

Fact vs. Fiction: Ongoing Genocide in Darfur

**and
The Faulty Premises Behind the
Washington-Khartoum Thaw**



Executive Summary¹

This report is intended to analyze claims made by the US government to justify lifting sanctions against Sudan. We examine the level of violence against civilians, of military action initiated by the government of Sudan, and of incidence of sexual violence committed during the time period referenced by the US government in Executive Order 13761.

Presidential Executive Order 13761 justified the removal of sanctions against the Sudanese government on the basis of “Sudan's positive actions over the past 6 months [July 2016-January 2017]. These actions include a marked reduction in offensive military activity, culminating in a pledge to maintain a cessation of hostilities in conflict areas in Sudan.”² The Executive Order also included a requirement that the State department, in consultation with other executive departments and agencies, issue a report examining Sudanese progress. In October of 2017, the Secretary of State released “a notice stating that the Government of Sudan has sustained the positive actions that gave rise to [the executive order].”³ However, DWAG has found that these claims cannot be supported by any available evidence, and that the period following this executive order has been marked by an increase in Sudanese government criminality and offensive military activity. This report analyzes data presented by the United Nations Secretary General’s reports on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), as well as data collected by DWAG from reports by Radio Dabanga during the period 2016-2018.⁴

We find that:

- 1) Violence against civilians has not meaningfully decreased,
- 2) the Government of Sudan’s (GoS) share in this violence has not decreased at all, and
- 3) violence against civilians continues to be used as a weapon of war in tandem with the government’s military campaign.

We also analyze how, despite years of evidence demonstrating government atrocities and fundamental criminality, international reporting continues to unfairly legitimize the al-Bashir regime and incorrectly hold both government and rebel forces equally responsible for those crimes.

¹Image on cover is a still taken from eye-witness video documenting the damage to Feina Village, East Jebel Marra following a rocket attack by the government-backed Rapid Support Forces militia on March 28, part of a government campaign in the Jebel Marra region during the spring of 2018.

Report prepared by Policy Intern Henry Eccles.

² Executive Order 13761

³ FR Doc. 2017-21927

⁴ Executive Order 13761 also mentioned Sudanese cooperation with the United States in the field of counterterrorism. A forthcoming DWAG report will examine that similarly dubious claim.

Introduction

The most recent UNAMID report features language explicitly presenting a clear assessment that the situation on the ground in Darfur is improving for civilians. However, upon closer examination we find that this conclusion is misleading.

Analyzing UNAMID report data, and cross-referencing with data from the ACLED and news reporting from Radio Dabanga, we have come to the following conclusions,

Since the start of 2016:

- The level of violence against civilians has not meaningfully decreased
- The level of reported sexual and gender-based violence has not decreased
- The proportion of that sexual violence which is targeted against children has increased
- The level of government offensive military action has not meaningfully decreased
- The share of violence against civilians committed by government forces has remained steady
- The GoS share of violence against civilians is systemically underreported by UNAMID
- Violence against civilians continues to be part of a calculated campaign of genocide as one tool in the government's war against Darfuri rebel groups.

These conclusions are hidden from a superficial reading of individual UNAMID reports, as these reports are worded in such a way that at a glance the rebels are responsible for the bulk of the violence. Taking a deeper look, government and allied forces are uniformly responsible for the mass violence against civilians, both in terms of documented cases of abuses and initiating the periods of armed conflict which lead to displacements.

More unfortunately, the UNAMID reports sometimes misidentify the cause of fighting, and equate both sides of fighting in terms of moral and actual responsibility, despite significant evidence that government and government-supported forces are overwhelmingly responsible for initiating military campaigns and human rights violations (HRV).

One partial result of this trend can be seen in the recent United States response to the government attacks in Jebel Marra in the spring of 2018, in which the US equated rebel and government forces in terms of their responsibility for violence against civilians. This of course was despite years-long trends of government initiated assaults in the region, independent documentation that this fighting was driven by a government campaign, and independent and UN reporting of atrocities committed by government forces in line with a targeted campaign in Jebel Marra.

Even more disturbingly, the conclusions of UNAMID that the situation in Darfur is improving despite significant evidence that it is not gives the United States government false cover for removing sanctions against the regime in Khartoum. This report demonstrates that Presidents Obama and Trump prematurely removed sanctions under the assumption that the GoS had shown significant improvement in the area of human rights over the six-month period from June -December 2016.

Introduction to the Data

This report uses data from the following three sources:

I. UNAMID Reports

The United Nations Secretary General is mandated to periodically report on the status of the UNAMID mission in Darfur. These reports contain a general assessment of the situation on the ground, as well as figures for various metrics of conflict and UNAMID action.

Because reporting periods vary in length by significant margins, UNAMID data is generally presented here as “per day,” which we calculated by dividing any totals presented in the report by the number of days which the report covers. The exact start and end of the reporting period is typically stated in the introduction to the report.

Because the reports do not perfectly align with months and years, annual totals reported here are approximate. For instance, “2017” totals are summed from the reporting periods running December 24, 2016 to December 15, 2017.

II. ACLED

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project is an independent data collection and analysis organization. The project aggregates reports from multiple sources, including Radio Dabanga, and identifies events by date, location, and actors involved, among other variables.

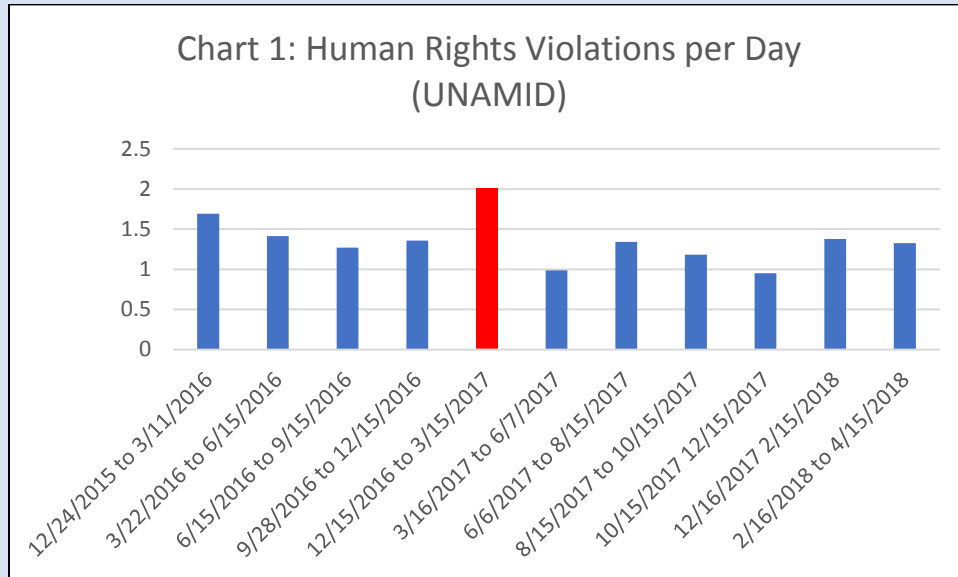
III. Radio Dabanga

Radio Dabanga is an independent Sudanese-run news outlet based in the Netherlands. They broadcast daily news based on eye-witness reporting from inside Sudan, where outside international media access is often extremely limited. The numbers cited in this report were compiled by DWAG from hundreds of separate news articles published by Radio Dabanga on DabangaSudan.org

