

VOICES OF VICTIMS

What conversations with victims of violence in Sudan
teach us about transitional justice

**FRIEDRICH
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ABOUT THE ARTWORK IN THIS BOOK:

This mural titled “The Scream” was painted by the artist Jalal Rahma in April 2019 during the revolution and the time of the protest sit-in in front of the military headquarter. It took up several square metres of a wall in an underpass at the University of Khartoum, but has in the meantime been removed.

Photo credit: Abubakar Garelnabei Elnair

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INTRODUCTION

“We want justice.” This was the overarching sentiment shared with us over the years whenever we met survivors of atrocities across Sudan – people of Darfur, Blue Nile, Southern Kordofan, Eastern Sudan and others. Decades of conflict and abuse of power have left dense layers of trauma and feelings of injustice. Many of those affected ask that their grievances be addressed, but many also lack the knowledge, tools, and fora to pursue justice. Victims feel neglected and powerless. The INSAF Campaign for Transitional Justice seeks to meet some of the needs by educating families of victims and survivors on their rights, on avenues to advocate for their causes, or on how to form alliances. “Justice, peace and freedom” were the slogans of the Sudanese Revolution. Our consultations show that the Sudanese continue to aspire towards these goals. In post-Bashir’s Sudan, a diverse society is calling for a healing and reconciliation process. Justice, truth and redress must be the foundation of a peaceful future Sudan.

The idea of this booklet emerged in summer 2021, after workshops organized by the INSAF Campaign with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Khartoum for the families of victims of conflict. INSAF had invited around 80 people. Most of them were families of people who disappeared during the Bashir regime or of youth killed in the infamous violence against June 3rd protestors. Fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, daughters, sons, and friends of martyrs came together, sharing their unaddressed grievances. The workshops provided space to discuss the basic tools of transitional justice, the working principles of the justice system, the use of amnesties, redress, compensations, or models of truth seeking. On the side of the workshop sessions, the INSAF team

conducted interviews with participants on their thinking about justice through the lens of personal experiences.

Questions were designed by legal aid lawyers and focused on judicial remedies. They explored the extent of participants' confidence in the judicial organs; the extent of their willingness to accept compensation (and which kind); perceptions of responsibility of perpetrators; as well as proposals for institutional reforms. We see this booklet as a start of a discourse: More questions must be asked and the dialogue must continue. With different victims communities. With perpetrators. We need to further explore victims' thinking around truth commissions, memorialization, vetting processes, and reform needs. However, the answers to these initial questions were so instructive that they led Friedrich Ebert Foundation to compile them in this book, making them available to a wider audience and thus give those a voice who have been voiceless for too long.

This publication is primarily intended to intensify dialogue on tools and strategies addressing wrongs that took place in the past years in Sudan, with victims' very varied views and wishes taking center stage. The wider Sudanese public (and international community) may find this booklet useful to get more familiar with or hear for the first time from Sudanese who suffered traumatic losses, possibly helping along joint work on societal reconciliation. Finally, it hopefully proves useful to people who are developing, funding or implementing judicial reform processes in Sudan, informing their recommendation in a yet to be defined transitional justice process for Sudan.

Rifaat Osman Makkawi - INSAF Campaign for Transitional Justice

Christine-Felice Röhrs - Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

**LET BYGONES
BE BYGONES ?**

**WOULD YOU ACCEPT A GENERAL
AMNESTY FOR PERPETRATORS ?**

This [a general amnesty] is wrong in my opinion. First of all, we still have not received justice for the martyrs of [the coup of] 1985, nor for the martyrs of [the anti-government protests of] 2013. The families of some of those martyrs received some support.

WE WILL NOT FORGIVE. YOU KNOW WHY ?

Because if we, the families of the martyrs of 1985, had insisted on the necessity of punishment, demanded punishment, and refused amnesty, what happened in the past few years would not have occurred. Pardon should be for minor crimes, but not for crimes against humanity, such as torture, detentions, and crimes against people with no political affiliation or who were not members of political parties. You ask me to pardon the perpetrators. Why would I? If the president committed such crimes and we pardon him, another president will govern and commit the same crimes.

Sister of the martyr H. Y.

It is not easy to forgive. After all, someone lost his life. If you come and tell me, "Let bygones be bygones," then I have no assurances for the future. Another authority might rise and repeat the same thing all over again.

Family of the martyr M. O.

We should know who the killer is and why he did it. We want to know for the sake of future generations. We do not want the same mistake to be repeated. Therefore, we should know the whole truth. I do not accept general amnesty.

Sister of the martyr K. H. K.

Saying “let bygones be bygones” is the reason for the crimes. If the Sudanese people had not “let bygones be bygones” since the Jawdah Warehouse Massacre in 1956, then no massacre would have happened in May [coup of 1969]. No ugly massacres would have happened with the [Bashir government, between 1989 and 2019] until today.

[The Jawdah massacre took place after two months of Sudan's independence in February 1956 in Kosti, White Nile State]

Family of the martyr M. H.

Peace is one of the names of Almighty God. Peace is one of the Revolution's three slogans. Therefore, we do not oppose peace, but **WE CAN NOT** either, for no peace can be achieved without justice. **IGNORE JUSTICE**

Mother of the martyr M. I.

I will not back down. I will not give up. I will neither forgive nor pardon. I will not give up my right, for rights are principles, and our God Almighty permits punishments. The killer should never think that I would ever give up A.'s blood, not even for all the money of the world, even in spite of my difficult financial situation.

