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THE RIGHT TO EAT: THE IMPERATIVE OF HUMANITARIAN AIRDROPS TO EL FASHER

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: THE MORAL AND STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE FOR IMMEDIATE AERIAL INTERVENTION

For thirty relentless months, Sudan has been engulfed in a war of annihilation—its darkest chapter marked by the eighteen-month siege of El Fasher in North Darfur, where the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and allied militias have turned starvation into a weapon of mass atrocity. This encirclement represents a deliberate and documented campaign of systematic deprivation, constituting weaponized starvation and the commission of mass atrocity crimes, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, placing hundreds of thousands of civilians at extreme risk of ethnically motivated violence and potential genocide.[1]

For over a year, all conventional diplomatic efforts and attempts to secure humanitarian access via land routes have failed completely, proving that the RSF views aid obstruction as a critical, non-negotiable strategic leverage point.[2] The protracted failure to deliver assistance through standard channels has rendered traditional humanitarian mechanisms obsolete. Consequently, internationally protected and sustained humanitarian airdrops are no longer an option of choice but the necessary, unavoidable *last alternative* to prevent mass mortality and halt a silent genocide.[3]

This report demands immediate, decisive action from the international community, specifically the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), to authorize and implement a large-scale aerial relief operation. This operation must strategically leverage the deterrent power of global air assets to ensure unrestricted access, employing a security calculus fundamentally different from the failed negotiations

[1] Malnutrition in Darfur's besieged el-Fasher city kills 23 people in a ..., accessed September 28, 2025, https://apnews.com/article/sudan-dafur-malnutrition-deaths-82eeee30439a90be55cf6c3493508834

[2] Atrocity Alert No. 435: Sudan, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Democratic Republic of the Congo - Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.globalr2p.org/publications/atrocity-alert-no-435/

[3] The Case for Humanitarian Airdrops in Darfur - by Eric Reeves, accessed September 28, 2025, https://sudanreeves.org/2025/04/23/the-case-for-humanitarian-airdrops-in-darfur-2/

over vulnerable ground convoys. The world's inaction has transitioned into complicity; this must cease now through effective, immediate aerial intervention.

II. THE UNFOLDING CATASTROPHE IN NORTH DARFUR: SIEGE, STARVATION, AND THE GENOCIDE PRECEDENT

A. Systematic Weaponization of Famine and Atrocities

The situation in El Fasher is a full-blown humanitarian disaster, amplified by the deliberate actions of the besieging forces. El Fasher has been under siege by the RSF for over a year, during which all trade routes have been severed, markets destroyed, and farming restricted, intentionally creating the conditions for famine.[4] This deliberate encirclement is designed to induce the collapse of the city and its remaining population.[5]

The human cost of this strategy is catastrophic. Deaths from severe acute malnutrition have dramatically increased, particularly among the most vulnerable populations, including children and pregnant women.[1] Reports indicate that over 10,000 children in El Fasher were treated for severe acute malnutrition since January of the previous year, a figure double that of the year before.[6] The Sudan Doctors Network has described the RSF siege as a “systematic crime represented by depriving civilians of their right to life and targeting El Fasher citizens with famine as a weapon of war,” noting that the continuation of this situation means the city is "entering a phase of silent genocide".[7] The systematic deprivation of life

[4] The War and Humanitarian Crisis in Sudan - Congress.gov, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF12816

[5] Atrocity Alert No. 435: Sudan, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Democratic Republic of the Congo - Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.globalr2p.org/publications/atrocity-alert-no-435/

[6] Malnutrition in Darfur's besieged el-Fasher city kills 23 people in a ..., accessed September 28, 2025, https://apnews.com/article/sudan-dafur-malnutrition-deaths-82eeee30439a90be55cf6c3493508834

[7] Malnutrition in Darfur's besieged el-Fasher city kills 23 people in a ..., accessed September 28, 2025, https://apnews.com/article/sudan-dafur-malnutrition-deaths-82eeee30439a90be55cf6c3493508834

by starvation constitutes a severe war crime under International Humanitarian Law (IHL).[8]