Section I: The Human Rights Situation in Darfur

Part A: Overall Human Rights Violations and Violence Against Civilians

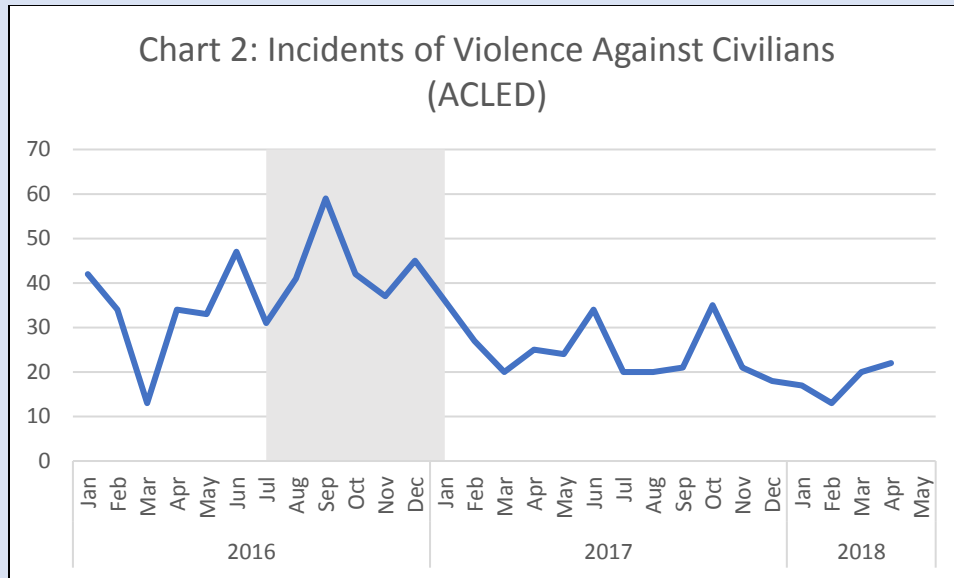
Despite positive language in some UNAMID reports and claims by the US government, the level of human rights violations has not decreased significantly since 2016. So far, 2018 has had roughly 94% of the Human Rights Violations (HRV) per day (1.35) as compared to 2016 (1.43) according to UNAMID reports.



Especially considering that the UNAMID reporting period containing the announcement date of E.O. 13761 (shaded red) saw the **highest** rate of Human Rights Violations per day during the entire 2016-2018 period, the credibility of any report that the United States observed a meaningful commitment by the Government of Sudan towards reducing hostilities must be called into question.

Chart 2 illustrates data compiled by ACLED, documenting violent incidents in Darfur in which civilians were attacked. We actually see a **spike** in violence against civilians during the six-month period referenced in Executive Order 13761, shaded gray. After the announcement of the executive order there is a slight decline in incidents of violence against civilians, but it is more likely that this decline is a result of a return to a steady rate of abuses after a period of particularly intense violence rather than a meaningful change in GoS policy or strategy.

Taken together, these two estimates of the overall human rights environment in Darfur do not warrant great optimism on behalf of the Government of Sudan. At best there is **mixed** evidence that violence declined very **slightly**, by around six percentage points. This is hardly the sea-change which should be required to justify the re-admittance of Sudan into the good graces of the United States.



The need to remain wary of statistically minor reductions in the scale of violence is made starker when considered in the context of historical trends in international attention on the Darfur conflict. Data collection by the Humanitarian Information Unit (HIU), an organization within the US State Department, is an illustrative example of the dangers of accepting temporary reductions in the acuteness of conflict as the end of systemic conflict as a whole. Between 2002-2010, HIU collected data counting villages destroyed and damaged by fighting in Darfur. Following what looked to be a general cessation of such events in 2010, HIU stopped collecting data.

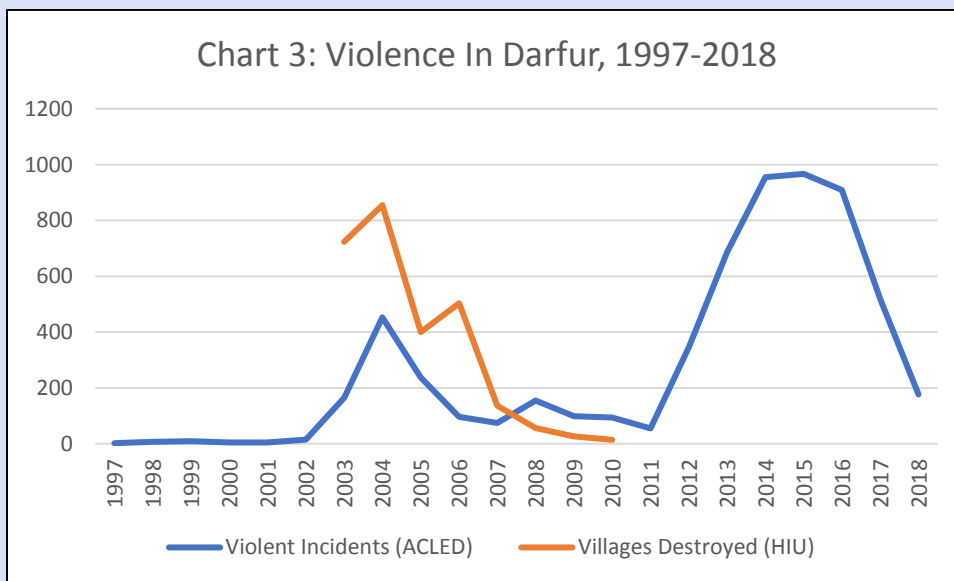


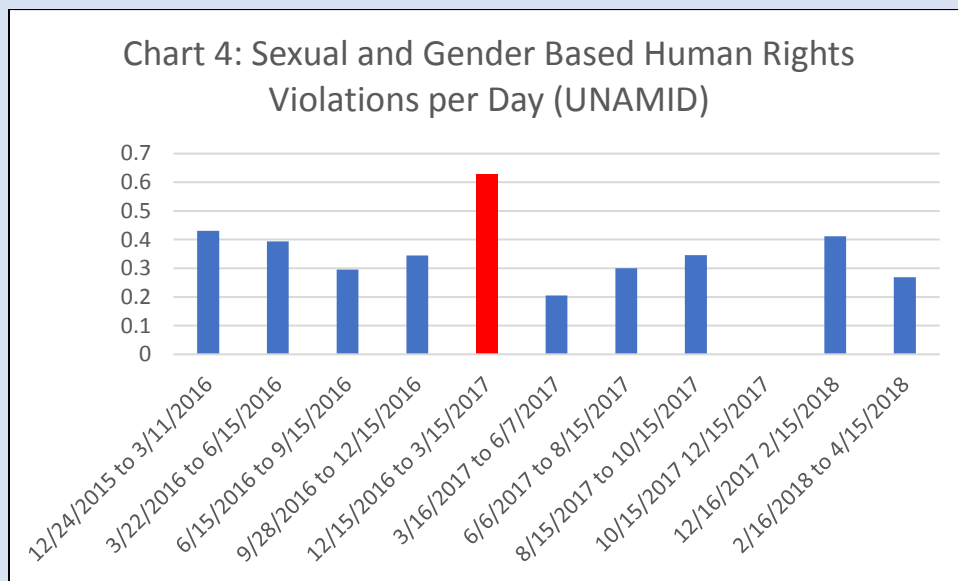
Chart 3 show what happened next: **immediately** after the State Department stopped monitoring, violence in Darfur show up dramatically. Chart 3 should be a warning to the international community not to let our guard down. If history is any guide, when the international community takes its eye off the situation on the ground in Darfur, violence spikes. A temporary, minor reduction in violence against civilians (which we see is in fact a tenuous claim), cannot be the basis for removing pressure on the government in Khartoum, and especially cannot be the basis for reducing vigilant international observation of the situation in Darfur.

Given the context of renewed fighting this spring, the context of human rights violations has not diminished nearly enough to reasonably conclude that the Sudanese government is changing tactics or improving on Human Rights.

Part B: Sexual and Gender Based Violence

The perpetration of rape and other sexual violence as a weapon of war has long been documented in Darfur. Especially considering United States moral and legal positions on such atrocities, this sexual violence requires particular consideration. DWAG has found no evidence that the situation on the ground for women in Darfur has improved whatsoever in the past two years, either in terms of the overall level of sexual violence, the level of brutality of that sexual violence, or the rate at which children are targeted.