Mother of the martyr A. U.

There are some things that you cannot forget about, but you can change them for the better. Forgetting them is not as important as learning from them.

Forgetting the past is impossible, so you can learn and benefit from it, turning its energy into another power that benefits you more. This is better.

Family of the martyr A. S.

In our case - the matter of martyrs in particular - amnesty does not work, because one should try to get to a point where no more blood is shed and where we can avoid repeating the same mistakes. That is why punishment is necessary.

Family of the martyr W. A.

I believe that justice should take its course before we forgive, make peace, and say "let bygones be bygones." People should be convinced by the truth. Where is the killer? Where is the criminal?

Family of the martyr M. S.

This is totally unacceptable; there is no reconciling with a murderous state. This is totally unacceptable. We continue demanding punishment by affirming that the State's practice of systematic killing is the crime. We continue demanding an independent judiciary and want the authorities to put an end to this status quo.

Father of the martyr A. K.

**HE WAS MY OLDEST SON.
HE WAS NOT DOING ANYTHING.
HE USED TO HELP ME A LOT.**

And you are telling me we should forgive and pardon those people. I personally cannot forgive them. - As she said, we cannot forgive them. Blood for blood. We will not accept any monetary compensation for our dead son. It is hard for us to forgive them and let them live in peace.

Family of the martyr M. H.

If they come forward and say this, we would forgive. Forgiveness is granted by God.

Wife of the martyr I. M. I.

A reconciliation should take place so that we can forget the past. We cannot simply say “let bygones be bygones.” A price should be paid before we can say this.

Amnesty would be worthless if it does not help change Sudan.

Father of the martyr A. S.

If a man comes and beats me, then admits his crime and says he was wrong, I might forgive him. However, if a man comes and beats me, then does not admit the truth, it would be impossible to forgive him. Those people have killed our children. Let them bring the killers forward and state that they are killers; only after that would it be possible to forgive them. {But whoever pardons and seeks reconciliation, then their reward is with Allah.} [partial Quranic verse]

Family of the martyr M. F.

If the RSF, the police, and security forces go on TV and media outlets and recognize what they have done, we would be a little consoled, but we will not completely pardon them. I think these people should be held accountable. They would be humiliated when they confess what they have done. Yes, they need to apologize. However, pardoning them is impossible. I am the mother of a martyr, and, personally, I will not forgive any person who committed such a crime against the Sudanese people. They should be held accountable, and this is the transitional justice we seek. *Mother of the martyr A.U.*

I do not care if they forgive them or not. My son will not come back to me even if they kill his killer.

Father of the martyr M. A.

Reforming institutions in Sudan is the first and primary demand. Demanding punishment or retribution for the perpetrators is indeed a demand, but Almighty God granted us freedom in such decisions. {But whoever pardons and seeks reconciliation, then their reward is with Allah.} [partial Quranic verse] We do not forgive. I think forgiveness would only happen in one case, i.e., the reform of public institutions and infrastructure in Sudan. This would make us feel that what the martyrs had called for and were killed for has been achieved.

Family of the martyr M. S.

Her martyrdom ... He killed her treacherously and unjustly. She was killed by a bullet ... as she was inside the house. **SHE DID NOT TAKE TO THE STREETS. SHE HAD NO POLITICAL AFFILIATION. I DEMAND PUNISHMENT.**

Sister of the martyr F. H. J.

I myself will not forgive for many reasons. Those killed were in the streets defending the rights of their killers before their own rights. During the days of processions and protests, when it was time to disperse the protests, they did not stop killing. They killed, burned, raped, and threw people in the Nile. They killed people and did not want their families to find them. There are still more than 1,000 people missing to this day, and their parents hope they return to them. They may also be found in the Nile. I cannot personally forgive this.

Family of the martyr O. A.

I am against letting bygones be bygones, for accountability is the most important thing in my opinion. The perpetrators of such crimes should be held accountable to make sure that no one will do it again.

Sister of the martyr S. A. A.

I am for and against this. I am, of course, against general amnesty without conditions and restrictions. Conditions are necessary for the reconciliation, and things should be clear. I am not talking about personal conditions, but more about national conditions.

Father of the martyr O. B.

I am against this [a general amnesty] for one simple reason: unless trials are conducted for the killings that took place, and unless everyone involved is held accountable, then this will happen again. **We must start with those who pulled the trigger while aiming a gun two centimeters away from their victims**, shooting the bullet out of their guns and into the chests and heads of our martyred brothers and sisters. We must start with those people and trace it all the way to the top of the pyramid to those who benefited from the killing. If those people are not tried, the same operations and killings may be repeated.

Brother of the martyr M. A.

Forgiveness has conditions. You cannot pardon a murderer without knowing who he has murdered. How could you pardon otherwise? Although the crime may be considered a collective crime, the sole responsible party is the presidency, of course. If the head of state personally comes forward and says that they committed a crime against the Sudanese people, then we can forgive.

Family of the martyr A. I.

Reforming institutions will prevent such incidents from being repeated, then comes amnesty. It is not easy to forgive.

Family of the martyr N. S.

I am against any call for reconciliation with those who committed atrocities, crimes, and human rights violations in a blatant and despicable manner. They need to be held accountable before the International Criminal Court in The Hague. Had the perpetrators of the Jawdah Warehouse Massacre in the 1950s been punished, then the massacre that resulted when the protests [of the revolution in 2018/2019] were dispersed would not have occurred at the start of the 21st century.