Beyond starvation, essential civilian infrastructure has been actively targeted. Hospitals, markets, mosques, and displacement camps have been repeatedly struck.[9] An attack on a mosque carried out by the RSF killed dozens of civilians during morning prayers, an action that the UN Humanitarian Coordinator characterized as a possible war crime requiring immediate investigation.[10] Furthermore, the full-scale assault on the Zamzam IDP camp—the epicenter where famine was first confirmed—displaced over 400,000 people, further intensifying the crisis within the besieged city itself.[11]

B. The Legal Determination of Mass Atrocities

The widespread and systematic nature of the violence and deprivation in Darfur meets the legal threshold for mass atrocity crimes. The U.S. government has officially designated previous actions of the RSF and its allied militias during this war as genocide, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.[12] Crucially, the risk of ethnically motivated violence continues to rise as fighters advance deeper into the city.[13] Non-Arab communities in Darfur are currently enduring crimes that may amount to acts of a new genocide perpetrated by the RSF.[14]

[8] IHL and Humanitarian Assistance | How does law protect in war? - Online casebook - ICRC, accessed September 28, 2025, http://casebook.icrc.org/law/ihl-and-humanitarian-assistance

[9] INGOs call for urgent protection of civilians fleeing Al Fasher as world leaders met at United Nations | Save the Children International, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.savethechildren.net/news/ingos-call-urgent-protection-civilians-fleeing-al-fasher-world-leaders-met-united-nations

[10] UN chief sounds alarm over worsening crisis in Sudan's El Fasher - UN News, accessed September 28, 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/09/1165903

[11] One year after famine first confirmed in Sudan, WFP warns that people trapped in El Fasher face starvation | World Food Programme, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.wfp.org/news/one-year-after-famine-first-confirmed-sudan-wfp-warns-people-trapped-el-fasher-face-starvation

[12] 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Sudan - State Department, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/sudan

[13] UN chief sounds alarm over worsening crisis in Sudan's El Fasher - UN News, accessed September 28, 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/09/1165903

[14] Sudan - Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/sudan/

The systematic nature of the crisis points to a calculated military objective: the weaponized starvation deployed by the RSF is not merely a consequence of the war but a primary tool of ethnic cleansing and military strategy aimed at securing undisputed dominance over Darfur.[15] By making life unsustainable, the RSF seeks to clear the population, thereby ensuring control of the city, and the entire region of Darfur. This systematic intent is central to proving the legal elements of Crimes Against Humanity and potential Genocide.

This crisis represents a tragic and immediate regression to the conditions that compelled the international community to adopt the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) framework in 2005. Darfur was pivotal in driving the R2P framework forward two decades ago after the international community failed to respond adequately to the 2003-2005 genocide.[16] If global institutions fail to act decisively now, despite the clear legal commitment enshrined in R2P to prevent genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing [17], it implies a catastrophic abandonment of the commitment made by heads of state two decades prior.

III. THE COMPREHENSIVE FAILURE OF CONSENSUAL ACCESS AND DIPLOMACY

A. RSF Strategy: Aid Obstruction as a Military Tool

The repeated attempts to secure humanitarian access through consensus and negotiation have yielded an 18-month record of failure. The RSF's complete military encirclement and intentional obstruction ensure the impossibility of safe ground convoys.[18] Land routes are "simply too dangerous" due to RSF refusal, pervasive

[15] Amid Push for Sudan Peace, Battle for El Fasher Intensifies | International Crisis Group, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sudan/amid-push-sudan-peace-battle-el-fasher-intensifies

[16] Twenty years of the Responsibility to Protect and the unfulfilled promise in Darfur, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.globalr2p.org/publications/twenty-years-of-the-responsibility-to-protect-and-the-unfulfilled-promise-in-darfur/

[17] About the Responsibility to Protect | United Nations, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/responsibility-protect/about

