

Sudan: Amidst deaths, injuries, imprisonments, UNICEF stresses children's protection 'at all times'

Children are likely among the dead during a month of nationwide protests in Sudan with “scores” of others injured and detained, according to a top UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) official, who spelled out that “children should never be targeted nor used or exploited”.

“Children were reportedly killed in ongoing turmoil that broke out last month in Sudan,” [Geert Cappelaere](#), UNICEF Regional Director for the [Middle East and North Africa](#), said on Wednesday, noting that “scores of children were also injured and others detained”.

Against the back drop of an “unprecedented hike in the cost of living and shortages in bread and fuel” he said that poverty has increased, “forcing some families into negative measures like taking their children out of school”.

UNICEF calls on the authorities in Sudan to prioritize the protection of children – *UNICEF Regional Director Geert Cappelaere*

Pointing to information it had received, UNICEF revealed that there has been an uptick in the number of Sudanese children now requiring health and nutrition care, since the anti-Government protests began.

“While it is difficult for UNICEF to verify these reports, children must be protected at all times from all forms of violence, harm, cruelty and mistreatment whether physical or mental” stressed Mr. Cappelaere.

“UNICEF calls on the authorities in Sudan to prioritize the protection of children and safeguard their rights to education and health in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child” concluded the UNICEF Regional Director.

News agencies have reported that demonstrations against an on-going economic crisis have been taking place across the country on a near-daily basis, since 19 December. Large crowds, including teenagers and demonstrators in their 20s, have been calling for an end to the 30-year rule of President Omar al-Bashir.

There have been reports of many being fired on with tear gas and bullets, and thousands being detained. The UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet, expressed alarm at the use of “excessive force” last Thursday.

A Government crackdown against journalists covering the protests is also

reportedly underway. At least 26 people are reported to have died, including two security officers.