Father of the martyr A.K.

The principle of forgiveness and tolerance already exists among the Sudanese people, but some things should precede forgiveness, pardon, and communal reconciliation. These things are known to us and even to the civil society, such as identifying the perpetrator. He should then apologize, then the people could accept it and listen to the reasons among themselves, and so on. I think people may reach the point of tolerance and forgiveness, but not without this requirement. Any forgiveness without this would be empty. I cannot forgive the killer without knowing who he is. I think this is very important.

Father of the martyr A. A. A.

**DO YOU TRUST IN
THE SUDANESE
JUDICIAL SYSTEM
TO DELIVER JUSTICE?**

Had there been justice in the Sudanese judiciary, we would have witnessed at least one trial within the three years following the death of our children. I do not believe there is any justice.

Mother of the martyr M. I.

I TRUST THE SUDANESE JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC PROSECUTION. THINGS GO RIGHT, EVEN IF THERE ARE SOME ERRORS.

Errors are not occurring all over the judiciary and public prosecution. People are continuing with their cases, and most legal files are with the prosecutions. They might help, but some people need their cases to be reviewed by the Constitutional Court. Even the legal files reviewed in the prosecutions are advancing, maybe slowly, but they are advancing. People are demanding that public prosecutions be different and that cases get treated faster so that every person gets justice, for the sake of the country.

Brother of the martyr I. M. I.

I neither trust the public prosecution nor the Sudanese judiciary, because they turn a blind eye to everything. They never offered us anything. Nothing is clear to us.

Family of the martyr M. I. F.

As they say, good deeds are individual and bad ones are communal. This means that maybe 90% of the judiciary consists of people who will not achieve justice for us, and they are prevailing, while 10% may be capable, but do not have a say, because the governing authority imposes its will, and that is how things are run.

Brother of the martyr A. A. A.

I neither trust the public prosecution nor the judiciary. There is no justice. There is no integrity. They know who the killer is but cannot bring him to court for trial.

Family of the martyr M. S.

I trust the judiciary and public prosecution in Sudan. I do not know how to explain it. It might be a partial trust, which means that they might grant me justice in some cases and not in others.

Family of the martyr S. T.

There is no judiciary in Sudan. Crimes were committed before and people were sentenced to death, such as in the case of the school teacher Ahmed al-Khair. The court and judges sentenced the perpetrators to death by hanging, but none were actually executed.

Sister of the martyr F. H. M.

[The Sudanese teacher Ahmed al-Khair died under torture in Khashm El-Girba in Kassala State in February 2019 during the revolution].

The Sudanese judiciary is considered one of the most efficient and fair judiciaries, with the best judges in Africa and some other international countries. However, during the “salvation” period (means the Bashir regime time), the judiciary was largely politicized, so many deviated from the right path and from achieving justice. However, if the judiciary returns to its initial course, I believe the Sudanese judiciary is the best ever.

Father of the martyr A. A. A.

We used to trust the Sudanese judiciary, because it was independent at some point, but we lost our trust in it lately because they were not working. Neither justice nor accountability were achieved. Accountability is still nonexistent Nothing happened in terms of justice.

Mother of the martyr A. A. A.

I fully trust the Sudanese judiciary and public prosecution for one very simple reason, which is that some attorneys general are represented in the public movement against the former government. Therefore, I trust the judiciary and public prosecution.

Family of the martyr M. T.

Nothing is done, even in the cases that reach the court. We do not even feel that they have the intention of doing something.

Family of the martyr O. N.

I honestly trusted the Sudanese judiciary at some point, but after what happened, everyone is exerting pressure on the judiciary. Therefore, I lost all the trust. They now take orders to protect people who committed heinous crimes that everyone knows about.

Family of the martyr A. M.

I think that the Sudanese prosecution and law are compromised. It is easy for the state to manipulate them, because they do not have a culture of rule of law. They simply follow the principle of the stronger eats the weaker and the law of the jungle. We do not mean anything to them anyway.

Father of the martyr I. M. N.

My son's case might be the reason why I do not trust them. I used to go every day to the public prosecution, from the early morning until 3 pm with the martyr's friends. They used to tell us that the attorney general has something going on and would be back in a half hour. We would come back after an hour, but we never met with him. To this day, we still have not given our testimony, so

HOW DO YOU WANT ME TO TRUST THEM?

Mother of the martyr S. T.

First of all, we trust Sudanese law to achieve our demands and punish the perpetrators of the crimes against our martyrs. We do not trust foreign judiciaries or the like. Our country will advance and be reformed when we trust Sudanese law and the law of our country. We, the family of the martyr H. Y., still have hope in the Sudanese judiciary.

Sister of the martyr H. Y.

I trust them to a certain point. Based on our experience with the martyr M.'s case, we followed it up in two phases. There was an attorney general whom we did not fully trust, so he was changed. We gained trust after that. We started to trust the Sudanese judiciary after that.

Brother of the martyr M. A. A.

I feel they are always closer to the authorities and are heavily politicized. It is not a neutral space for justice.

Father of the martyr A. S.