[18] Atrocity Alert No. 435: Sudan, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Democratic Republic of the Congo - Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.globalr2p.org/publications/atrocity-alert-no-435/

insecurity, consistent looting, and the targeting of humanitarian assets.[19] Civilians attempting to flee face immense danger, including extortion, sexual violence, and ethnic targeting along escape routes.[20] To consolidate this siege, the RSF has constructed a continuous, 68 km long, encirclement wall around the city[21]—a combination of trenches, sand berms, and fortified checkpoints—that physically restricts movement, channels civilians into controlled passages, and allows the militia to monitor, tax, or block anyone attempting to leave or bring in aid.

The fundamental obstacle is strategic: the RSF will never consent to access because permitting large-scale relief operations would entirely undercut the military advantage gained through systematic starvation.[22] For the RSF, control of El Fasher is essential for its long-term viability and control of Darfur.[23] Therefore, the calculated denial of aid is a function of military policy, guaranteeing the failure of traditional, consent-based humanitarian approaches.

B. The Exhaustion of Alternatives

The diplomatic efforts by the UN, the African Union, and regional partners have consistently encountered stalling tactics and broken promises from the controlling parties.[24] Agreements regarding aid delivery, even when formally signed, have not been implemented on the ground, ensuring that humanitarian access remains impossible.[22]

[19] The Case for Humanitarian Airdrops in Darfur - by Eric Reeves, accessed September 28, 2025, https://sudanreeves.org/2025/04/23/the-case-for-humanitarian-airdrops-in-darfur-2/

[20] INGOs call for urgent protection of civilians fleeing Al Fasher as world leaders met at United Nations | Save the Children International, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.savethechildren.net/news/ingos-call-urgent-protection-civilians-fleeing-al-fasher-world-leaders-met-united-nations

[21] Raymond, Nathaniel A., Caitlin N. Howarth, et al. "Residents of El-Fasher Attempting to Escape as RSF Attacks Continue." 26 September 2025. Humanitarian Research Lab at Yale School of Public Health: New Haven. https://files-profile.medicine.yale.edu/documents/fa53bffe-06a7-4451-9276-afb784e94706

[22] Malnutrition in Darfur's besieged el-Fasher city kills 23 people in a ..., accessed September 28, 2025, https://apnews.com/article/sudan-dafur-malnutrition-deaths-82eeee30439a90be55cf6c3493508834

[23] Amid Push for Sudan Peace, Battle for El Fasher Intensifies | International Crisis Group, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sudan/amid-push-sudan-peace-battle-el-fasher-intensifies

[24] Shifting the Burden: The Responsibility to Protect Doctrine and the Humanitarian Crisis in Sudan - The Enough Project, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.enoughproject.org/files/ResponsibilityDoctrine.pdf

Furthermore, Reports indicate that the RSF has systematically looted humanitarian convoys, including a World Food Programme shipment in Al-Kuma, North Darfur, where aid was seized and diverted by RSF-affiliated groups[25]. Additionally, the RSF has been implicated in the looting of aid intended for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Central Darfur, where armed militia, some in RSF attire, confiscated food supplies and sold them in local markets.[26]

Given the exhaustion of all consensual and negotiated land-based modalities, the world's continued failure to overcome these politically motivated barriers for 18 months has allowed weaponized starvation to become systemic, effectively transforming international inaction into tacit complicity in a grave war crime.[1] The international community must acknowledge that the entity controlling the ground—the RSF—is using that control to impose a perpetual veto on life-saving aid. This necessitates shifting the solution away from the ground domain entirely, making sustained aerial relief the only logical and moral response.

IV. THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE OF AERIAL RELIEF: DETERRENCE AND THE RSF RED LINE

A. The Differential Security Calculus

The justification for humanitarian airdrops rests upon a fundamental change in the security calculus. Airdrops provide a mechanism to bypass the RSF's ground-based military veto. When the international community decides upon aerial delivery, no party can override it on the ground. While the RSF retains the capacity to erect physical barriers, loot convoys, and weaponize aid on the ground, they are strategically unable to stop a determined, internationally protected air operation.