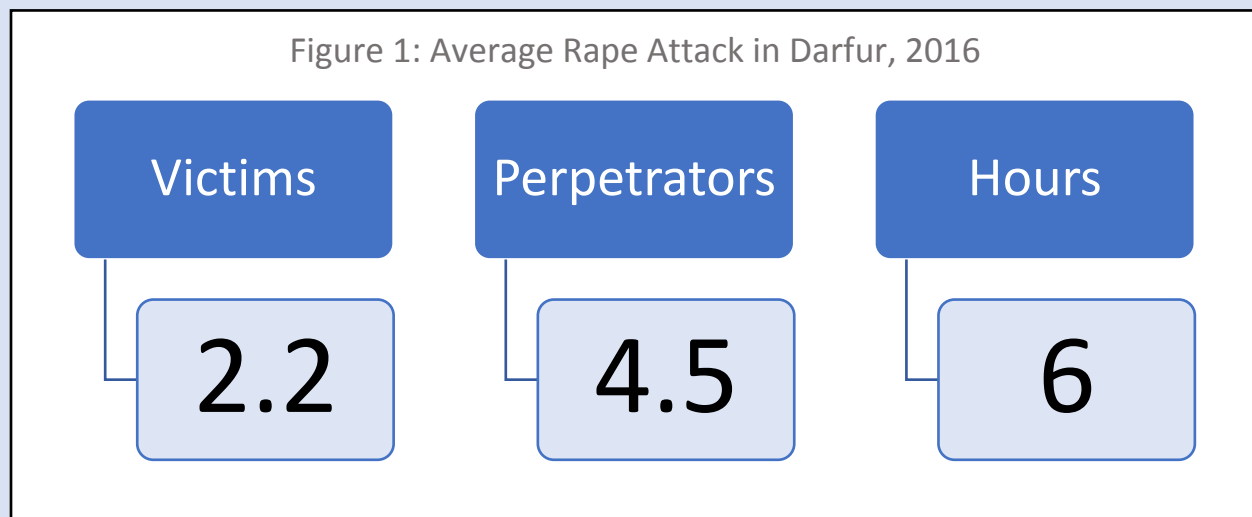
UN data does not point to a decrease in sexual and gender-based violence since 2016. In fact, since December 2015 the highest rate of sexual and gender-based violence was in the reporting period for December 2016-March 2017, shaded red in Chart 7. Executive Order 13761 was released **in the middle** of this period of heightened violence against women and girls.



Not only does UN data show **no decline** in sexual and gender-based violence, it also grossly **underreports** the level of sexual violence against civilians. Radio Dabanga reported significantly higher numbers of rapes during 2016-2018 than UNAMID reported across the entire spectrum of gendered violence. UNAMID counted fewer rapes, attempted rapes, and other gendered violence than Radio Dabanga reported rapes alone. In 2016, UNAMID reported a total of 88 cases of sexual and gender-based human rights violence; Radio Dabanga reported 151 individual cases of **rape alone** in that year.

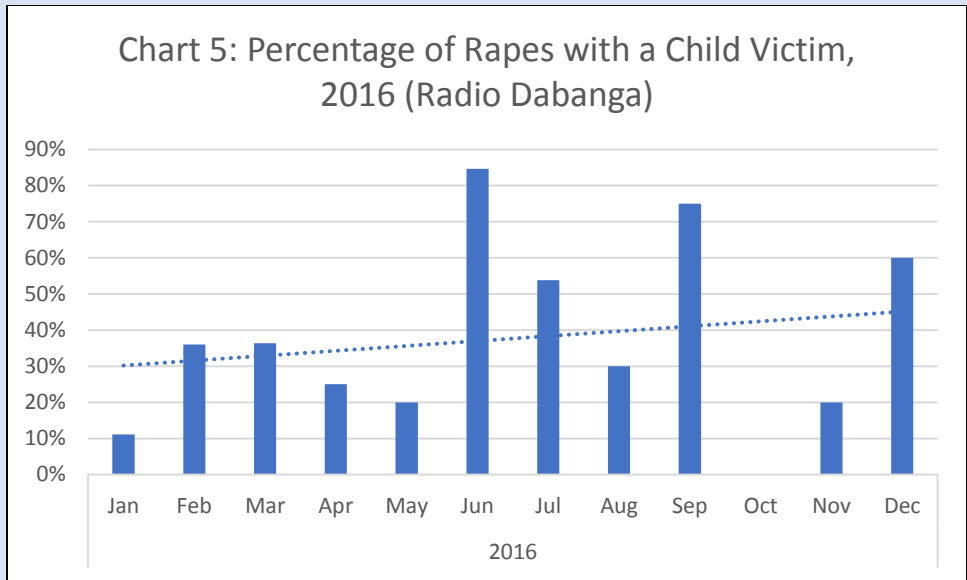
The particular brutality of sexual violence in Darfur has also not abated. Gang and group rapes predominate cases. Minors are targeted extremely frequently. This can hardly be considered an improvement in the human rights situation, especially when considering that these rapes are politically motivated, as demonstrated in Section III below.

Of the rapes reported individually by Radio Dabanga in 2016, for which details such as location, number of victims, and number of perpetrators were recorded, fully **60%** of all cases involved multiple victims, and **50%** involved multiple perpetrators. Rape attacks in 2016 averaged **2.2** victims, **4.5** perpetrators, and lasted an average of **6 hours**! These numbers are already dramatically high, but also methodologically **underreport** the actual brutality of these incidents, as DWAG only included incidents in which specific numbers were recorded, and not those which used language such as “multiple men,” etc.

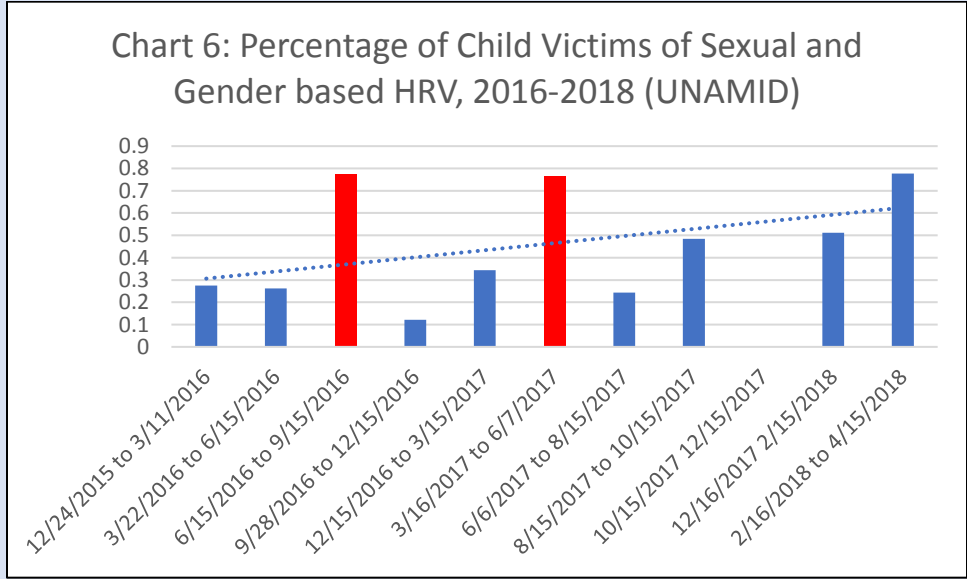


Sexual Violence Against Children

Additionally, the rate at which children are targeted with sexual violence is increasing. The six-month period referenced by Executive order 13761 actually demonstrated a **higher** rate of child rapes as a percentage of total rapes than the preceding six-month period during the first half of 2016, as shown in Chart 5.



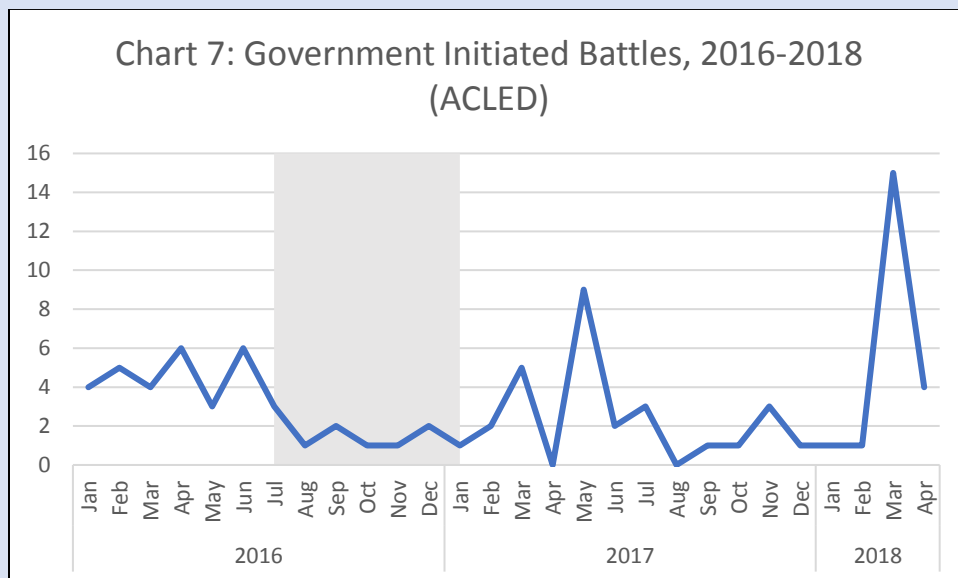
Data from UNAMID reports also demonstrates a gradual increase in the rate at which children are targeted for sexual and gender-based Human Rights Violations over the past two years. It is further important to note that two of the UNAMID reporting periods which saw the highest proportion of child victims of sexual and gender based HRVs were during the six months **prior to** and immediately **after** the announcement of E.O. 13761, both highlighted red in Chart 6.