**WHO, IN YOUR VIEW, CARRIES MORE
RESPONSIBILITY
FOR CRIMES AGAINST CIVILIANS?
LOWER RANKED SECURITY FORCES AS
THEY EXECUTED ORDERS OR OFFICERS
WHO GAVE THE ORDERS?**

I do not care about the soldier who killed my son, but I want to know the reason why the commander gave him the orders. I only want to know the reason, there is a reason for everything. I want to know the reason. I want to know why the commander instructed to kill those innocent people and children. **How would he feel if the same happens to his children? I will not ask what would happen if they got killed. Instead, bring me his child so I can cut his finger, just a little cut on the index finger. Why? I want to see what his reaction would be in that scenario, let alone how he would react if his child was killed.**

Father of the martyr M. A.

Killing is not justified in any case, no matter how low the rank is. You may refuse orders, even if you are punished by death for such action. I know that those who refuse orders are sentenced to death in military courts, but only God Almighty can decide when to take a soul. Therefore, I do not accept when someone kills another person with premeditation. However, I know that circumstances may force them to choose this path or to choose to work, so I do not judge them as much as those who give the orders.

Mother of the martyr Q. H.

I totally believe this [that lower ranked security forces carry less responsibility], no matter if right or wrong. I totally believe in this because they receive orders and must execute them.

Father of the martyr O. B.

The leaders are the ones responsible, of course. They should be held accountable, but this does not excuse the individuals who carried out the orders. This does not absolve them of the crime.

Sister of the martyr S. A. W.

I am against such statements. The responsibility is collective, not individual. Responsibility ranges from the upper echelons that gave the orders to the lower ranks who did them. Had the higher ranks prohibited such acts, what happened in the streets would not have occurred.

Wife of the martyr I. M.

The two groups are in the hot seat together. I mean, we cannot bring one group to trial and not the other. Both carried out these crimes, thus, high and low ranks are in this together.

Friend of the martyr S. T.

The trial should start with those who issued the orders, and they should be punished just like those who executed such orders. They are all in this together. No one has the right to kill another person. They received the orders to kill, and they executed them, so they should be held accountable just like those who gave them the orders.

Brother of the martyr H. M. O.

Both are responsible, but the greater responsibility falls on lower ranks, for they have a double responsibility. Yes, you may have been ordered, but you also did nothing in the face of these insane orders. Those who executed the orders are just like those who issued them. They say,

**IF THE SPEAKER IS CRAZY,
MAY THE LISTENER BE SANE.**

Even if they received orders to kill, should they have carried them out? This does not make sense to me.

Friend of the martyr S. T.

High authorities and leaders are always responsible, but the responsibility of other ranks depends on the situation. I do not question the actions of lower ranks when they are facing an enemy. However, when we are dealing with a revolution, when people are demanding change, they are not doing so only for themselves, but also for the soldiers, policemen, and lawmen.

Brother of the martyr M. O.

No one who carried weapons and beat protesters is a pitiable person. Whatever the case, they can refuse to obey orders. They are soldiers and received orders, and they can very well determine whether such orders are right or wrong. God granted them a brain to be able to know the difference. **THEY KILLED UNARMED PEOPLE WHO NEITHER CARRIED WEAPONS NOR RESISTED, SO WHY WOULD THEY KILL THEM?** They are criminals, even if they received orders, and the higher ranks are criminals, too. They are all criminals, and none of them are pitiable.

Uncle of the martyr M. F. M.

They should have refused to execute the orders. They should have stood with the revolutionaries immediately and refused to carry out the orders. They are Sudanese and the revolutionaries are their brothers. They are from the same homeland and country, and they have the same objectives. I would have refused to execute the order. Therefore, we hold the military and civil establishments responsible. They were all involved in dispersing the protests, and this is their responsibility.

Mother of the martyr M. S.

The higher ranks should be held accountable, because the lower ranks only follow orders. They receive orders and execute them.

Sister of the martyr M. I. F.

At the end of the day, those in lower ranks knew what was right and wrong, but if the higher ranks had not given them orders, they would not have executed them.

Mother of the martyr H. H.

I think everyone who participated, whether of low, middle, or high leadership ranks, should be held accountable. Why? Because at the end of the day, the human being internally holds himself accountable. If someone asks me to throw myself in the sea for example, I have a brain and I understand, so I will not follow his command. Therefore, the lower ranks are not victims, for they are involved as much as the higher ranks.

Family of the martyr M. T.

... The people who followed the orders are not ignorant nor young enough to claim that they could not disobey. The people who executed the orders are not ignorant. They are affiliated with a military institution, so they are subject to laws and regulations. If you receive an order, you execute what the law orders you to do. You follow the law, and their laws guarantee their protection if they refrain from executing the orders. We are talking about people and human beings, and they cannot simply kill them. I do not consider them blameless or victims, but rather ignorant of laws and their rights.

Brother of the martyr W. A. R.

They [lower ranked security forces] are victims, and those in high ranks are responsible. If a soldier comes forward and tells me that he shot my son, A., I will ask him two questions: What dispute did you have with A.? Was there an old quarrel or an unsettled dispute that prompted you to use the state's rifle, which belongs to us, along with our ammunition, to shoot A.? He will, of course, tell me that there is nothing between them. I will directly tell him that instead of being the criminal, he should have been a key witness and went to the public prosecution to report the party that issued the orders. The party that issued the order is my target, given that it is the criminal, as it prepared all the logistical factors to facilitate this massacre. Therefore, the soldier is a victim.

Father of the martyr A. K.