[25] SudanTribune & SudanTribune 2025, *Sudan accuses RSF of looting UN aid convoy in North Darfur*, https://sudantribune.com/article/301679.
[26] Ali, E 2025, *Sudan in-depth: Aid efforts blocked and weaponised amid sweeping cuts and army gains*, *The New Humanitarian*, https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2025/04/11/sudan-depth-aid-efforts-blocked-and-weaponised-amid-sweeping-cuts-and-army.

The most compelling evidence that humanitarian airdrops can succeed securely lies in the behavior of the RSF during the 2023 international evacuations. During the withdrawal of foreign nationals from the capital Khartoum in April 2023, the RSF stood down. The militia did not attack international planes or convoys, allowing foreign forces, including U.S. forces who evacuated 76 embassy staff, to safely execute their departure.[27]

The reason for this restraint was unambiguous: the RSF faced a "credible and direct threat of retaliation" from powerful international actors. The RSF leadership is acutely aware that confronting powerful global military capabilities would jeopardize their political project and expose them to direct military consequences. This restraint demonstrates that the RSF, despite its widespread criminality, operates under a pragmatic risk-deterrence model.

This calculation is sharply confirmed by comparing their restraint toward international forces with their documented systematic brutality against local civilian populations. The RSF has engaged in systematic campaigns of ethnic cleansing, massacres, and attacks on medical clinics against local populations where the perceived risk of immediate, external retaliation is negligible.[28] This duality of behavior proves that the security calculus for international air assets is fundamentally different from the security of local ground movements.

B. Establishing the Deterrence Threshold

To initiate the necessary air bridge, the international community must establish the same deterrence threshold that secured the Khartoum evacuations. Firing on a non-SAF, internationally protected aircraft operating under a global humanitarian mandate would be construed as an act of war against the world—a line they dare not cross.

[27] Evaluation of the Department's 2023 Evacuation of Embassy ..., accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.stateoig.gov/report/esp-25-02

[28] "The Massalit Will Not Come Home": Ethnic Cleansing and Crimes Against Humanity in El Geneina, West Darfur, Sudan | HRW, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/05/09/massalit-will-not-come-home/ethnic-cleansing-and-crimes-against-humanity-el

Humanitarian airdrops, when conducted under a clear international mandate, function as a strategic mechanism of deterrence, raising the cost of obstruction dramatically. This shifts the RSF's risk calculus from high-reward localized criminality to high-risk international confrontation. **The hundreds of thousands of trapped civilians in El Fasher currently deserve that same level of international protection afforded to foreigners trapped in Khartoum in the beginning of the war**. Initiating these airdrops sends an unequivocal message: the weaponized starvation of civilians will no longer be tolerated.

The table below summarizes the critical strategic shift enabled by aerial relief:

Strategic Analysis: Risk Assessment of Humanitarian Modalities in El Fasher

Modality	Control/Veto Power by RSF	RSF Aggression Likelihood	International Deterrent	Status under IHL/R2P
Land Convoys (Consensual)	High/Absolute RSF Veto.	High (Blocking, Looting, Targeting, Diversion).	Negligible (Perceived cost of local violence is low).	Systematically obstructed; War Crime (Starvation).
International Air Delivery (Airdrops)	Zero RSF Veto.	Extremely Low (Fear of Retaliation/Act of War).	Credible and Direct Military Threat (Khartoum Precedent).	R2P Enforcement Mechanism; Life-saving Relief Operation.

