



SUDAN CRITICAL RESPONSE REPORT APRIL 2023

A Report On Concilium's Response to the Sudan Evacuation



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*Khartoum International Airport:
Since the outbreak of civil war, the airport has
been left in ruins, a stark reminder of the
conflict's devastation.*

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT (BLUF)

On April 15th, 2023, violent clashes erupted between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan, resulting in the largest non-combatant evacuation since the evacuation of Lebanon in 2006. The United States alone had more than 16,000 citizens in Sudan, nearly 4000 of which were Christian missionaries and aid workers.

The evacuations were a complex process due to the intense fighting, especially around the capital, Khartoum. Many expatriates were evacuated via Port Sudan on the Red Sea, from where they were airlifted or took overland routes to South Sudan, Chad, Egypt and Ethiopia. The situation in Khartoum would become a watershed event for Concilium placing Concilium in a position to help not only missionaries but thousands of expats seeking to evacuate Sudan.

Ultimately, Concilium's response to Sudan would carry a significant weight of influence within the faith based community and the US Department of State. As a result of Concilium's actions to bring Americans to safety, Concilium was recognized by the State Department for our leadership in such trying times.

The Concilium team worked hard to provide critical analysis, logistical support, and relevant security guidance to our partners and beneficiaries representing thousands of missionaries to get them to safety **AT NO COST**. Without exaggeration, Concilium's crisis response in Sudan would not have been possible without the faithful prayers and financial giving of Concilium's supporters. It is because of YOU our Sudan evacuation was even possible. **THANK YOU!**



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SITUATION

Sovereignty and Black Swans

On April 15th, 2023, violent clashes erupted between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan, resulting in the largest non-combatant evacuation since the evacuation of Lebanon in 2006. The United States alone had more than 16,000 citizens in Sudan, nearly 4000 of which were Christian missionaries and aid workers.

The evacuations were complex due to the intense fighting, especially around Sudan's capital, Khartoum. Many expatriates were evacuated via Port Sudan on the Red Sea. Others took overland routes to South Sudan, Chad, Egypt and Ethiopia.

It is of no little fact and consequence that relatively few, if any, nations or leaders (inside or outside of Sudan) saw these clashes coming. As a result, Concilium's work with evacuating missionaries and Christian aid workers would quickly expand to supporting US Government efforts to help its citizens escape a quickly deteriorating situation fraught with risk and danger.

Efforts at evacuation and extraction were hampered by the fighting within the capital, Khartoum, where the majority of foreign civilians were located. Because the city is split from south to north by the Nile River, essentially two separate evacuations were required. Those on the west side of the Nile evacuated overland to Egypt or Chad while civilians on the east side traveled overland to Port Sudan on the Red Sea, or to Ethiopia.

Concilium's response went on for more than three weeks and helped literally thousands of missionaries, aid workers, and others safely evacuate Sudan.

*Khartoum, Sudan:
Sudanese Armed Forces
Forces celebrate
capturing a former
Rapid Support Forces
(RSF) stronghold.*



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INITIAL RESPONSE

Warn & Prepare

Early in the morning in the USA on April 15, 2023, Concilium was made aware of “shooting” taking place in Khartoum and Omdurman, Sudan. Unaware of the scale of the developing situation, Concilium's crisis consulting team recommended that missionaries shelter in place and ensure they had all electronics charges in the even of a power loss. A few hours later, the increasing scope of the situation was becoming clear and the need to activate a “whole of organization” response became clear.

The clashes in Khartoum and around Sudan capped months of heightened tensions between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and its partner-turned-rival, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Those tensions had delayed a deal with various Sudanese political parties to get the country back to its short-lived transition to democracy, which was derailed by an October 2021 military coup—all of which had created a powder keg in Khartoum that unexpectedly exploded that April Sunday afternoon.

Concilium first step was to create a Signal collaborative group for our missionary partners and beneficiaries to collaborate in real time. This group quickly grew two more than 60 missionary organizations collaborating together and sharing real time information on the developing situation. Concilium Insight, the analysis arm of Concilium, provided analysis of the developing situation for Concilium's



The future for Sudan is unclear as shown on the face of RSF soldiers.
April, 2023.

partners and beneficiaries.

By the evening of April 15 Sudan time, the challenges for evacuation became abundantly clear when the international airport in Khartoum was attacked, destroying commercial aircraft and causing critical infrastructure damage to the main terminal. Most contingency plans foresaw evacuation via commercial or charter flights from the international airport. This was no longer to be the case. This situation forced every missionary in Khartoum to seek help for other evacuation options—and placed Concilium in a position that would ultimately find more than 50 governmental and nongovernmental organizations turning to Concilium for guidance and help.

It is no exaggeration to say that the situation in Khartoum would become a watershed event for Concilium placing Concilium in a position to help not only missionaries but thousands of expats seeking to evacuate Sudan. But for this to happen, Concilium would need to step up in a big way. What we did not realize is how this action would lead to Concilium being recognized for our accomplishments by the US Government.



