

# REMEMBERING EL FASHER

A Call for Justice, Protection and  
Accountability

Event Report | 26 October 2026

Convened by the Strategic Initiative for  
Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA) Network  
in partnership with Amnesty International and  
Human Rights Defenders from Darfuri Civil  
Society



## REMEMBERING EL FASHER, CONFRONTING ONGOING ATROCITIES

On 26 October 2026, SIHA Network and Amnesty International convened a hybrid gathering to commemorate the victims of the atrocities in El Fasher, honor survivors, and renew calls for civilian protection, justice and accountability. The event brought together Sudanese human rights defenders, survivors, medical professionals, researchers and international justice experts, with participants joining from across Sudan, refugee camps in eastern Chad and other locations internationally. The discussions underscored a central message: El Fasher is not an isolated tragedy, and the war in Darfur and in Sudan is far from over. The atrocities form part of a longer history of ethnically targeted violence, displacement, destruction, and impunity. Participants highlighted the continuing targeting of non-Arab African communities, including attacks on civilians and displacement camps, the destruction of essential infrastructure, and the widespread use of conflict-related sexual violence amid severe gaps in services and support for survivors.

Opening the gathering, SIHA Regional Director Hala Al-Karib recalled El Fasher as a historic center of education, commerce and cultural life, whose destruction represents not only an immense loss of life but also an assault on the identity, history and future of Darfur and over all Sudan.

The event moved beyond remembrance to examine what justice must mean for survivors: an end to the violence, restoration of essential services, protection of land and property rights, access to education, safe and voluntary return, and accountability for perpetrators and those enabling the atrocities.

**“We will not bury our pain, and we will keep our collective memory alive to condemn all those who participated and all those who supported the violations against Sudanese people and Sudanese civilians.” — Hala Al-Karib, SIHA Network**

## KEY ISSUES AND MESSAGES

### The war continues, and civilians remain at risk

Presenting findings from Amnesty International’s investigation, City Under Siege, Children Under Fire, researcher Laura Mills detailed crimes attributed to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), including deliberate starvation, killings, rape, sexual slavery, torture, abduction and ethnically targeted attacks. Drawing on more than 200 interviews, the investigation documented system-

atic violence against communities surrounding El Fasher, the siege of the city and atrocities committed during its fall. The violence has not ended. Survivors continue to face insecurity, detention, surveillance and deprivation, while displacement camps remain vulnerable to further attacks. Human rights defender Hussain Harran linked attacks on camps, including Zamzam, to longstanding patterns of forced displacement and attempts to remove indigenous communities from their land.

Speakers called for immediate ceasefire, effective civilian protection, stronger measures to halt arms transfers and sustained international attention to ongoing atrocities.

**“The war in Darfur has not ended yet, it’s still continuing and therefore I think that there is absolutely no excuse to continue to ignore the atrocities which are taking place — Hussain Harran, Darfuri activist**

## **Restoring essential services and supporting survivors of sexual violence**

The destruction of health infrastructure has compounded the humanitarian crisis. Dr Mudathir Ibrahim, former director of El Fasher’s Saudi Hospital, described how repeated attacks reduced a once extensive healthcare system to a single functioning hospital. Medical personnel continued providing care despite attacks, shortages of medicines, and disruptions to water, electricity, and food supplies.

**“We knew how to intervene in order to save the lives of our patients, but we did not have the elementary means to actually provide these services.” — Dr Mudathir Ibrahim, former Medical Director of Al Saudi Maternity Hospital**

Speaking from refugee camps in eastern Chad, women’s rights defender Elham Mohamed described the severe conditions facing displaced women and girls, including trauma from sexual violence, inadequate shelter and privacy, food insecurity, limited healthcare and economic exploitation. Her intervention reinforced the urgent need for accessible medical care, including reproductive health services, psychosocial support, safe accommodation, food assistance and livelihood opportunities. Services for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence must be sustained, survivor-centered, and accessible without unnecessary administrative barriers.

**“The refugees within this area need a great amount of help... they are also in need of psychosocial support and... security and economic empowerment.” — Elham Mohamed, women’s rights defender**

## Education is a right and essential to Darfur's recovery

Rafia Idris, a medical student and survivor of the violence in El Geneina, highlighted the devastating consequences of prolonged educational disruption. Students have lost years of schooling as institutions were attacked or closed, while displacement, financial hardship, insecurity and detention have prevented many from resuming their education.

Education is indispensable to rebuilding Darfur. Without sustained access to learning, the region risks losing a generation of health professionals, educators and other skilled individuals needed for recovery.

Participants called for practical solutions to enable displaced students, including those in refugee camps, to continue their studies safely and affordably.