While the RSF is the primary operational obstacle, the formal Sudanese government had agreed to a humanitarian truce in El Fasher that was rejected by the RSF[29], and also demanded the international community to assist in delivering the aid to the 18-month besieged city[30]. The international community, led by the U.S. and E.U., must preemptively leverage regional backers, such as Egypt and Saudi

[29] AfricaNews 2025, Sudan's leader approves seven-day humanitarian ceasefire in El-Fasher, https://www.africanews.com/2025/06/27/sudans-leader-approves-seven-day-humanitarian-ceasefire-in-el-fasher/

[30] SudanTribune & SudanTribune 2025, *Sudan's premier condemns international silence on 'terrorist' RSF crimes*, https://sudantribune.com/article/305417

Arabia, to pressure local and foreign actors, clearly stating that obstructing life-saving aid will result in painful long-term political consequences.

V. THE LEGAL MANDATE FOR NON-CONSENSUAL AID: R2P AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

A. IHL Obligation: The Prohibition of Starvation

International Humanitarian Law provides a robust framework for compelling access to El Fasher. IHL recognizes the right of civilian populations affected by armed conflict to receive humanitarian assistance, and it fundamentally prohibits starvation as a method of warfare.[31]

The RSF's actions—the deliberate siege, obstruction of aid, and the resulting deaths from the manufactured famine—constitute a clear and egregious violation of this customary rule, triggering a global obligation to intervene.[1] While parties to a conflict have the right to inspect relief supplies, they are under an explicit obligation to permit relief operations for the benefit of civilians.[27] When a party systematically abuses this right by weaponizing aid to achieve military or ethnic goals, the humanitarian obligation to provide assistance decisively supersedes the requirement for localized consent. Non-consensual airdrops become the legal and moral necessary measure.

B. Invoking the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

The ongoing atrocities in Darfur fully trigger the international community's collective Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The doctrine mandates that the international community use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian, and other

[31] IHL and Humanitarian Assistance | How does law protect in war? - Online casebook - ICRC, accessed September 28, 2025, http://casebook.icrc.org/law/ihl-and-humanitarian-assistance

means to protect populations from the four defined mass atrocity crimes: genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.[32]

With the formal approval and explicit request of the internationally recognized Sudanese authority, the failure of the international community to deliver humanitarian aid to El Fasher cannot be justified on grounds of sovereignty or lack of consent. The obstruction of life-saving assistance in this context constitutes more than inaction; it risks being construed as tacit complicity in the ongoing atrocities. Under the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), the consent of the state transforms a humanitarian operation from a potentially intrusive intervention into a cooperative effort to uphold civilian protection. Therefore, by neglecting to act despite clear authorization and urgent appeals, international actors not only forfeit their moral and legal mandate but also tacitly enable the RSF's siege and its attendant human suffering.

Darfur is currently experiencing confirmed crimes against humanity and war crimes, with communities enduring crimes that may amount to acts of genocide perpetrated by the RSF.[33]

Since the Sudanese government has agreed to a humanitarian truce in El Fasher and formally requested international assistance in delivering aid, the principal obstruction lies with the RSF, which continue to enforce the siege. In this context, the international obligation under the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) has already satisfied the requirement of seeking consent (Pillar II) and must now advance to actively ensuring protection and relief (Pillar III). Non-consensual humanitarian delivery—limited strictly to relief operations and not accompanied by offensive military action—constitutes a legitimate and proportionate measure under R2P Pillar III. The systematic and lethal character of the RSF siege elevates the El Fasher

[32] About the Responsibility to Protect | United Nations, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/responsibility-protect/about

[33] Atrocity Alert No. 435: Sudan, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Democratic Republic of the Congo - Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.globalr2p.org/publications/atrocity-alert-no-435/

crisis to a threat to international peace and security, empowering the UN Security Council to authorize non-consensual action under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.[31]

The table below summarizes the legal foundations requiring immediate aerial intervention:

Legal Triggers and International Obligations in the El Fasher Crisis

Mass Atrocity Crime (Basis)	IHL/R2P Trigger	Supporting Evidence from El Fasher	Resulting International Obligation
Crimes Against Humanity / Ethnic Cleansing	Responsibility to Protect (R2P) - Pillar III	Systematic targeting of civilians, mosques, camps (Zamzam), and ethnic groups.	Decisive Response (Chapter VII measures), Protection of At-Risk Populations.
War Crime: Starvation of Civilians	Customary IHL (Prohibition of method of warfare)	18 months of deliberate siege; prevention of aid access; malnutrition deaths of vulnerable groups.	Obligation to permit relief operations; Intervention to prevent further criminality.
Ground Access Failure	Customary IHL (Condition of assistance)	RSF control, looting, and targeting humanitarian convoys and personnel.	Justification for alternative, non-consensual delivery modalities (Airdrops).