It is their job to follow orders. The people who killed in the name of the army, the police, or the security forces in general...I mean, my son could have been one of them, had his education been different. He might have been an officer who received orders and committed such acts, for that would have been his job We should not think about those people, but rather about the laws that brought them up in this system. That is how they were educated, and instead of protecting citizens and their freedom, they work with any government that takes over.

Mother of the martyr A. S.

The lower ranks commit such actions. Nothing justifies that they follow the higher ranks' orders.

Sister of the martyr A. H.

Individual (soldiers) are more evil than high-ranking officers. Officers give them orders, just like the devil that whispers and tells you to err. He only gives you the idea, but he does not force you. They are soldiers or individuals affiliated with a certain institution. They should follow their principles that prompted them to join such institutions in the first place. God said, "Obedience to God is obedience to parents," so if your parents order you to disobey God's commands, then you should not do it. They are disobeying God's orders in obeying their officers.

Brother of the martyr A. A. A.

The people who planned, ordered, and executed the orders should be held accountable so that transitional justice is achieved. For me, transitional justice means holding the big shots accountable.

Mother of the martyr F. O. N.

The one who gives the orders is not the same as the one who executes them. The ones who follow orders only execute them, and if they do not, they have poor children, mothers, fathers, brothers, and family depending on them. That person would be fired and leave his loved ones in the street. What would they do? Steal to live? Of course not. **THEREFORE, I THINK THE ONE WHO GIVES THE ORDERS SHOULD BE TRIED BEFORE THE ONE WHO EXECUTES THEM.**

Sister of the martyr F. H. M.

I believe that even if officers gave orders, junior officers and security services had the right not to carry out these orders. They could have even executed the orders in different ways. I mean, instead of “shoot to kill” as Ali Osman said, they could have shot to injure. But they insisted on shooting to kill these young men, which means they intended to kill and are part of the entity that carried out these actions.

Father of the martyr A.A.A.

[Ali Osman Mohammed Taha was, among others, First Vice President of Sudan from July 2011 to December 2013 during the Bashir regime. Media reported him saying during an internal meeting in 2013 – briefly before anti-government protests started - that security forces were given the order “shoot to kill”.]

According to my understanding of victims, I consider individuals [meaning lower ranks] in the army, security forces, and RSF as victims. I do not think that their trials are important, but **I demand that they be rehabilitated through a respected institution and to change their military mentality.** As for the commanders who give orders, they should bear the responsibility for the orders issued to their forces to kill, because they provide the support, give immunities, and break the law. Let the law be applied first before granting them amnesty and determining their future roles in political work. They should not have any role in political life in Sudan.

Father of the martyr A. R. S.

DO YOU SUPPORT THE NABIL ADIB COMMISSION OR AN AFRICAN / INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE?

[The Nabil Adib Commission was established by the transitional government after the revolution to investigate the massacre of 3rd of June 2019]

I gave my opinion about the Nabil Adib Commission when it was formed and said that it will extend and break deadlines and time limits every time, and this is exactly what happened - although Nabil Adib justifies this by saying that they are building a case that the judiciary cannot reject, I think that they have had enough time. He met with more than 3,000 witnesses. He checked all the evidence, and he is now supposed to submit his findings to the court.

Father of the martyr A. F.

The Nabil Adib Commission will not achieve anything. Everyone has this opinion, and it is the reality... I also reject obtaining assistance from an African commission, because African commissions are at the same level as our regimes here in Sudan. They are corrupted, just like our commissions here.

Brother of the martyr W. A. R.

Forming a foreign commission would not be better, even if the Nabil Adib Commission did not achieve anything. We should form a commission of Sudanese people. Our problem is with each other. If we do not solve it together, there will be no solution to our problem. **I DO NOT ASK MY NEIGHBOR TO SOLVE A PROBLEM IN MY HOUSE.** I also hope that the Nabil Adib Commission works hard without ignoring the issues. It should try to hold discussions as much as possible and identify some of the killers. Even if partial justice is achieved, we will feel better when they identify some of the killers and arrest them. We would feel justice is being served.

Brother of the martyr H. M. O.

I consider the Adib Commission a failed committee that is holding up the cases. It did not do anything for us. I suggest forming an international committee for justice to be served.

Mother of the martyr F. O. N.

I think that even if the Nabil Adib Commission does not achieve anything, we should not need assistance from foreigners. The people who committed these acts are among us. Therefore, the Sudanese should resolve these matters and hold the trials. We have people who committed crimes, so we cannot bring foreigners to hold their trials. This is not appropriate.

Sister of the martyr A. A. A.

I prefer a commission including honest Sudanese people working together with foreigners.

Brother of the martyr M. S.

Unfortunately, I do not trust in the Adib Commission. **I REGRET GOING AND GIVING MY TESTIMONY**, because I am afraid for the martyr's friends and all the young people who came forward and gave their testimonies.

Mother of the martyr S. T.

It is, in fact, a failed committee, and we are trying to learn where our children's cases are. Where are the cases? Are they holding their trials online? Do these cases exist or not? What did Nabil Adib do for us? He has not done anything for two years, and this is the third year.

Mother of the martyr A. A. A.

I think that this committee is not formed properly. Those are my feelings. It is always controlled by the authorities.

Brother of the martyr A. S.

He has nothing to offer. He has no relation with the martyrs' families whatsoever. His first and last concern is to pretend, nothing more and nothing less.

Father of the martyr I. M. N.