**"Education shouldn't be seen as a luxury. It's critical for the survivors of Darfur and for peace in Sudan."**  
— Rafia Idris, Medical student

## Land rights, restitution and voluntary return are central to lasting peace

Speakers stressed that forced displacement in Darfur cannot be separated from the dispossession of communities, confiscation of land and destruction of livelihoods. Feminist advocate Samah Jamos argued that return must not be treated simply as a humanitarian or logistical exercise.

**"Dignified return is impossible without reparations. People have lost more than their homes. They have lost family members, livelihoods, memories, and their sense of safety and human dignity"— Samah Jamos, feminist advocate**

Protecting civilians who remain in Darfur is an immediate priority, while meaningful return requires security, restoration of land and property rights, restitution or compensation for losses, rehabilitation of essential infrastructure and guarantees against renewed violence. Displaced communities must have the freedom to determine whether and when to return. Any political process must also incorporate meaningful justice and accountability mechanisms, including truth-telling, clarification of the fate and whereabouts of missing and forcibly disappeared persons, and recognition of the harms suffered by affected communities.

## Documentation, protection of human rights defenders and accountability

The discussions reinforced the importance of preserving evidence and survivor testimonies for future justice processes. Human rights defender Musbah Eisa explained that attacks on activists, lawyers, journalists and witnesses undermine both civilian protection and the possibility of accountability.

Speakers called for greater investment in secure documentation, digital security, emergency protection and flexible funding for frontline defenders. Abdulbasit Alhaj, legal adviser with the Wayamo Foundation, emphasized the importance of collecting evidence that meets international legal standards and supports accountability, including the responsibility of those who ordered or facilitated crimes.

He also raised concerns about Chad's announced withdrawal from the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), particularly its implications for Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad. The decision raises concerns about future cooperation with international justice mechanisms, the protection of survivors and eyewitnesses, and the preservation of evidence. These risks could further expose vulnerable refugees and witnesses to violence and undermine their access to justice.

**"We don't just lose the individuals, we lose the individuals as well as the information, and we lose the testimonies as well." — Musbah Eisa, human rights defender**

**"It is not the lack of mechanisms to hold those responsible to account. There are legal regimes... It is just the lack of political will to do so." — Dr. Mutasim Ali, human rights lawyer**

Dr. Mutasim Ali further stressed that accountability must extend beyond direct perpetrators to the political, financial, and military networks that enable atrocities.

Speakers urged stronger international legal action, including through the ICC and other available mechanisms, to ensure accountability for both perpetrators and those enabling the violence.

## THE COST OF INTERNATIONAL INACTION

One of the strongest messages of the gathering concerned the failure to act despite repeated warnings. Nathaniel Raymond of Yale University's Humanitarian Research Lab described how satellite monitoring, intelligence and successive briefings had provided advance warning of the threat facing El Fasher.

Raymond argued that the failure to prevent the atrocities was not simply a failure of information but a consequence of political decisions in which strategic and economic relationships took precedence over civilian protection. His intervention raised a wider question of responsibility: accountability must encompass not only those who committed atrocities, but also the actors who enabled, supported or knowingly failed to prevent them.

**"These people did not die in El Fasher because we didn't have enough information or because there weren't good mechanisms." "....This was the most accurately predicted mass killing in human history.".....They died because their lives were less important than our obligations underneath international law and the Genocide Convention to save them."**  
— Nathaniel Raymond, Yale Humanitarian Research Lab

## CONCLUSION: FROM REMEMBRANCE TO ACTION

The gathering affirmed that remembrance must be accompanied by concrete action. Protecting civilians, ending sexual and gender-based violence, restoring essential services and education, safeguarding land rights, enabling voluntary return and pursuing justice are interconnected priorities. None can be addressed sustainably without confronting the structures of violence and impunity that have shaped Darfur for decades.

The atrocities in El Fasher were neither unforeseen nor inevitable. Credible warnings existed, the risks were documented, yet meaningful action to prevent them was not taken. For SIHA Network and its partners, remembering El Fasher is therefore not only about honoring those who have been lost and standing with survivors, but also about demanding accountability from perpetrators, those who enabled the violence, and those who failed to act. As atrocities continue across Darfur and Sudan, remembrance must translate into sustained international action to protect civilians, uphold their rights and ensure justice.



**Strategic Initiative  
for Women in the  
Horn of Africa**

 <https://sihanet.org>

 SIHA Network

 @sihanet

 @SIHA-Network

 @sihanetwork

 Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA)

 SIHA Network

 SIHA Network

 SIHA Network

**SUPPORT US:** <https://sihanet.org/support-us/>