VI. OPERATIONALIZATION PLAN: LOGISTICAL FEASIBILITY AND EXECUTION

A. Airdrops as a Proven, Scalable Mechanism

The claim that airdrops are infeasible is historically incorrect. Airdrops have proven logistically feasible in complex, contested environments. There are precedents for aerial relief in Darfur itself, including the airdropping of twenty tons of medical

supplies and food drops into West Darfur.[34] Furthermore, the U.S. Air Force has successfully conducted regular, large-scale humanitarian airdrops into other highly contested urban zones, such as Gaza.[35] The Sudanese government used to conduct regular airdrops to supply El Fasher, providing critical humanitarian aid to the besieged population[36]. However, in July 2025, reports indicated that the RSF had acquired Chinese-made FK-2000 air defense systems, reportedly delivered by the UAE[37]. Deployed in El Fasher and Nyala, these systems enhanced the RSF's capability to target SAF delivery aircraft, significantly hindering the government's ability to continue humanitarian airdrops into the city.

Technological advances have substantially mitigated the historical constraints associated with airdrops, specifically regarding accuracy. Improvements in GPS guidance, parachute design, and weather assessment allow for increased accuracy and capacity. Modern cargo aircraft, such as the American C-130, are capable of airdropping up to 19 tons of supplies in a single run[38]. This capacity is essential for meeting the severe, widespread needs of El Fasher's trapped population.

B. Logistical Hubs and Capacity

To ensure sustainability, the operation must be launched from established, secure logistical hubs where aid is already stockpiled. Two strategic origin points are immediately available: Port Sudan, which holds substantial food stores, and Chad's eastern city of Adré, which is also stockpiled with humanitarian aid.

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[34] The Case for Humanitarian Airdrops in Darfur - by Eric Reeves, accessed September 28, 2025, https://sudanreeves.org/2025/04/23/the-case-for-humanitarian-airdrops-in-darfur-2/

[35] Airdrops to Gaza: The Art and Science of One of the Largest Aid Missions Since the Berlin Airlift - Air & Space Forces Magazine, accessed September 28, 2025, https://www.airandspaceforces.com/usaf-gaza-humanitarian-airdrops-bts/

[36] Townsend, M & Morresi, E 2025, *'We will never, ever escape': inside the ever-tightening siege of the Sudanese city of El Fasher*, *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/sep/24/siege-sudan-city-el-fasher-rsf.

[37] Abdul, K 2025, *UAE delivered Chinese FK-2000 air defense systems to Sudan's RSF*, https://www.military.africa/2025/07/uae-delivered-chinese-fk-2000-air-defense-systems-to-sudans-rsf/.

[38] 143d Airlift Wing *C-130 Hercules*, https://www.143aw.ang.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/451678/c-130-hercules/.

The operation must be scaled to address increasing famine. Based on planning assumptions for comparable besieged urban populations (250,000 to 300,000 residents), approximately 1,500 tons of food supplies (Equivalent to 79 airdrop trips) per month are required to provide partial, life-sustaining rations. Achieving this monthly requirement demands a consistent, dedicated, large-scale air bridge, not merely symbolic, intermittent drops.

C. Addressing the Critique of Inefficiency (The "Airdrop Paradox")

Critics often cite the fact that airdrops are the least effective way for relief compared to ground convoys due to distribution challenges and potential loss. However, in the context of El Fasher, where ground access has been systematically obstructed for over a year, leading to zero delivery of aid, the acknowledged inefficiency of airdrops is morally irrelevant. Even partial and imperfect delivery constitutes a life-saving triumph over the absolute certainty of mass mortality and organized starvation under the current siege.