I support an international or African investigation committee, because the Adib Commission has had enough time. **MORE THAN TWO YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE CASE OF THE SIT-IN DISPERSAL AND HE DID NOT ISSUE ANY FINDINGS.**

Mother of the martyr M. S.

The Adib Commission did not do anything and will not do anything. The reports that they issue... Every time they have a deadline, they release shameful reports that underwhelm the people. They have no intention of achieving anything in their commission, so I think that independent committees are a better option.

Sister of the martyr F. O. N.

Two days after he took over, the Prime Minister visited us as a family of martyrs in our home and promised a special committee for the martyrs. He then formed the Adib Commission without notifying us, and this was a huge failure. I am the victim here, so how can they appoint a commission without consulting me first. My absence is a mistake. That is why we denounced the Adib Commission from the start, and we were right, for he has not come up with anything new in two years, and is still asking for more time for inquiries.

Father of the martyr A. I.

This commission will not achieve anything because there is a lot of stalling. A committee should be formed to ask them about the procrastination, why it happened, and why the delay occurred.

Brother of the martyr M. A.

I do not know which party appointed Adib to investigate the sit-in dispersal. He has not done a thing for us since he was appointed. I do not trust the Adib Commission. I reject it and demand that another be appointed in his place by a decision from the martyrs' families.

Mother of the martyr A. M.

I do not trust it, because just like any other committee it will not achieve anything. The forces present at the sit-in dispersal are well-known. The forces present at the June 30 convoy are also known. They were all known. The reason for these obstructions is clear. **These obstructions are coming from the top.**

Sister of the martyr H. Y.

I do not think that Adib is seriously working now, for the truth is clear and the facts are clear, but he is delaying and procrastinating. However, as I told you, there are Sudanese experts capable of achieving justice in this country. Therefore, I do not think we should resort to international committees, but rather obtain the assistance of qualified Sudanese experts.

Sister of the martyr K. H. K.

Local or national courts are better than international ones. At least this preserves my rights and dignity.

Brother of the martyr M. O.

The Adib Commission is procrastinating. With all the videos and witness testimonies of those who spoke to them... He himself said he had about 3,000 witnesses... The videos were delivered to him, and things are clear. He said that they might be fabricated, but they were broadcast live during the dispersal. How could people fabricate live feeds? If he is afraid of the leaders of the forces responsible for these crimes, then he can say that the forces are wearing so and so, and I condemn them. He did not satisfy our needs.

Sister of the martyr O. A.

This Commission played a role and tried to ascertain the facts, and it actually did so, but it hides some of them to save itself. This is the same Commission that cooperated with the authorities. Let us be clear. ... The Sovereign Council controls such programs from afar, and **the Adib Commission has limits that they are not allowed to cross.**

Father of the martyr M. A.

**WILL YOU FORGIVE OR
PARDON SECURITY
FORCES IF THEY PUBLICLY
ADMITTED TO CRIMES?**

Too late. One does not admit to the crime two years after one commits it. Had they admitted one week or month after the crime, we might have accepted it, but the judiciary and retribution are the only solution now.

On behalf of the family of the martyr M. T. M.

WE WILL FORGIVE. THOSE WHO FORGIVE HAVE PURE HEARTS.

If someone makes a mistake, knew he was wrong, recognized the mistake, and apologized, we should forgive them, because one can not live without forgiveness. We forgive, but on the condition that it does not happen again. We want security for all of Sudan, and not only in the cities.

Family of the martyr H. M. O.

By God, if the killer comes to me... I have a partner, my wife, the mother of my slain child; I would take her opinion. ... What I care about is that even if they kill the killer, my son would not return. ... If I consult the mother of the slain and she accepts, then I would pardon him, even if they decide to pardon killers.

Father of the martyr M. A. S.

It is impossible for me to forgive those who shed the blood of the martyr A. K. for any reason whatsoever. I demand retribution, and only retribution. I repeat it again, I demand retribution.

Mother of the martyr A. K.

We have drafted our constitution so that the state can be established by the new generation. The new generation! Not the old people, who have been in power for 40 years, who have a divisive mind, and not the political parties that have participated in committing crimes. This generation, independent people, who should advance the country to achieve the destiny that God Almighty has chosen for them. By the way, God was not silent for 30 years. He was not silent. He needed 30 years to have a generation of mature human beings emerge from the core of these 30 years. Conscious people. Those born in 1989 are now 30 years. ... If this is done, we can face [my martyred son] A. and all the martyrs and tell them that their hopes, aspirations, and sacrifices bore fruits. Otherwise, we will continue the struggle.

Father of the martyr A. K.

Part of our demands is that the regular forces that played this ugly role confess. This is part of our demands, because no one has confessed yet. I mean, every person has a choice. I do not know how my psychology would be at the moment of confession, but I believe that whatever they do to the perpetrator will not bring me back my son. Therefore, I hope that God enables me to fully forgive when that moment comes.

Mother of the martyr A. S.

I personally do not think that I can forgive.

Sister of the martyr K. H. K.

If they come and ask for our forgiveness, we as a martyr's family will not accept. What these people did was planned and carried out in a systematic fashion. What happened was not by chance. We would have accepted reality had it occurred by chance. Rather, it was systematic.

Uncle of the martyr A. T.