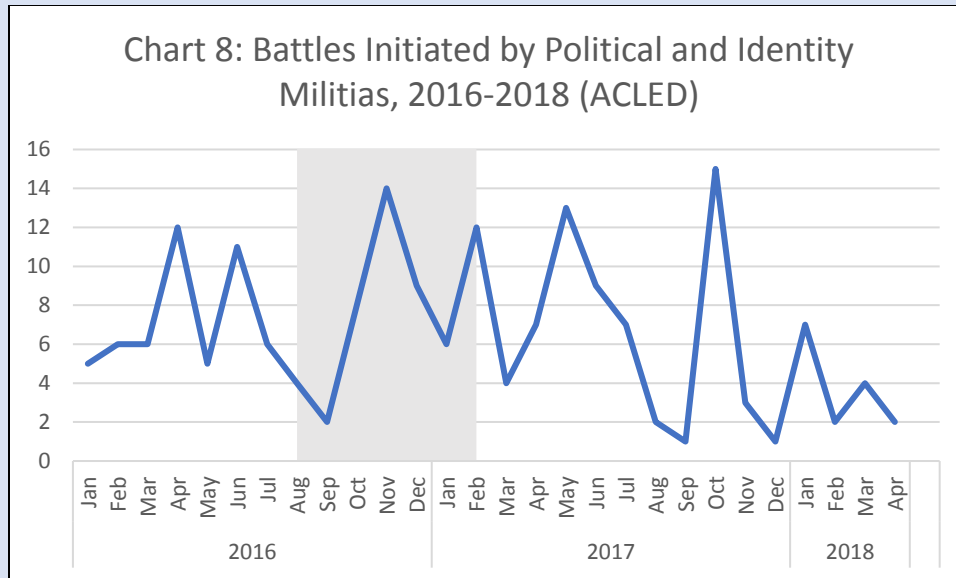
Section II: Offensive Military Action and Responsibility for Atrocities

Part A: Trends in Government Offensive Military Action

Presidential Executive Order 13761 specifically cited a reduction in offensive military action by the government of Sudan over the preceding six months. Chart 7 shows the number of battles per month initiated by government forces over the period Jan 2016 – April 2018, as reported by ACLED. The six-month period referenced in the Executive order does indeed show a reduction in offensive military action, but *only* that six-month period shows such reduction. Immediately after the announcement, Sudanese government offensive military action spiked, spiking again in spring of 2018. The data up to January 2017 hardly justifies the announcement itself, but certainly the Sudanese governments actions after E.O. 13761 do not reflect a sustained commitment to reducing offensive military action.



While offensive military action by forces directly controlled by the Sudanese government did drop during the period cited in E.O. 13761, the GoS role in initiating fighting in Darfur did not meaningfully decrease when we consider indirect government support for militia offensives. Offensive military action by militias long identified with government policy did not show any decline during the six-month period, as demonstrated in Chart 8 below.



The justification for Executive Order 13761 as a response to a commitment by the Government of Sudan to a decrease in offensive military action is thus shown to be either fundamentally misleading or patently false. Direct government military action did increase during the cited period of the second half of 2016, but **only** during this period. Government supported action by proxy militias, which actually accounts for the majority of human rights violations during the 2016-2018 period, did not decline whatsoever.

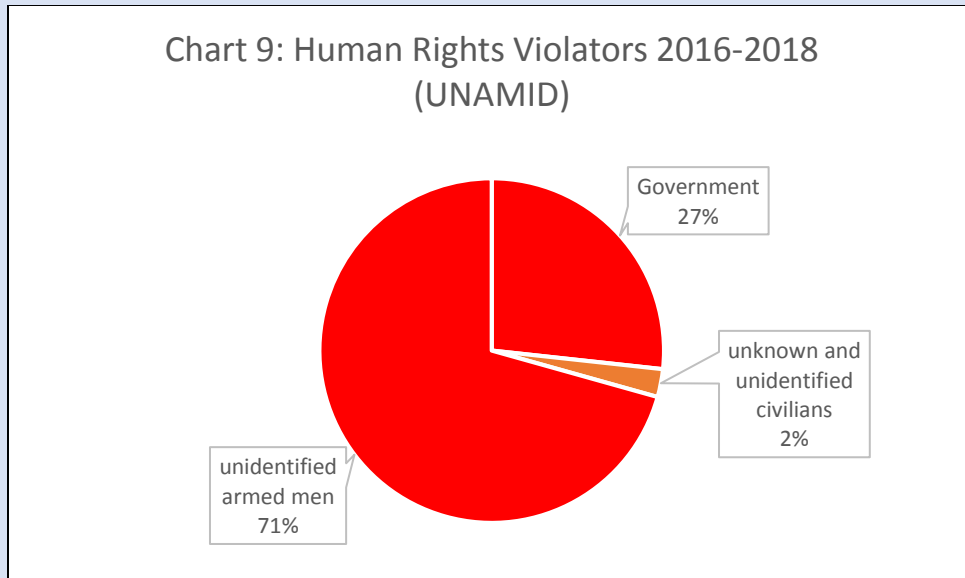
Part B: Trends in Government Share of Violence Against Civilians

Not only has the general level of violence against civilians not meaningfully decreased over the past two years, neither has government responsibility for that violence. Chart 9 shows the breakdown of responsibility for human rights violations in the period 2016-2018, as determined by UNAMID. Government forces were directly responsible for between one quarter and one third of all documented human rights violations throughout the period, and this figure was roughly constant from year to year.⁵

It is also important to note that, per UNAMID data, government forces were the only positively identified group responsible for human rights violations. Government forces were thus responsible for **100%** of all Human Rights Violations with an identifiable perpetrator. This has again been a constant throughout the entire time which UNAMID has been issuing reports.

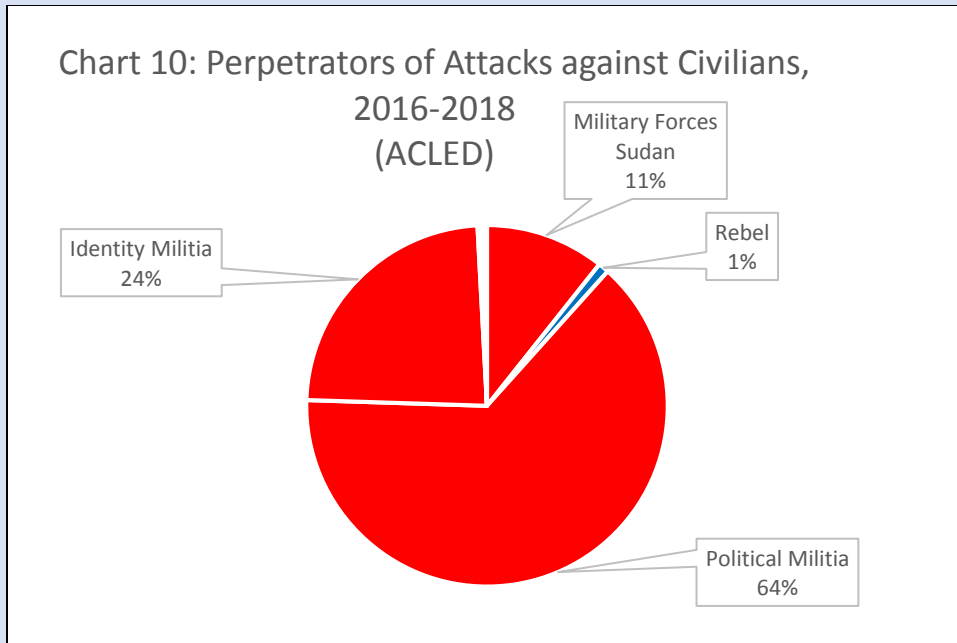
⁵ 2016 (27%), 2017 (24%), 2018 (34%)

Chart 9: Human Rights Violators 2016-2018
(UNAMID)



The Government of Sudan’s culpability for human rights violations does not end with directly observed cases for which government forces were identified as the perpetrator but must also take account of government support for armed militias as well as a selective lack of government accountability for certain armed groups. The government share of violence is thus significantly underreported by the failure to link “unidentified armed men” with government policy.