To mitigate the critical challenge of distribution, particularly the absence of formal humanitarian organizations on the ground, several operational steps are necessary:

1. **Drop Zones:** Utilize large, easily identifiable open areas within or immediately adjacent to heavily populated centers.
2. **Packaging:** Employ heavy, tamper-proof, and resilient packaging to prevent immediate looting and destruction upon impact.
3. **Monitoring:** Implement satellite monitoring and overhead surveillance to document drop zones and subsequent distribution patterns, thereby holding any perpetrators (primarily the RSF) accountable for deliberate interference or theft.
4. **Coordination**: Actively collaborate with the local aid groups and the Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs) still operational in El Fasher to ensure that delivered supplies reach the intended recipients efficiently and that distribution efforts are synchronized with existing humanitarian networks.

A critical component of the operational plan must be to ensure the logistical support of neighboring states. Utilizing Adré, Chad, requires proactive diplomatic

engagement with the Chadian government to ensure full cooperation and non-objection to the air bridge. This diplomatic success must be secured prior to launch to guarantee operational continuity. Furthermore, the sustained commitment is vital: intermittent drops create chaos and are easily appropriated; only a permanent, high-volume air corridor can saturate the need sufficiently to stabilize the crisis and allow rudimentary local distribution mechanisms to form within the besieged population.

Operational Comparison: Airdrops vs. Ground Convoys (El Fasher)

Parameter	Land Convoys (Failed Strategy)	Sustained Airdrop (Proposed Strategy)	Feasibility Justification
Access Control	Controlled by RSF checkpoints and veto power.	Bypasses ground control; reliant on international airspace protection.	Eliminates the primary cause of failure (RSF obstruction).
Speed of Deployment	Slow; requires weeks of negotiation and security clearance.	Rapid deployment from established regional hubs (Port Sudan, Adré).	Allows immediate response to acute mortality crisis (malnutrition deaths).
Risk to Personnel	High risk of targeting, kidnapping, and looting.	Low risk; RSF deterred by fear of direct military confrontation.	Shifting risk from vulnerable aid workers to strategically protected assets.
Capacity (Tons/Month)	Effectively zero over 18 months due to obstruction.	Scalable to meet minimum requirement (e.g., 1,500 tons/month) using large cargo planes.	Addresses the need for sustained relief, not just symbolic drops.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION: A CALL FOR DECISIVE, IMMEDIATE ACTION

The evidence is overwhelming: the siege of El Fasher is a systematic act of mass atrocity predicated on weaponized starvation, which the international community has failed to counter through 18 months of consent-based diplomacy. Sustained, internationally protected humanitarian airdrops are the only viable mechanism

remaining to fulfill the IHL obligation to provide relief and the R2P mandate to protect civilians from atrocity crimes.

A. Specific Demands to International Actors

1. **United Nations Security Council (UNSC):** The UNSC must immediately adopt a Chapter VII Resolution authorizing a large-scale, sustained humanitarian air bridge into El Fasher and surrounding besieged areas. This resolution must explicitly define any interference with the operation—including targeting of aircraft or obstruction of distribution—as a direct threat to international peace and security, thereby triggering enforceable sanctions and protective measures. Specific deterrent measures that can be used to safeguard the operation include:
    - Unified public warning by UNSC P5 and regional partners.
    - Automatic sanctions triggers for interference.
    - Airspace control notifications and deconfliction channels.
    - Real-time incident attribution mechanisms.

