

VOICE stands in solidarity with the women, girls and people of Sudan

Statement

17 June 2019 – VOICE stands in solidarity with the people of Sudan whose calls for peace and change through nonviolent demonstrations are met with violence and repression. In particular, VOICE stands in solidarity with Sudanese women and girls who are leading, nurturing, sustaining and experiencing this movement. We call for an immediate end to the violence, intimidation and torture of the people of Sudan and an end to the sexual harassment, assault, degradation, rape and killing of women and girls.

On 3 June military forces including the Rapid Support Forces, a byproduct of the Janjaweed militias, violently dispersed, killed and raped peaceful protesters conducting a sit-in in Khartoum. The Transitional Military Council (TMC) has since admitted that it ordered this brutal action.

This show of military force comes after months of collective action around the country and calls for change. Unbearable price hikes for basic costs of living sparked protests in December 2018. Families struggled to buy food to put on the table. Poor people were hit the hardest. Women began organizing on social media calling for peaceful demonstrations and taking to the streets. Girls and student movements mobilized. Their efforts were joined by farmers, unions, teachers, doctors and communities in the largest and most lasting show of protest against Omar al-Bashir's thirty-year regime.

Women and girls -- across generations and life experience, in home, in the streets and in prisons-- are at the forefront of Sudan's revolution. Leaning into a culture and *herstory* of political activism, women and girls are feeding and nourishing the call for change, standing on the frontlines facing ammunition, tear gas and physical brutality, and a motivating force through song, chants, music and poetry.

Their voices must be heard. Their leadership must be recognized. VOICE calls on the philanthropic community to meaningfully support women's activists and the women's movement in Sudan. Globally, a disappointing 0.12% of humanitarian response funding is allocated to addressing violence against women and girls. This must change.

VOICE stands in solidarity with calls for peace and an immediate end to violence and military rule in Sudan. In particular, VOICE believes that the self determination of the people, especially women and girls, must be centered and upheld.

VOICE calls for:

1. Accountability for the sexual violence, including rape, killing and torture committed by the military in a manner that is guided by survivors and their communities.
2. Centering the critical leadership of women and girls in all their diversity to be able to lead the charge for political and social change. We know and have evidence on how there is no lasting peace without women at the table.
3. The immediate release of all political prisoners, especially female political prisoners, from detention and prisons.

VOICE reaffirms the demands made by the Sudanese people articulated in the [Movement for Black Lives and Africans Rising statement](#):

1. An independent, international inquiry into the killing of more than 100 peaceful protesters by forces led by the Transitional Military Council (TMC)
2. Recognition of the Forces for the Declaration of Freedom and Change (FDFC) as the legitimate representative of the Sudanese people and Condemnation of interference by the governments of US allies — the Saudi Kingdom, the UAE and Egypt — in support of the TMC
3. An immediate end to the internet black-out, an attempt by Sudanese authorities to limit not only communication, but information shared across and outside Sudan
4. For the International community and the African Union to recognize and hold the Egyptian Government accountable for its role in the violent repression in Sudan. The world cannot ignore the fact that the current Chairperson of the African Union, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of Egypt, continues to play a role in aiding the TMC
5. The liberation of all political prisoners

VOICE is a global organization that unapologetically aims to create a world where girls and women no longer face discrimination and violence, and where they are respected leaders of humanitarian responses.

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