Because ACLED labels individual incidents with a higher degree of precision in date and actors involved, as opposed to reporting totals for entire time periods, we can both compare data reported in broad categories between ACLED and UNAMID, as well as examine the components of these categories in greater detail. We see that across these datasets government forces are identifiably responsible for similar levels of violence against civilians, though ACLED reports the proportion higher than UNAMID, and we again see a qualitative pattern whereby “unidentified” groups are described as likely in line with government policy.



ACLED codes actors involved in violent conflicts using categories which are not Sudan specific. As such, the categories of “Political Militia” and “Identity Militia” do not perfectly align with government-supported groups *ipso facto*. However, upon closer DWAG analysis, the vast majority of the groups included within these two categories by ACLED are groups which can credibly be considered as in line with Sudanese government policy.

Similarly, the largest two actors within these two groups are both “unidentified.” While actions undertaken by “unidentified” groups cannot be described as government-aligned with absolute certainty, given the historic track record of Arab militias working closely with government forces, and the lack of any historical evidence of significant violence against civilians positively attributed to rebel factions, DWAG considers this a safe assumption.

Chart 11 further breaks down the groups presented in the ACLED data. When we combine the groups positively identified with GoS command and policy, these groups are responsible for 41% of incidents of violence against civilians, 14 percentage points higher than UNAMID reports. Again, considering that “unidentified” attackers are often identified as Arab or as herders, and that the pattern of attacks described in the ACLED data are very similar to those of identified groups, government aligned groups are likely responsible for much of the activity in the “unidentified” categories. As with UNAMID reporting, rebel groups are responsible for only a very small fraction of the violence against civilians (1%), and government aligned forces are responsible for **93%** of all incidents of violence against civilians for which there is a positively identified attacker.

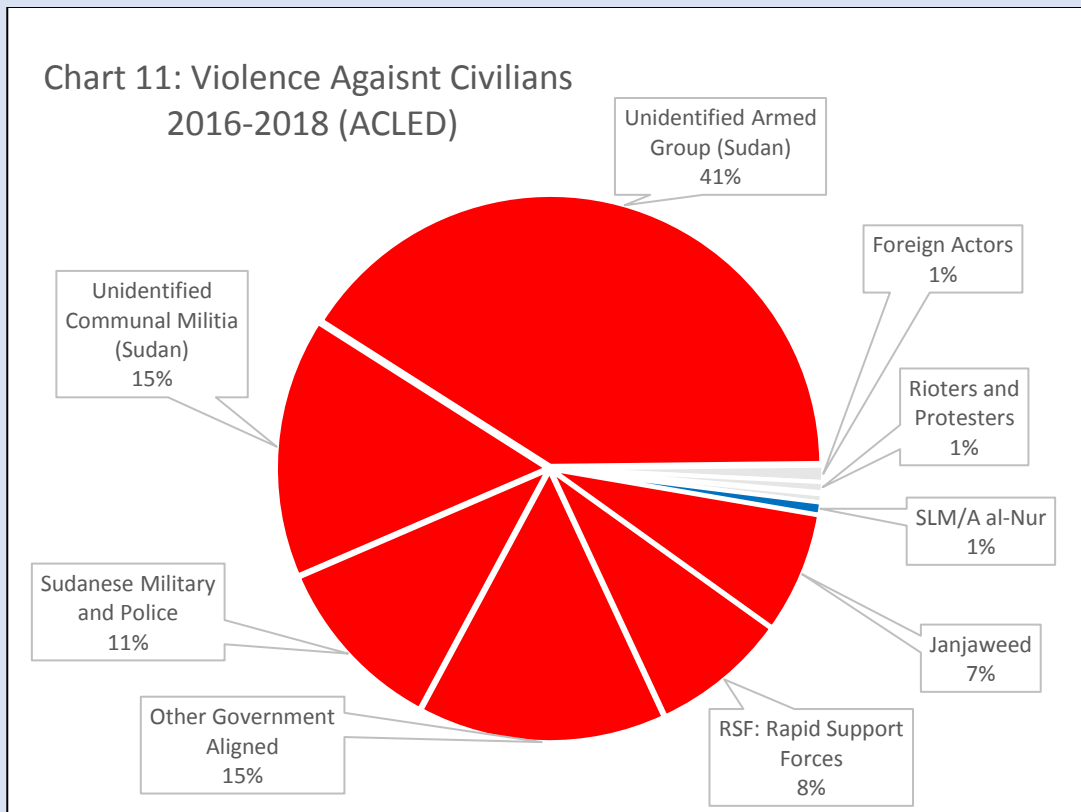


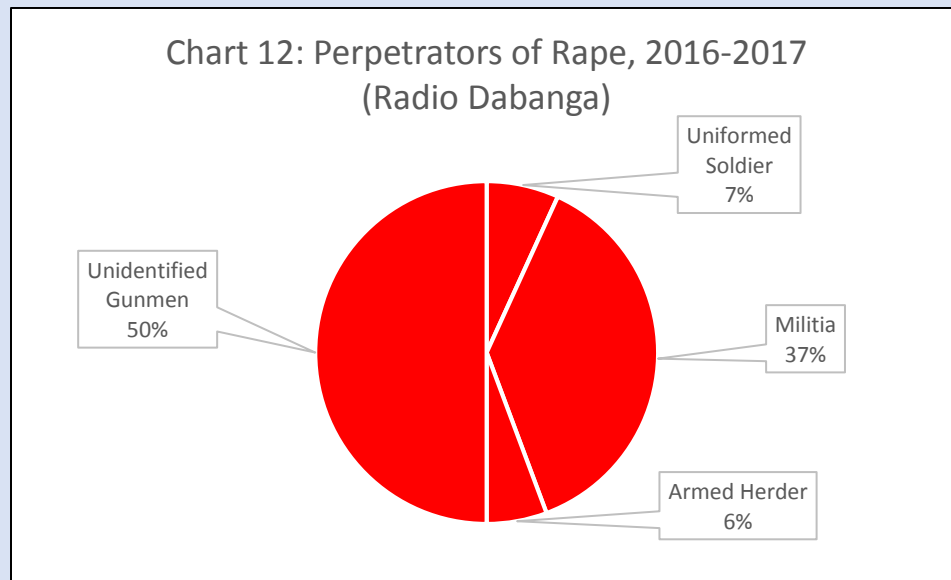
Chart 12 breaks down perpetrators of rape in Darfur by affiliation. Uniformed soldiers are reported as being involved in only 7% of rapes. However, when we include RSF militia members, government share increases to 44%. The other two categories used by Radio Dabanga, “unidentified gunmen” and “armed herder,” are somewhat less directly associated with government policy. Armed herders are uniformly Arab, and again unidentified gunmen are frequently identified as Arab by Radio Dabanga reports, just as in UNAMID reports.