2. **United States, European Union, and Major Powers:** These powers must immediately contribute the necessary strategic lift capacity (e.g., C-130s, C-17s) and diplomatic cover to initiate the air bridge within 72 hours. These nations must issue a public, unified declaration that the targeting of internationally protected aid aircraft constitutes an unprovoked act of aggression against the world, thereby establishing the credible deterrence required to secure the mission.
3. **African Union (AU) and Regional Actors (Egypt, Saudi Arabia):** The AU and key regional stakeholders must exert immediate, overwhelming political pressure on the RSF leadership and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) leadership to cooperate or face unified regional and international isolation and punitive measures. They must also ensure the full utilization and security of logistical hubs in neighboring states, especially Chad (Adré).
4. **International Criminal Court (ICC):** The ICC must prioritize investigations into the systematic use of starvation as a weapon of war in El Fasher, publicly

naming and indicting the commanders responsible for obstruction and atrocity crimes.[1]

B. Final Declaration: The Choice Between Decisive Action and Complicity

The international community stands at a perilous juncture defined by 18 months of failed diplomacy and the acceleration of mass atrocity crimes. The choice before the world is stark and absolute: decisive action to break the siege via aerial relief, or irreversible complicity in a silent genocide unfolding in Darfur—the very region whose tragedy defined the need for the Responsibility to Protect.

Global leaders must heed the clear security precedent established in Khartoum: the RSF stands down when faced with a credible and direct threat of retaliation. The trapped civilians of El Fasher, facing systematic ethnic cleansing and starvation, should be afforded that same level of international protection now. The time for deliberation has passed.

Act now. Save hundreds of thousands of lives. Break the siege.

ANNEX: DETERRENCE MEASURES UNDER A CHAPTER VII RESOLUTION

The UN Security Council (UNSC) should utilize concrete deterrence mechanisms to authorize under a Chapter VII resolution to ensure the safe and effective conduct of humanitarian airdrops into El Fasher and surrounding areas.

1. Explicit Mandate and Warning

- **Clear language:** Resolution should state that any interference with humanitarian flights constitutes a violation of international peace and security.
- **Advance notification:** UNSC members and regional partners issue a unified public warning that obstruction or attack will trigger immediate consequences.
- **Automatic sanctions trigger:** Resolution should stipulate that any verified interference activates targeted sanctions (asset freezes, travel bans) against senior commanders and financiers.

2. Airspace Protection Measures

- **Deconfliction corridors:** Establish designated humanitarian air corridors, publicly notified to all parties.
- **Protective presence:** Authorize UN or regional monitoring aircraft to accompany or observe humanitarian flights.
- **Rules of engagement:** Mandate that any hostile act against humanitarian aircraft will be treated as a breach of international peace, enabling proportionate defensive measures by contributing states.

3. Accountability and Attribution

- **Real-time monitoring:** Require use of satellite, radar, and ISR assets to track flight safety and detect interference.
- **Incident attribution cell:** Establish a joint UN–AU mechanism to investigate and attribute responsibility for any obstruction or attack within 72 hours.

- **Referral pathway:** Resolution should recall ICC jurisdiction over Darfur and starvation as a war crime and affirm that obstruction of aid may be referred for prosecution.

4. Diplomatic and Regional Leverage

- **Regional coordination:** Engage Chad, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia to facilitate basing, overflight, and rapid response.
- **AU endorsement:** Secure African Union backing to reinforce legitimacy and regional ownership.
- **Conditional engagement:** Tie future political negotiations with RSF leadership to demonstrable non-interference with humanitarian operations.

5. Graduated Consequences

- **Tier 1:** Immediate targeted sanctions on individuals and entities obstructing aid.
- **Tier 2:** Expanded arms embargo enforcement, including interdiction of supply routes.
- **Tier 3:** Authorization of protective measures by contributing states to neutralize imminent threats to humanitarian aircraft.

Conclusion:

A Chapter VII resolution should not only authorize humanitarian airdrops but also embed a credible deterrence framework. By combining explicit warnings, protective airspace measures, rapid attribution, and automatic consequences, the UNSC can significantly reduce the risk of interference and uphold its responsibility to protect civilians facing starvation.

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DON'T FORGET EL FASHER.

TRAPPED. STARVED. TARGETED.



AIRDROP AID TO EL FASHER NOW!

SILENCE IS COMPLICITY