If the people who gave the orders – not those who executed the orders, those who gave the orders – apologized, let bygones be bygones. **At the end of the day, they are humans, and humans make mistakes. They can be forgiven if they honestly feel remorse.** I am talking about those who gave the orders and not the ones who executed the orders.

Aunt of the martyr N. S.

If, for example, the army and all the forces appear in the media and say this, I would still think that is too late. It is too late because they had their chance. They appeared and said the truth. They basically said, "What happened happened." This was clearly said, but justice was not served, whether social justice, justice for Sudan, or transitional justice. I do not think that I can forgive.

Representative of the family of the martyr M. S.

["What happened happened" is a well-known and much criticized statement made by a member of the Military Council, Shams El-Din Kabbashi, in a press conference about the events of the massacre of 3rd of June 2019 during the revolution]

I will not forgive. I will not forgive. We believe in blood for blood. This is a major requirement for us.

Friend of the martyr S. T.

I do not think that forgiveness is tied to confession. I mean, if a member of the RSF or a member of the security apparatus comes and says that he killed my brother, the story will not end there unless there are institutional reforms in all state institutions. **AS I TOLD YOU, REFORMS ARE NEEDED IN THE JUDICIARY INSTITUTION AND THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. UNLESS THERE ARE REFORMS, CONFESSIONS DO NOT MEAN ANYTHING, AND APOLOGIES DO NOT MEAN ANYTHING.**

Brother of the martyr M. A. H.

We do not forgive them, because criminals will always remain criminals for their whole life, no matter how important they become. They will repeat their crimes, whether they are forgiven or not. They will repeat their crimes. They are not confessing because they do not yet trust the civilian authorities. **They do not recognize us. They do not recognize us.**

Mother of the martyr A. A. A.

Whose orders did they follow when they killed, and what did they gain from it? They accepted killing, but for what reason? They should be clear with us, so we can seriously consider forgiving or punishing them with imprisonment or the death penalty. I support forgiveness, but even if they confess, they should be completely removed from their duties. They should leave room for other people after confessing, acknowledging what they did, and apologizing. We will forgive them then.

Mother of the martyr A. M. A.

Confession is important. This is my personal opinion. Confession is important, but it must be bound by two requirements. This confession should be followed by the revelation of the truth, because truth has value. It is very important to know how these crimes were committed. **The second requirement is the desire to bring about institutional reforms in the judiciary and military forces as a price for these crimes. This is important. I will be able to pardon those who killed my son if these two requirements are met.**

Father of the martyr A. S.

Man is merciful by nature, but we want the killer to stand in front of us and say that they killed our son, while they want to make a settlement. We want settlement in court, not outside the court, and any person has the right to express his opinion and viewpoint. These are our children; we want nothing other than retribution. Every case is unique from the others, and the options are distributed among the blood relatives. In this case, if you resort to the judiciary, and the judiciary rules, then this gives you three options: you either forgive, receive blood money, or demand retribution. Once the case reaches the judiciary, each family chooses what it thinks is most suitable for it.

Brother of the martyr I. M. I.

**WHAT IS YOUR STANCE
ON COMPENSATION
AND / OR
“BLOOD MONEY?”**

Financial compensation was never a solution, for money runs out, but these feelings do not end. The feeling of loss does not end. I vividly remember details about my son at any given moment.

Mother of the martyr A. K.

No, never. In the name of all the martyrs' families, I repeat and say that no family of a martyr will compromise and accept any financial compensation. ... For this country to advance, the law should take its course.

Mother of the martyr A. O. S.

I consider these compensations a legitimate right for families and the state's duty. This symbolic compensation is a right for families, just like the right to practice law, apply laws, and achieve justice. Blood money is also a legitimate right for families. When in court, the family has the right to pardon, accept blood money, or demand retribution. This is not the right of any other person. It is right of the parent. For example, my brother is a martyr, but I do not have the right to say I want retribution. After I get to the court, I will eventually consult my mother, because she has the right to blood more than me. I stand by her choice. If she chooses to forgive, I forgive, and if she says she wants blood for blood, then I will say the same.

Brother of the martyr W. A. R.

Blood money is mentioned in the Sharia, but blood money is paid when someone is killed by mistake, for example. If someone was killed by mistake, I might accept the blood money, considering that the killer did not have the intent to kill the victim. As for the crimes committed in the era of the former regime, they are all premeditated crimes, so we do not accept blood money. "Blood for blood," as they say. No one will accept it otherwise. The martyrs' families will not accept blood money, even if they give them the money of the world. They will not accept.

On behalf of the family of the martyr M. T. M.

Our problems are not financial. Our problem is that we lost a part of us, our son. I lost my eldest son. His younger brother has special needs, and his other sibling is a female. How will you compensate me for this loss? Do not start imagining things. We are the family of the martyr A. S., and women are the core of our family. We do not have a backwards mentality. Even in today's day and age, if they tell you that you will have a daughter, you are happy, but you are proud if it is a boy. I do not want people to start accusing me of gender inequality, but this is the deeply rooted reality for us. They took away the most important part of my household, so how will they compensate me? ... They pay to tempt some weak souls who are living through difficult circumstances and to perhaps influence them. Their hearts as parents may be too overwhelmed to say no, and thus the criminals will win their impunity. No to impunity. Those who shed blood should be punished by bloodshed. We do not accept blood money. This is one of the slogans of the revolution.

Father of the martyr A. K.

This is immoral. No money in this world can compensate for a soul.

Brother of the martyr A. S.