⁶ “Other Government Aligned” consists of: Militia (Dagash), Salamat Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Fellata Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Rizaygat Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Militia (Herders), Misseriya Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Awlad Rashdan Clan Militia (Sudan), NCP: National Congress Party, Nuwayba Ethnic Militia (Sudan), PDF: Popular Defence Forces, Rizaygat Awlad Zaid Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Al-Falata Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Maaliya Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Mahariya Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Militia (Asbad Mohamed Khater), Militia (Abdallah Ganga), Arab Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Abala Ethnic Militia (Sudan), Militia (Osman Abdellatif), Militia (Pro-Government)

“Sudanese Military and Police” consists of: Military Forces of Sudan (1989-) Military Intelligence Service, Police Forces of Sudan (1989-) National Intelligence and Security Services, Military Forces of Sudan (1989-) Border Guards, Police Forces of Sudan (1989-), Military Forces of Sudan (1989-), Military Forces of Sudan (1989-) Abu Tira, Police Forces of Sudan (1989-) University Police, Prison Guards (Sudan)

“Foreign Actors” consists of: Military Forces of Chad (1990-), UNAMID: United Nations/African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (2007-), Unidentified Armed Group (Libya), Unidentified Communal Militia (Chad), Unidentified Communal Militia (South Sudan), Zaghawa Ethnic Militia (Chad), LRA: Lords Resistance Army

Data labels have been removed for categories with less than 1%, which includes: Vigilante Militia (Sudan), and Unidentified Ethnic Militia (Sudan)



The pattern through all three datasets is remarkably stable. Government-aligned forces are identifiably responsible for ~30-45% of human rights violations against civilians in Darfur, across UNAMID, ACLED, and Radio Dabanga reporting. Government aligned forces are responsible for ~100% of all incidents for which an actor can be positively identified. Members of unidentified groups, across all three data sources, are commonly referenced as belonging to communities which are traditionally politically aligned with GoS forces in Darfur.

Systemic Bias Favoring GoS in UNAMID Reports⁷

Qualitative analysis of language used in UNAMID reports reveals a clear bias in favor of GoS forces. Such language is deeply important, as the manner in which UNAMID presents the conflict in Darfur guides the judgement of policymakers around the world.

A few excerpts from the most recent UNAMID report, in May 2018, are illustrative of a general pattern of bias.⁸ Government forces are always presented as either neutral or a positive asset to civilian protection, and rebel groups are uniformly presented as initiators of conflict.

Even when UNAMID acknowledged that government forces **initiated** “operations in areas previously controlled by SLA-AW in the Jebel Marra area,” UNAMID reports that “SLA-AW elements attacked a Sudanese military camp,” and that government forces deployed “in response.”

When an Arab militia “burned down the village of Durgo,” killing three civilians and displacing the entire population, this is presented by UNAMID as the logical response to SLA-AW action. (2)

⁷ Sudan Analyst and Harvard fellow Eric Reeves has catalogued the pattern of UNAMID failure in depth on his blog: <http://sudanreeves.org/2018/05/16/the-failure-of-the-un-african-union-mission-in-darfur-recent-assessments/>

⁸ UNAMID report can be found online at: <https://unamid.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/s-2018-389.pdf> page numbers are cited in parentheses

When civilians are targeted, UNAMID uniformly reports in the passive voice, as if combatants have no agency, such as when “clashes also took place in Katur, East Jebel Marra, on 1 April, resulting in one person killed, one injured and 73 houses burned down.” (2)

The only instances where UNAMID does not hedge responsibility between all groups is when GoS and RSF forces are portrayed in a directly positive light, as when

“The arrival of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on the same day put a stop to the attacks [against civilians].” (2)

or

“Intercommunal violence has decreased mainly owing to interventions by the Government...” (2)

The section on “Conflict Analysis” then concludes with a report that “on 19 March, the President of the Sudan, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, extended the unilateral ceasefire announced by the Government in all areas of operations until 30 June 2018.” (2) This is presented as true, with no further analysis, despite significant evidence at the time that government forces continued to be engaged in an offensive military campaign in the Jebel Marra region, as per Radio Dabanga reports.⁹

UNAMID reports also ignore a key relationship between violence against civilians and government military action, which we will examine in detail in the following section. Specifically, UN reports omit that violence against civilians is not only nearly uniformly perpetrated by government and government-supported forces, but also aligns nearly perfectly with the location and timing of government military campaigns.

It is unsurprising that government and RSF forces are portrayed in such a positive light when considering that UNAMID actually cites these groups as sources of on-the-ground information in their reports. Somehow, these two are seen as credible sources despite UNAMID acknowledgment that RSF and government forces are the only identifiable perpetrators of human rights violations, that RSF and government forces actively prevent UNAMID forces from monitoring conflict zones, and that the President of Sudan has been **indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide** by the International Criminal Court. The incentives underlying this UNAMID hedging are clear considering that UNAMID requires Sudanese government consent to visas for personnel and transit of supplies from Port Sudan to support the mission. **Given such adverse diplomatic conditions, that UNAMID continues to report even the level of government culpability that it does should amplify the fact that the Sudanese regime is responsible for mass violence.**

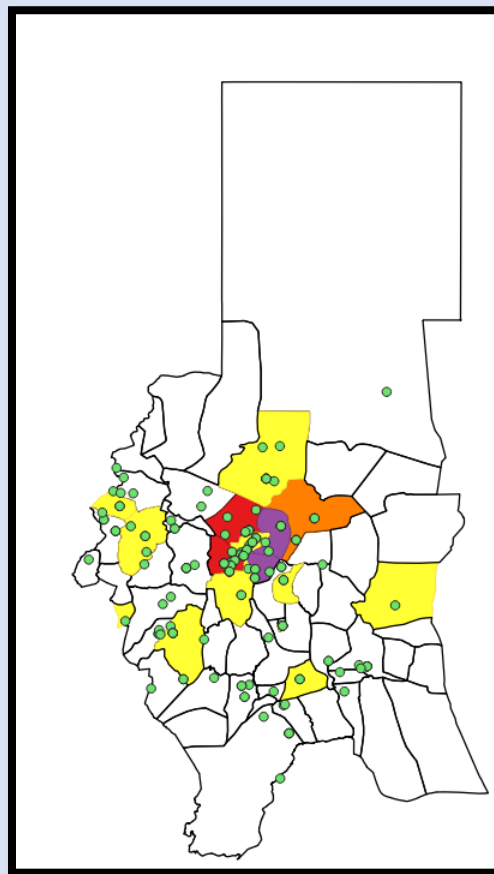
⁹ A brief summary of the Spring 2018 Jebel Marra campaign, prepared by DWAG staff, can be found on darfurwomenaction.org

Section III: Use of Violence Against Civilians as a Political Weapon

The previous two sections demonstrated that 1) Human Rights Violations, and especially Sexual and Gender-based violations, have remained steady, and 2) that the Government of Sudan and her proxy militias have committed nearly 100% of these violations. We also saw that offensive military action by GoS and proxy militia forces has remained roughly steady throughout the period observed. We will now see that these two phenomena are inextricably linked, as violence against civilians is used in tandem with military operations to achieve a political and strategic objective. To be clear, this is the very **definition of genocide**.

Part A: Geographic Analysis

Geographical analysis shows that violence against civilians is highly co-located with government military campaigns. Map 1 overlays incidence of rape by locality, as reported by Radio Dabanga in 2016, with the location of battles as coded by ACLED in 2016. Each green dot represents a firefight in that location, localities are shaded based on incidence of rape with darker shading representing higher incidence.



Map 1: Battles (ACLED) and Incidence of Rape by Locality (Radio Dabanga), 2016

Taken together with the fact that these rapes were nearly uniformly perpetrated by GoS or proxy militia forces, a clear pattern emerges of rapes being perpetrated in tandem with military action. This pattern holds true of the entire 2016-2018 time period. Cross referencing ACLED data on battles and incidence

