governance.

Military leaders then created yet another "Sovereign Council" replacing civilian leaders with

some of the armed opposition groups inside the country who were based in Darfur and in the southern areas of the country on the border with the Republic of South Sudan. The partitioning of Sudan between the north and south has only resulted in a precipitous decline in the economic and social status of the developing state.

For many years the break-up of Sudan was championed by Washington, London and Tel Aviv in an effort to weaken its oil industry and create further sectional violence which has plagued both governments in Juba (South Sudan capital) and Khartoum.

## **People Demand Removal of Military Rule**

Many indications from the character of the demonstrations in Sudan surrounding the October 25 coup anniversary was the wholesale objection to the United States influenced talks being pushed by the **Secretary of State Antony Blinken**. The administration of **President Joe Biden** has maintained the same imperialist foreign policy towards Sudan that was in practice during his predecessors **Donald Trump and Barack Obama**.

Sudan has been pressured by Washington to maintain a pro-western foreign policy and to politically recognize the State of Israel. Under the Trump administration he had boasted that “sleepy Joe” Biden could not have pulled off a deal in which the interim administration of Hamdok and the TMC acknowledged Tel Aviv.

In fact, this unilateral maneuver by Sudanese technocratic and military leaders aimed at removing the country from the U.S.-contrived “terrorist list” and making the state eligible for IMF loan refinancings during 2020 was a violation of its own Israeli Boycott Act passed by a motion within the parliament in the early years of independence from Britain in 1958. In January 1956, Sudan was one of the first countries to win national liberation from British colonialism. See [this](#).

[Al Jazeera noted](#) in regard to the mobilizations that:

“The mass protests also signaled a popular rejection of ongoing US-led talks that aim to broker a new civilian-military partnership between a loose coalition of political parties known as the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) and the military coup leaders. During Tuesday’s (Oct. 25) demonstrations, many people were chanting: ‘No negotiations, no dialogue, no partnership,’ referring to popular demands for a fully civilian government in power without involvement from the military or armed groups. The night before the protests, the Friends of Sudan – a coalition of countries that includes the European Union (EU), the UK and the US – released a statement that reaffirmed their support for a civilian-led government, which they said was needed to stop the country’s economic decline and worsening humanitarian crisis. However, the country’s pro-democracy movement is wary of the phrase ‘civilian-led’, seeing it as a euphemism for a reformed partnership with military figures since that was the same language used to describe the civilian-military government before it was toppled last year.”

Reports from inside the country on October 25 said that some protesters blocked streets and roads with burning tires while the security forces used teargas in efforts to disperse the demonstrations. One person was killed in the twin city of Khartoum, Omdurman, when a police truck ran over a marcher. The Sudanese authorities claimed that they only fired teargas when the demonstrations became violent without addressing the root causes of the

unrest.

This response from the military regime follows a pattern since the beginning of the unrest nearly four years ago. Over the last year the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors, an important organization within the civilian Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC), have issued press releases saying that well over 100 people have been killed by the security forces, including the military. During the demonstrations in late October participants said that plainclothes operatives representing the authorities were infiltrating the rallies and demonstrations utilizing violence against activists.

## **U.S. Seeks to Undermine Revolutionary Movement in Sudan**

**Mike Hammer** the U.S. envoy to the Horn of Africa for the State Department has visited the region on numerous occasions ostensibly to assist in reaching a political settlement. However, Washington has a long history of interference in the internal affairs of Sudan.

Under the presidential tenure of the former President al-Bashir, the U.S. accused the government of committing genocide in the western Darfur region. The government in Khartoum was fighting an armed insurgency which had the support of outside interests including U.S. imperialism.

Several attempts were made to have al-Bashir arrested and sent to the Netherlands to stand trial before the International Criminal Court (ICC). This institution has only targeted African political and rebel leaders while refusing to conduct any serious investigations against the crimes of genocide carried out by the U.S. and its NATO allies against geo-political regions of the Global South as well as oppressed peoples in their own jurisdictions.

In the present crisis of instability, the U.S. under Biden continues the attempts to conceal its true motivations. Secretary of State Blinken said on the anniversary of the coup:

"The U.S. stands ready to use all the tools at its disposal against those who seek to derail progress toward Sudan's democratic transition, the senior official noted, which was considered a hint that new sanctions may be imposed on whoever obstructs the democratic transition process in the country. 'As we did a year ago, we continue to reject military rule and stand with the people of Sudan in their demands for freedom, peace, and justice for all Sudanese,' the statement stressed. State Department spokesman Ned Price also hailed the Sudanese people's "longstanding struggle to achieve democratic, civilian-led governance. We remain committed to helping the Sudanese people achieve the goals of their revolution, as a country that is stable, prosperous, and at peace with itself and its neighbors,' Price stated, urging all Sudanese actors to engage constructively in ongoing negotiations toward establishing a civilian-led transition." See [this](#).

Although these words may sound as if Washington is sincerely concerned with ensuring a democratic transition from military rule, the reality is that the U.S. is only committed to civilian control in Sudan if its realization maintains a subservient posture towards imperialism. What the Biden administration and its ruling class backers fear more than anything is the potential for the ascendancy of a revolutionary democratic dispensation in Sudan which would reestablish its role as a leading force in the anti-imperialist struggle in Africa and throughout the world.

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