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# GLOBAL UP-TO-DATE

A  Publication

The world around us is changing rapidly. Wars, new turn in global politics, human rights issues are occurring every day, posing new challenges and concerns. Global Up-to-Date is an initiative by Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) which will work as a hub for explaining the contemporary global issues.

The regular briefs will focus and explain the issues related to International Politics, Economy, Security, Human Rights, and Development. There will be a monthly printed version newsletter containing briefs of all the contemporary global important issues. The online version contains regular updates of the pressing issues along with the PDF version of the newsletter.

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# Suspended Biodiversity COP 16: A Summit Without Budget for Agenda Implementation Towards the Goal of “Making Peace with Nature”

*Really Chakma*



The 2024 UN Biodiversity Conference, hosted in Cali, Colombia, achieved milestones in furthering the cause of global biodiversity under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Although the lack of quorum led to a suspension of proceedings, key debates and interim decisions highlighted shared ambitions to halt biodiversity loss via inclusive, equitable, and novel approaches.

The conference celebrated the submission of 119 national targets and 44 updated NBSAPs, which constitutes progress in aligning the global effort with GBF objectives. Delegates underlined the need for timely implementation and equity in resource allocation, calling for increased support mechanisms for developing nations. The operationalization of the "Cali Fund" emerged as a key step toward multilateral benefit-sharing, especially from digital sequence information(DSI) on genetic resources. This mechanism is focused on bridging biodiversity financing gaps while paying attention to the needs of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and developing nations. As much as the fund is a great milestone, discussion on contribution thresholds and governance really showed that there was still a way to go for equitable and sustainable financing.

Attention was also given to marine biodiversity through the adoption of modalities for EBSAs, which would effectively ensure the implementation of targets in marine conservation under GBF and the UN Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction. In the same light, the conference addressed issues such as synthetic biology, and invasive species, setting new rules and capacity-building programs on ground to reduce risks thereof. The decision to establish a permanent Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) marked a milestone in this direction, as it acknowledged that IPLCs' role is irreplaceable in the realm of biodiversity conservation. This institutional setup aims at embedding the rights and traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples in biodiversity frameworks for better integration into policy formulation and implementation. Concurrently, the adoption of a dedicated program of work for Article 8(j) underlined the need to address the specific challenges faced by IPLCs, including financial constraints and barriers to participation.

As a part of mitigating those challenges, integration of biodiversity and climate change agendas, with delegates calling for increased synergies between the national and international levels. That way, linked crises could be tackled through coordinated action, with resources shared to meet general goals of the GBF. Introduction of the "One Health" plan further developed that ecosystem health, prevention of zoonotic diseases, and sustainable development are highly interdependent and could become the cornerstone of any future biodiversity strategy.

Resource mobilization then became very contentious, with a long and protracted debate on a dedicated global financing mechanism for biodiversity. Although developing countries were supportive, noting the acute funding gaps the instrument would hope to address, developed countries were apprehensive of the fragmentation it could cause in the global financial architecture. This deadlock illustrates the pressing need to work out an accommodation of differences to realize an equitable share of resources.

The conference's agenda also centrally included capacity-building and knowledge management. Delegates adopted decisions on enhancing technical and scientific cooperation, regional and subregional centers, and the Clearing-House Mechanism. Such undertakings are to bridge technological and institutional capability gaps to make a collective effort in biodiversity conservation. It is in this conference that the role of people of African descent was recognized, another great step toward inclusivity and representation. This decision recognized their role in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development and further encouraged collaboration and resource allocation for them. While there was progress, COP-16 failed to resolve some critical decisions on resource mobilization, the financial mechanism, and the GBF monitoring framework.

Disagreements remained, with developing countries demanding a new funding mechanism to fill the gaps, while developed countries preferred existing mechanisms, like the GEF, citing the risk of financial fragmentation. Debates on DSI revealed fissures over contribution thresholds and governance, and deliberations on the integration of national ABS measures, including equitable financial flows to IPLCs and marginalized communities, revealed the continuing difficulties in coming to consensus on sustainable biodiversity solutions. In all, the 2024 UN Biodiversity Conference represented both the progress and challenges of implementing the Global Biodiversity Framework.

