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## Statement from the Sudan Media Forum on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day

### Sudanese Journalists Brave Conflict on World Press Freedom Day

Sudanese journalists mark World Press Freedom Day trapped in a brutal, year-long conflict with no ceasefire in sight. Despite local, regional, and international efforts, entrenched positions by the military and Rapid Support Forces prolong the suffering and threaten a full-blown humanitarian crisis, as repeatedly warned.

The press has become a target. Journalists, both men and women, face systematic violence – killings, destruction of media houses, censorship, and illegal occupations. This "media blackout" prevents them from reporting, informing the public, and upholding press freedom.

The conflict has fractured Sudan, leaving it vulnerable. Both sides wage a "war on media," spreading propaganda and misinformation to manipulate public opinion. Communication networks are disrupted, further isolating citizens and hindering their ability to access information and aid.

On this day, the Sudan Media Forum salutes Sudanese journalists' unwavering courage. We urge them to unite and demand an immediate end to the conflict and humanitarian corridors for those suffering across Sudan and neighbouring countries.

#### **In this time of crisis, the Sudanese media has a critical role to fulfil, which requires:**

- Protection of journalists: All parties must adhere to international law and allow journalists to work freely.
- Unrestricted movement: Journalists and their equipment must move freely without harassment or censorship.
- End to attacks: All targeting and attacks on journalists and media platforms must cease.
- Journalist safety: Journalists, media facilities, and equipment must be protected under international law.
- Access for assessment: Journalists should be allowed access to assess damages and ensure safety of media headquarters.
- Unrestricted foreign access: Foreign journalists must have unrestricted access to cover the conflict.

The Sudan Media Forum calls for global solidarity. Journalists worldwide must stand with their Sudanese colleagues, raise awareness of the conflict's devastating impact, and pressure governments and international organizations to intervene. Only through a free and independent press can truth prevail, and justice be served.

**Sudan Media Forum**

**May 3, 2024**

