

### Sudan's Military Seizes Power in a Coup After Dissolving the Country's Transitional Government and Detaining Senior Officials

Sudan has descended into a political crisis, with the military under General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan seizing power in a coup after dissolving the country's transitional government and detaining senior officials. The move has thrown the prospects of stability in doubt, as Sudan had been engaged in a democratic transition process while working to try and strengthen its fragile state of affairs. Analysts have bemoaned the destabilizing role of external anti-democratic forces such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt in enabling the circumstances which have transpired due to the longstanding pattern of these entities propping up fellow authoritarian regimes in the region. The military coup has received international condemnation from the African Union, the United Nations, and the European Union, among others, in addition to major pro-democracy advocacy groups. Internally within Sudan as well, large-scale protests have emerged in opposition to the coup and political detentions, with demonstrators calling for the return of civilian rule.

Sudan has remained in a fragile state in recent years following the long period of rule under former dictator Omar al-Bashir. Since he was deposed in 2019 after popular protests demanded his removal over corruption, poverty, and war crimes, the country has made attempts to initiate a democratic transition process and had currently been ruled by a joint military-civilian government. The complex and delicate power-sharing transitional arrangement between the Sudanese military and civilian leaders was supposed to lead the country into its next round of democratic elections. The international community had been cautiously optimistic about the process, but this week's latest military coup development has put this in serious jeopardy. The United States, the African Union, and others have spoken out strongly against the coup and urged the need for the transitional government to be reinstated. Furthermore, in the face of what has taken place, the United States and the World Bank have halted aid going to Sudan after the military takeover.

The top figures in the Sudanese military behind the coup have tried to claim that their actions were necessary, declaring a state of emergency and arguing that the aim is to bring peace and security. This is not true however, as evidenced by the fact that pro-democracy advocates have been gunned down while protesting against the coup – with the military killing at least 10 civilians in the preceding days. As highlighted by the widespread demonstrations in opposition to the coup, it is apparent that a desire for democracy remains drastically more popular than any support for another military dictatorship. This was obvious during the massive protest movement against al-Bashir back in 2019 which led to his ousting, and is still the case today as well.

Issue experts and observers agree that Sudan stands at a critical point. Pro-democracy and rights activists have called on the international community to ensure that the democratic transition process in the country can carry on as planned. Sudanese citizens advocating for democracy need assistance and support from key world actors and global institutions to prevent a descent into instability and chaos. Additionally, Sudan is not only threatened by the potential for another military dictatorship but also for a humanitarian crisis. The country relies heavily on foreign aid, so a prolonged suspension of this would mean that those in critical need will suffer. Thus, it is imperative for both the citizens of Sudan as well as regional security that the crisis does not devolve out of control in the coming weeks and months.