Establishment of innovative mechanisms, recognition of IPLCs and marginalized communities, and alignment of biodiversity and climate agendas demonstrate commitments for transformative change. Nevertheless, much more is still to be discussed and cooperated towards reaching global targets in biodiversity. In the parallel, suspension put a question mark "Will there be a fair compromise on resource mobilization, the financial mechanism, and the GBF monitoring framework?"

## Sudan on the Brink: The Battle for Power, Survival, and Humanity

*Shurat Rana Rushmi*

The ongoing civil war in Sudan has spiraled into a devastating crisis, transforming a nation once brimming with hope into a battlefield of unimaginable suffering. Rooted in Sudan's turbulent political and ethnic history, the conflict has seen an explosive clash between two military factions—the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). This war is not only about power but also the soul of Sudan itself, as millions of civilians face displacement, death, and a humanitarian catastrophe largely ignored by the international community.



Sudan's descent into civil war began long before 2023, with years of political instability and military coups. In 2018, a popular revolution ousted longtime dictator Omar al-Bashir, fueling hopes for democratic change. However, this optimism was short-lived. In 2021, two years after Bashir's removal, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti), head of the RSF, orchestrated a military coup that dismantled Sudan's transitional government. Their power-sharing agreement soon fell apart, giving way to violent power struggles between the SAF and RSF. The tension between these two factions escalated in April 2023 into all-out war, ripping the country apart. What began as a political struggle quickly morphed into a full-scale civil war, leaving millions vulnerable. Yet the conflict has deeper roots than mere political rivalry—it is underpinned by a complex web of ethnic and sectarian tensions. The RSF, initially formed to quell insurgencies in Darfur, has strong ties to Sudan's Arab-majority regions, particularly in the west. Many RSF fighters follow an Arab-supremacist ideology, leading to targeted violence against Sudan's African tribal groups. In contrast, while the Sudanese Army is ethnically diverse, the violence it has committed in conflict zones often echoes the ethnic divisions that fuel the war. Both factions have perpetrated atrocities, including ethnic cleansing, contributing to a vicious cycle of violence.

The humanitarian toll of the war is staggering. More than 125,000 people have died from violence, starvation, and disease. Over 26 million people—nearly half of Sudan's population—are facing extreme food insecurity, with famine conditions affecting more than 1 million. The war has triggered one of the largest refugee crises in recent history, displacing 15 million people. The healthcare system is in ruins, with over 70% of medical infrastructure destroyed, leading to surges in preventable diseases. Education has also collapsed, leaving over 19 million children unable to attend school. Women, in particular, have borne the brunt of the violence. Abductions, sexual violence, and abuse at the hands of militias have become all too common. These gender-specific crimes, often exacerbated by the lawlessness of the war, highlight the urgent need for international intervention to protect civilians and hold perpetrators accountable.

The international response to Sudan's crisis has been woefully inadequate. Humanitarian aid efforts are underfunded, with only 56% of the 2024 funding requirements met. While initiatives like the Aligned for Advancing Lifesaving and Peace in Sudan (ALPS) Group have sought to mediate peace, these efforts have largely been ineffective. Sudan's geopolitical position, coupled with limited global attention, means the country's suffering remains largely unseen. The involvement of foreign powers, including Russia, Iran, and the UAE, who have supplied weapons to both sides, has further exacerbated the conflict. The failure of the international community to condemn these actions or impose sanctions has allowed the war to persist without meaningful intervention.