Some compensation is communal. They should do something for the families on behalf of the neighborhood and help those around you in the name of the martyr. This gives you a little relief.

Family of the martyr H. M. O.

We do not want this compensation. We do not want this compensation. We want to have a good, safe, and stable life in Sudan. We want our children to return.

Mother of the martyr M. H. A.

It would be good if they establish hospitals and schools in their names. There will be memories of the martyrs of Sudan.

Mother of the martyr M. H.

WE WANT EQUITY AND JUSTICE. THIS IS WHY OUR CHILDREN DIED. We want freedom, peace, and justice. We want justice. What is gone will not come back. They are dear to God now. We might forgive, but nothing would compensate us for our children and their blood. Nothing. No money, nothing.
Father of the martyr M. A. S.

Why would one accept compensation? It would not solve anything. Even if the problem is solved, one would still feel heartbroken, as if he had sold out his own son. This is a martyr, and any person in Sudan should know that this is a martyr who died on this date and where.

Brother of the martyr M. H.

These are our brothers. We do not accept blood money. **They can provide us with symbolic compensation, such as schools and hospitals in the name of the martyrs and streets named after them,** but we do not accept blood money at all.

Sister of the martyr M. I. F.

What does compensation mean? That they give you a building, a car, or something like that? The worldly money disappears, and what purpose would these compensations serve? They have no value. People will remember what happened, and the Sudanese people will not betray the cause nor the martyrs. Whatever they do, no problem, but people will not forget, and this generation and future generations will not forget. They will not forget.

Family of the martyr A. A. A.

They cannot compensate us with anything. My father died. Can this be rectified with money? Of course not, this is not right. I should know who the killers are, why they killed him, and what their objective was.

Daughter of the martyr I. M. I.

There are very poor families who do not have enough food, and we cannot deprive them of compensation, whether financial or otherwise, so that they can live a decent life. **Every family has the right to demand retribution or blood money or to forgive.** This symbolic compensation is a legitimate right. It is not a grant from a certain party, but a legitimate right for the martyrs. Streets, hospitals, and institutions should (also) be named after them to perpetuate their memory.

Father of the martyr A. A. O.

This is the right of the martyr before anything else, and he will receive it in this world or in the hereafter. He will obtain it and God surely keeps it for him. However, it is hard to accept compensation. I do not think this is possible. ... I believe in "blood for blood." (But) it is good to name streets or schools after the martyrs. As you said, future generations will know that there was a time of revolution and martyrs.

Sister of the martyr K. H. K.

Blood for blood. We do not accept blood money. Financial compensation, in general, makes you lose more than what you gain. I think symbolic compensation is acceptable.

Family of the martyr S. D. T.

I do not accept any compensation for my brother. I would have sold out the cause if I accept compensation. I would have sold his blood.

Sister of the martyr N. S.

No one accepts money or compensation for a crime. No, no, they killed them. We do not want any money from them. You think they (the victims) took to the streets because they wanted money? They went out to make demands on behalf of the people. We do not want a penny. We want retribution for our children, and we want Sudan to move on.

Mother of the martyr A. A. O.

Can you put a price on Q.'s blood for me? Q. was my eldest son. His responsibility was to build a homeland with a dignified life in his country. He wanted to live until he reached seventy or eighty years old. He had the right to live. He is my son; I carried him in my belly and saw him grow before my eyes. ... I do not think that any martyr's family will accept financial compensation. ... These young men took to the streets demanding freedom, peace, and justice. We want freedom, peace, and justice. I do not care if they name a street after him or not. This is not important. What is important is to achieve freedom, peace, and justice.

Mother of the martyr Q.

Compensation will not buy me my daughter's rights. It will not bring me my daughter's rights.

Mother of the martyr H. H. A.

I am completely against this, because giving people money is an insult. They should be given justice, rights in their homeland, value, significance, and reform in the country. Let everyone say, "By God, your children's blood bore fruit and led to the country's reform." [But] blood money is the right of the parent. That is certain. For Muslims, blood money is the right of the parent. and whoever pardons and reconciles would be rewarded by God. Accepting blood money is a private matter for families. We should not ask, "Why did you sell your son's blood?" or say, "You accepted money in exchange for your son's blood."

Mother of the martyr A. M. A.

God gave them the right to retribution, pardon, or blood money, so blood money is a right. We cannot blame a parent if he is willing to accept blood money and make amends with money. This is his right and God granted it to him, but will that put the matter to rest? I think we are simplifying the matter when we say that they sold blood. No one sells the blood of his child. I will accept blood money if someone kills a child, but **OUR CHILDREN TOOK OUT TO THE STREETS FOR THE CAUSE OF THE COUNTRY, SO IT IS ONLY NORMAL THAT WE DO NOT COMPROMISE UNTIL WE ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS, I.E., FREEDOM, PEACE, AND JUSTICE.** If they gave me all the money in the world, the money of the whole world, it would not compensate me for M.

Wife of the martyr A. M. A.

If a state of justice is achieved in Sudan, a state of institutions, then that would be enough for me to immortalize the memory of my son. I feel this is sufficient for me without financial compensation. But I think it is the people's right to accept financial compensation, because each person sees justice and fairness from an angle that is necessarily different from another. No one has the right to blame another for his view of fairness and justice. This is an issue that concerns people themselves and is based on cultural and societal concepts that differ from one society to another, and from one person to the other.

Father of the martyr A. S.