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OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

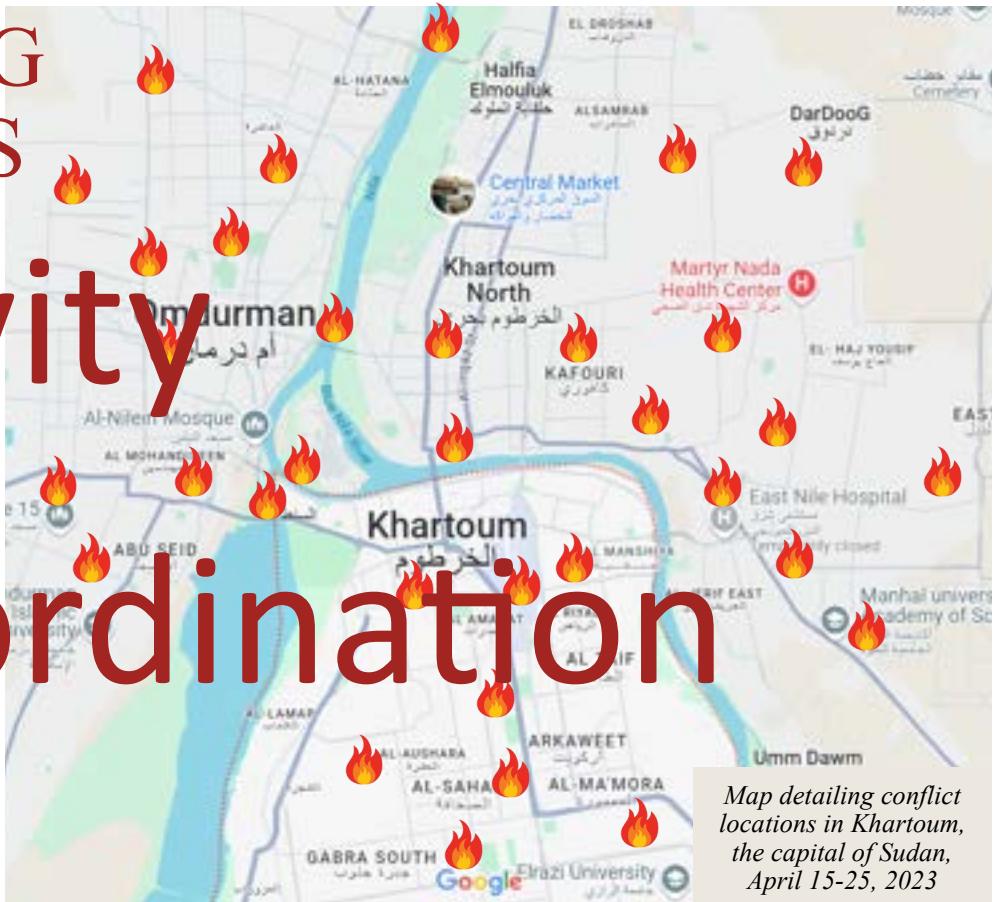
Creativity & Coordination

By God's grace, Scott Brawner, Concilium's President and chief crisis consultant, brought to the crisis more than a decade of experience traveling and serving in Sudan. That

experience would prove vital with evacuation planning. Scott used his experience to begin turning efforts toward two main routes to evacuate from the Khartoum metroplex. Scott's experience, combined with Insight's analysis, provided Concilium's partners and beneficiaries critical information and guidance to streamline decision making.

When the war began, Khartoum's greater metroplex, which includes Khartoum, Omdurman, and Khartoum North, was one of the most populated cities in Africa. Nearly 5.7 million people called Khartoum home—20 percent of Sudan's total population. The metro area is split into three general areas, Khartoum, Omdurman, and Khartoum North. Because of the fighting made the bridges crossing the Nile River unsafe to cross, Concilium recommended that missionaries on the west side of the Nile in Omdurman seek to evacuate north toward Egypt and cross at Aswan, and those on the east side of the Nile evacuate Southeast to Kassala and then into Ethiopia or northeast to Port Sudan to catch a ferry to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

By April 18, there was much confusion coming from official channels. The US Embassy in Khartoum was still pursuing shelter vs evacuation (that would soon change). That being said, Concilium was recommending at minimum that expatriate missionaries relocate



Map detailing conflict locations in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, April 15-25, 2023

outside the greater Khartoum area, if not evacuate the country altogether.

Some expats with evacuation insurance (which very few missionaries had...) were able to board two successful evacuation flights from Kassala in the east and Karima in the North. While initially viable, these options were not cheap, costing \$16,000-\$20,000 per person. The vast majority of missionaries could not afford that cost and looked to Concilium for other viable solutions. Unfortunately all charter flights would stop shortly due to fighting and fears of aircraft being shot down.

As the security situation in Khartoum deteriorated, various organizations began to partner together to evacuate the city. Overland convoy operations quickly became the recommended way to travel out of the city to evacuation sites around the country.

By April 19, one of Concilium's key partners successfully moved a group of missionaries out of Khartoum to Port Sudan which was a safe(er) area under the control of the SAF. However, the how to get out of Port Sudan to safety was the big question—a question that would soon receive a God-sized answer.