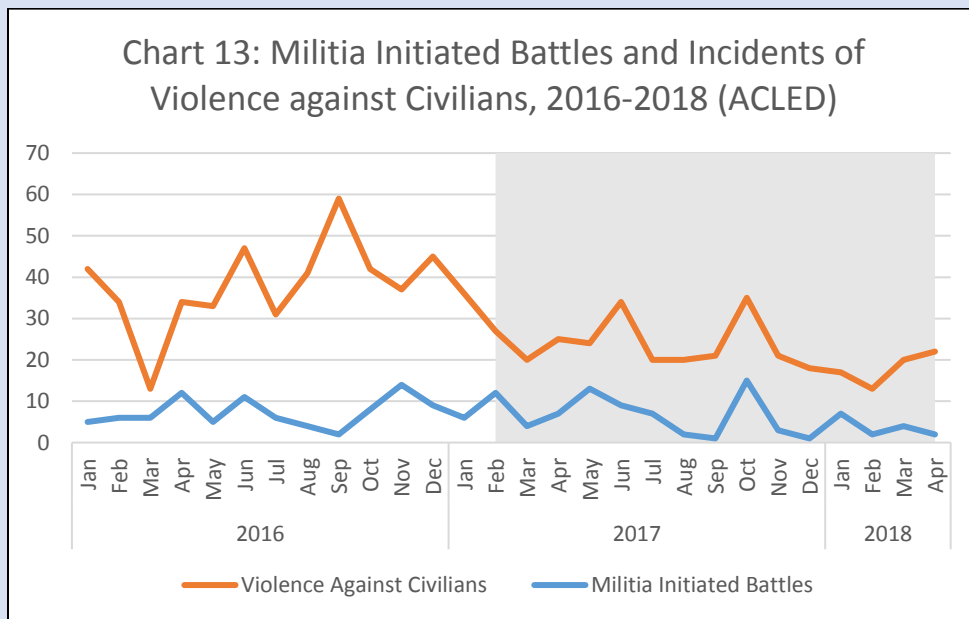
of violence against civilians, we found that **73%** of incidents of violence against civilians which took place in 2016-2018 occurred within **1 kilometer** of a 2016-2018 battle site.¹⁰

Part B: Time Series Analysis

Data from ACLED and Radio Dabanga also show that the timing of violence against civilians is highly related to the timing of battles.

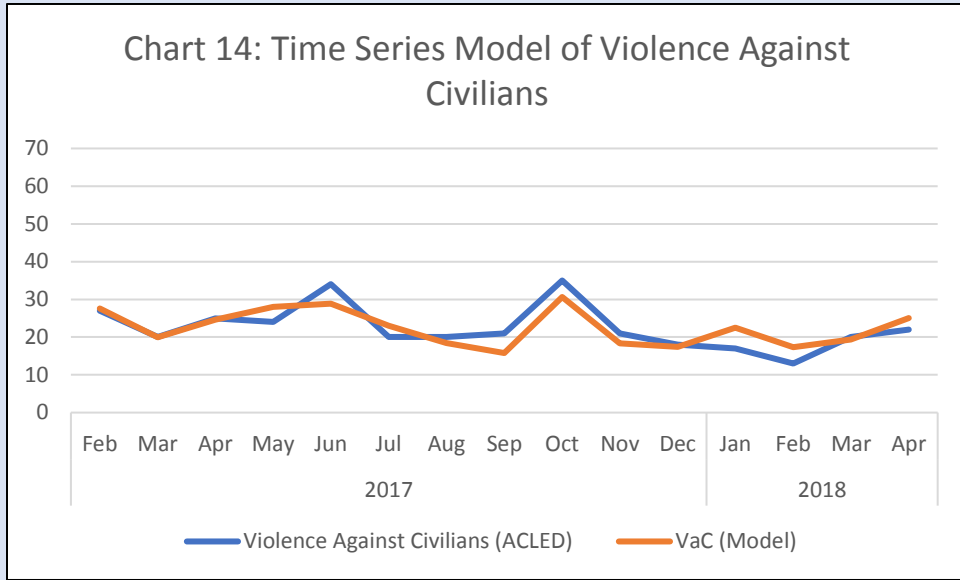
Harm to civilians is, unfortunately, a common byproduct of military conflict everywhere. It is therefore important to note that the incidents reported here are not events of “collateral damage” whereby civilians are inadvertently caught in the crossfire. They are incidents of rape, of savage beatings, of markets and villages systemically torn down or burned, and of extrajudicial killings which occur **in proximity to but off of** the battlefield, that are targeted to magnify the effect of battlefield results.

In fact, available information actually shows that the pattern of using violence against civilians as a weapon of war actually **increased** during the period following E.O. 13761. Chart 13 shows battles initiated by militia and incidents of violence against civilians, the period following the executive order is shaded gray.

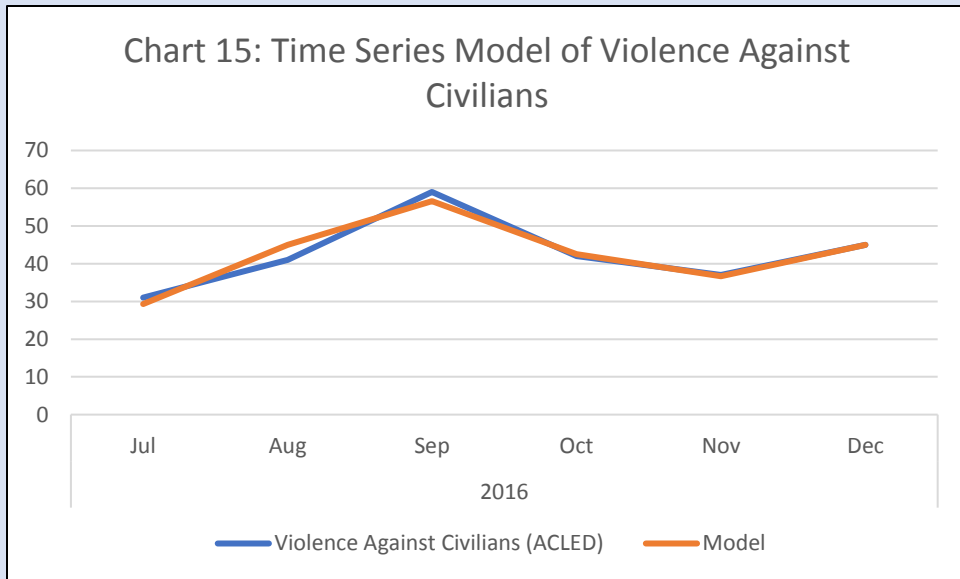


In the period since January 2017, there has been a statistically significant relationship between these militia-initiated battles and incidents of violence against civilians ($p=.01$, $r=.4$). Chart 14 shows our model of incidents of violence against civilians based on militia-initiated battles per month and government-initiated battles per previous month to predict incidents of violence against civilians.

¹⁰ This is calculated with ACLED data using QGIS to calculate minimum distance between all sites of violence against civilians and all sites of battles during the period 2016-2018.

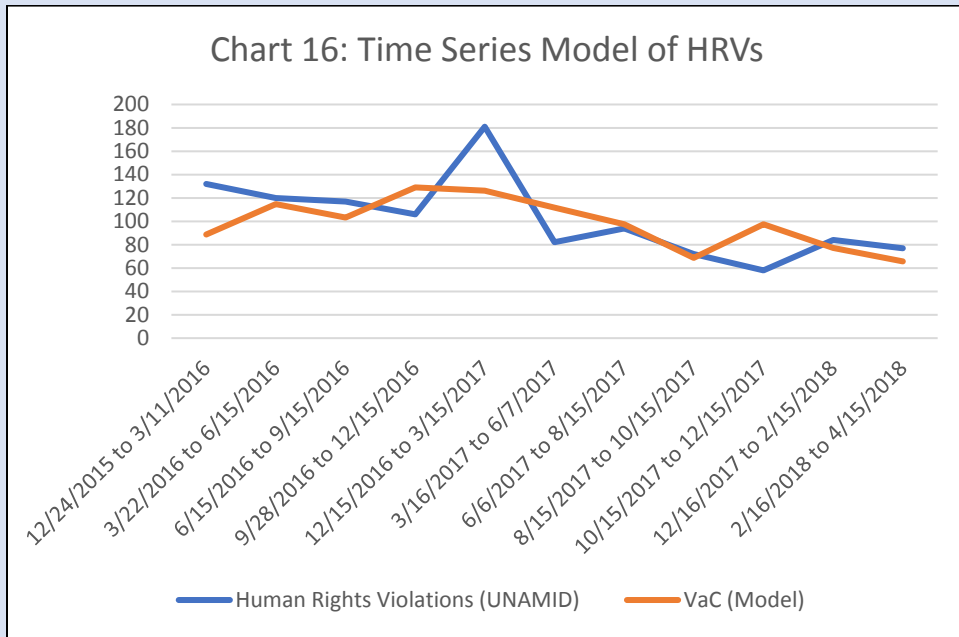


This relationship was also **especially present** during the six-month period referenced in E.O. 13761, as illustrated in Chart 15. During this period, the number of incidents of violence against civilians per month was **nearly perfectly** predicted by the number of militia attacks in that month and the number of government attacks in the previous month.