Despite these challenges, there is hope. Sudanese civilian groups, led by figures such as former Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, are working tirelessly to provide humanitarian aid, support displaced families, and push for peace. These groups, however, are constrained by a lack of funding, political support, and international attention. The international community must step up. Governments worldwide must provide substantial humanitarian assistance and push for an immediate ceasefire. Support for Sudanese-led peace initiatives is critical, as is holding accountable those who are fueling the violence, including foreign actors supplying weapons. Sudan's civil war is a tragedy that demands urgent attention. The suffering of its people should no longer be ignored. As global citizens, we must act to support those on the frontlines and work toward bringing an end to this brutal conflict. Sudan's future hangs in the balance, and the world cannot afford to stand idly by.

## Leadership Void: A Pivotal Moment for Hamas and Netanyahu

*Nuzhat Tabassum*



A symbol of resistance against occupation, an iconic hero and an inspiration to all the people supporting the end of genocide in Palestine. Yahya Sinwar, top leader of Hamas, was shot dead by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) on 16th October 2024 who was directly responsible for the October 07 terror attack leading to 1200 deaths and taking 250 Israeli hostages . He was on the wanted list of the Israeli military for so long it might be an achievement for them . Analysts predict that his death has presented Israel an opportunity to end the war once and for all . However, Israel has declared that they will continue their operations in Gaza even after the death of Sinwar as long as they deem necessary .

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will be able to say to the angry and disappointed Israelis that one of Israel's aims has been fulfilled . Sinwar's death will strengthen Netanyahu's political position domestically as well as internationally . It will allow him to be more flexible to make a ceasefire deal which will end the war in Gaza in exchange for hostages . Netanyahu is backed by two far-right groups that have vowed to overthrow the government if a cease-fire agreement is reached for the conflict before Hamas has been destroyed completely. They strongly believe that Hamas will use any ceasefire to regroup as a threat to Israel again . Moreover, these are advocating for establishing Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip, which has been rejected by Netanyahu . On the other hand, Netanyahu is facing problems domestically as well over the release of hostages. Their families are demonstrating protests for negotiations of ceasefire and release of hostages . However, Netanyahu's war aims are yet to be fulfilled. Firstly, eradication of Hamas as a fighting force and a threat to Israel. Secondly, rescuing 100 Israelis hostages taken by Hamas in Gaza. Thirdly, working with Hezbollah to maintain deterrence in Lebanon so that the 60,000 Israelis who were recently displaced from northern Israel may go back to their homes . The US might pressure Israel to end the war in Gaza and give access to humanitarian aid to 2.3 million people residing in Gaza who have been displaced by Israeli airstrikes.

The biggest impact will be on Hamas which lost most of its top leaders in the recent year. It will now have to find a new leader who will be as impactful as Sinwar. Sinwar was a hardliner when it came to ceasefire negotiations with Israel when it came to ending the war in Gaza and release of Israeli hostages . He was committed to calls for a permanent cease-fire, the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, and the release of hundreds of Palestinian captives. His death might quicken any deal of ceasefire negotiations. The group's political leadership in Qatar will probably have more freedom and authority now. Among them are Khaled Mashaal and Khalil al-Hayya, two important Hamas representatives in the months-long negotiations. Qatar, a crucial mediator that houses some of Hamas' top leaders, may exert further pressure on those leaders, which may hasten the process of reaching an agreement . But with lack of credible leaders it is also possible that ceasefire negotiations will be harder to approach since many top leaders were killed by Israeli forces within a year. But Sinwar was directing daily operations. So there is no possibility that Hamas will disintegrate quickly. Over the years, Hamas has become a guerilla force which makes it much more difficult to dismantle. The classic way to eliminate a guerilla force is to 'clear, hold and build'. This entails removing the enemy from a region, deploying troops to retain it, and creating an atmosphere that prevents the adversary from reestablishing itself. Israel can do the holding and clearing, but it hasn't been able to create an atmosphere that would prevent Hamas from operating .

The war in Gaza still remains uncertain as well as what Netanyahu' s next move will be. But despite Sinwar's death, he remains an inspiring figure among a large number of People including Palestinians. He fought all his life against oppression. Even in the face of the death he threw a stick towards the Israeli drone; signifying his last attempt to fight against Israeli oppression.