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SHIFTING SANDS

Flexibility Meets Opportunity

It was clear that no civilians were going to evacuate Sudan by commercial or private air charter. Overland options out of greater Khartoum were the only viable options.

Form those on the west side of the Nile, Concilium recommended that our partners and beneficiaries move north to the Sudanese town of Wadi Halfa and cross the Egyptian border to the ancient Egyptian city of Abu Simbel. From there evacuees could take a commercial air flight to Cairo and onward. However, the majority of missionaries needing evacuation support were located on the east side of the Nile in Khartoum and Khartoum North. For them the only viable options were to Ethiopia or Port Sudan, and at that time there was no way to know if there were ships available to move evacuees from Port Sudan to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

To begin working on the boat issue, Scott contacted the US Consulate in Jeddah for help. The Lord showed Scott and Concilium favor and the consulate connected Scott with a Saudi ship owner with a 5000 seat ferry that was coming to Port Sudan to collect passengers for the Eid—a large Muslim holiday. The shipping company held the ferry in Port Sudan for in order to fill the vessel with evacuees. Soon after, the US and Saudi governments would follow suit and begin sending navy vessels to Port Sudan to help. As a result, over the period of several weeks, more than 23,000 civilians would be evacuated from Port Sudan to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and then home.

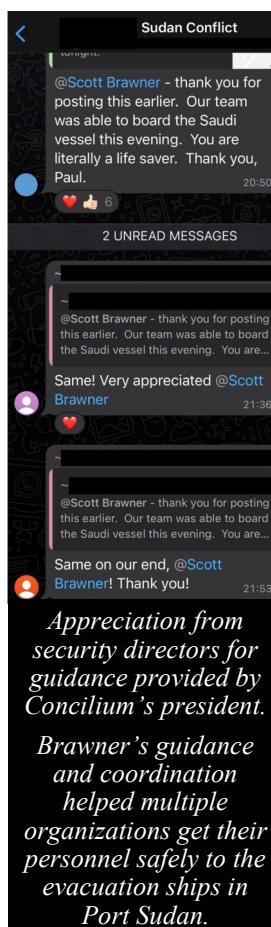


Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, commanding general of the Sudanese Armed Forces and de facto leader of Sudan.

With a boat secured that could move a large amount of evacuees to Saudi Arabia, the work to get missionaries from Khartoum to Port Sudan began. Concilium coordinated with more than thirty mission organizations who had seats in vehicles and enough fuel to get to Port Sudan, more than 400 miles away. The logistics necessary to make this possible were overwhelming. That said, missionaries came together and helped each other out.

In one particular case, a missionary family with six children, including a newborn, were able to safely move to a mission agency who had seven seats available on a bus. That family literally moved street by street—even through a crossfire—to get to the bus and to safety.

Time after time, Concilium partners would call us and provide their numbers of open seats. We would then turn around and get those seats assigned to those missionaries and their families who had no transport until EVERY ONE of Concilium's beneficiaries had a seat getting them to safety—**GOD IS GOOD!**



Generosity and Outcomes

Success & More to Do

For nine long days, the Concilium team worked hard to provide critical analysis, logistical support, and relevant security guidance to our partners and beneficiaries to get them to safety. By God's grace, on April 26, all of Concilium's Western partners and beneficiaries were safely evacuated from Sudan. The favor God demonstrated to Concilium was unprecedented--especially with so many still seeking to leave the country.

While we could rejoice with the many prayers being answered for our Western expatriate evacuations, there were still many African and Asian missionaries trapped in Sudan needing help. Due to political and security issues, Saudi Arabia and Egypt would not allow certain African and Asian nationals into their respective countries. Thus, the second phase of Concilium's response began to help move African and Asian missionaries and their families to South Sudan, Chad, and Ethiopia.

Given the challenges of Sudan and the lack of finances on behalf of African and Asian missionaries to be moved out of Sudan, Concilium continued to support our beneficiary organizations who requested our help by providing them critical information and connecting them to vital resources through our networks as we advocated on their behalf in the public and private sector.

With all that has occurred with Concilium's Sudan response, The Lord reaffirmed for all of us the power of cooperation and collaboration.



*Argeen Land Port, Egypt:
An evacuee from Sudan crosses into
Egypt, April 27, 2023. Concilium
helped evacuate several American
missionary families through
Sudan's land border with Egypt.*

Most of all, this collaborative stewardship was an excellent demonstration of our worship before the Lord--for God's glory and the good of His people.

As a result of Scott and Concilium's swift actions and coordination to bring Americans to safety, Scott and Concilium were recognized by the US State Department:

"On behalf of the Overseas Security Advisory Council, I send you my sincere thanks for all the valuable information and support you've provided to us, fellow OSAC members, and those desperately trying to depart Sudan. The OSAC community truly rallies together in times of crisis, and you have brilliantly demonstrated the strength, power and importance of this security network. Thank you!"

Ellen K. Tannor
Executive Director, OSAC
Diplomatic Security Service, U.S. Department of State

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