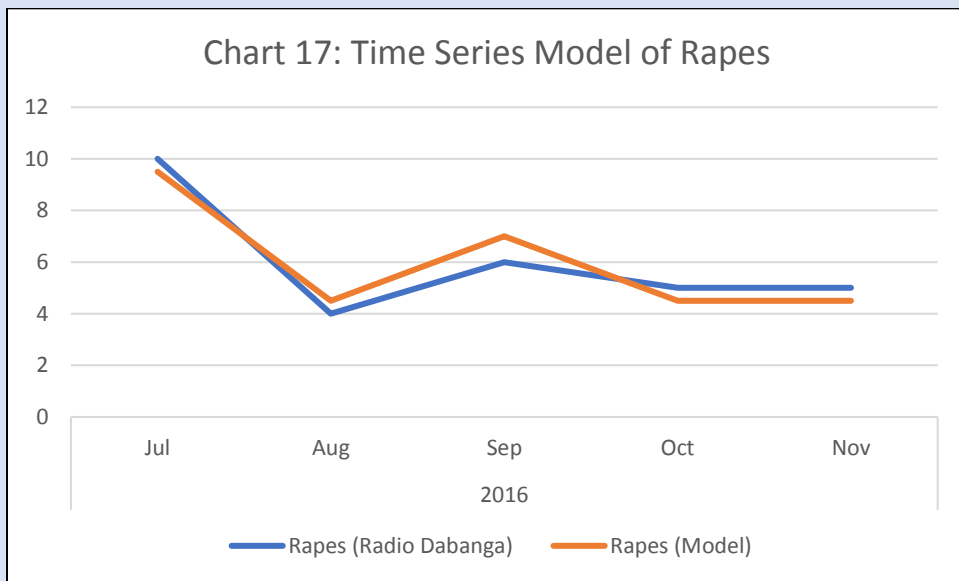


We can see a similar relationship when we cross reference UNAMID data for Human Rights Violations with ACLED data for militia-initiated battles. Chart 15 shows a model of HRVs based on Militia-Initiated Battles alone ($p=.04$, $r=.6$). We were not able to find a similar relationship between HRVs in one period and government action in the previous period, likely because UNAMID reporting periods are several

months long and therefore not subtle enough to pick up a single-month-long lag. Regardless, this is further evidence that human rights violations are closely tied to offensive military action by militias.



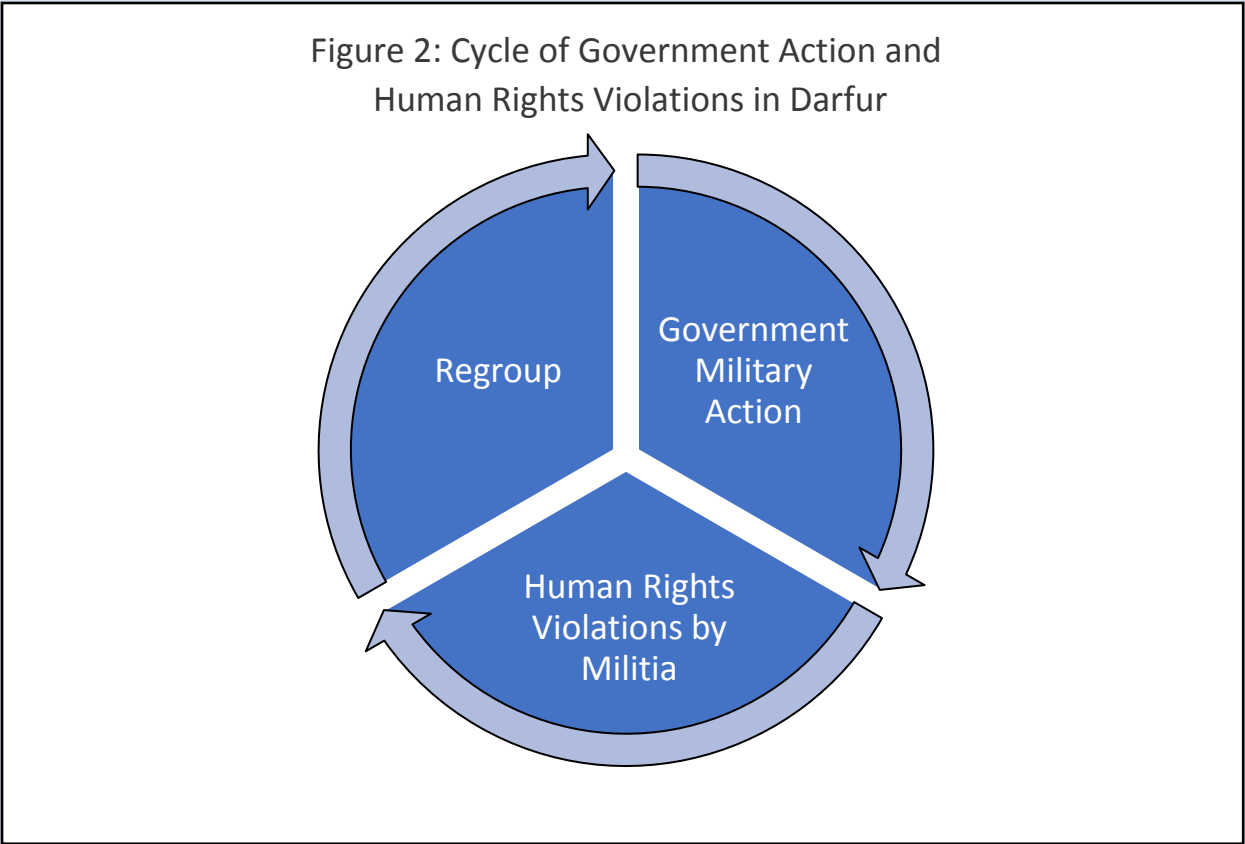
There is a similar (and again statistically significant) relationship between the timing of government-initiated battles and rapes in 2016 ($p=.04$, $r=.6$).



This correlation was again most prominent **specifically in** the six-month period during which President Obama asserted an improvement in Sudanese behavior. Chart 17 shows a time series model predicting rapes per month by the number of government-initiated attacks in the prior month. We observe that this nearly perfectly matches the actual number of rapes reported by Radio Dabanga in the second half of 2016 ($p=.01$, $r=.95$). This is an important point: incidence of rape was nearly **perfectly** predicted by recent offensive military action by government forces. This relationship **does not exist** for military activity initiated by rebel factions, nor does it exist for all battles. Increases in violence against civilians and incidents of rape are **only** linked to increases in military activity by GoS forces and their allied militias, and are nearly uniformly perpetrated by those groups.

There is a clear pattern that violence against civilians, especially sexual violence, is linked to government action. The evidence is clear that such violence is being used by the government as part of its political strategy.

An illustration of the model for battles and violence against civilians as shown in Charts 13-17 can be seen in Figure 1. In time period one, uniformed government forces initiate battles. Next, various government-aligned militias will initiate battles and conduct mass violence against civilians. After a cooling down period, which varies in length but generally lasts around 2 months, this pattern will repeat itself as government forces renew the initiative.



Conclusion

The conclusion is clear: The United State government cherry-picked data to justify a reversal in sanctions policy. The totality of the evidence **does not** demonstrate that the Sudanese government has lessened their policy of genocide against the people of Darfur.

In certain key metrics, the situation in Darfur is either static or deteriorating. In the indices that show any improvement at all, such improvement is not nearly significant enough to justify the changes that the US government has made in relations with Sudan. The Sudanese government and government-supported actors continue to use politically motivated violence against civilians, especially the use of rape and sexual violence as weapons of war, and the pace of offensive military activity by the government and government supported actors which give rise to such conditions for violence has not diminished.

This should be damning evidence. The level of human rights violations is not decreasing, government supported forces continue to be responsible for such violations, and these violations are being conducted in tandem with the military and political strategy of the government. These facts hardly support the notion that the government of Sudan is improving in support for human rights. Rather, the opposite is true: the government of Sudan continues to conduct and support **genocide** in Darfur.