

National News

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While President Museveni's meeting with Gen Dagalo comes amidst sanctions from US over senseless killings.

BY SAMILU BUSEIN

President Museveni last Friday held a high-level engagement with Gen Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, the leader of Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), at State House, Entebbe.

The meeting came barely a day after the United States (US) sanctioned three top commanders of RSF, the rebel outfit fighting the Khartoum government, over their role in committing genocide in El-Fasher, Sudan.

The State House, in a statement released shortly after the meeting, said the discussions focused on ending the conflict in the Republic of Sudan and restoring regional stability.

"The meeting comes at a time when Sudan continues to face a devastating war that erupted in April 2023 between the Sudan Armed Forces led by Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the RSF," the statement read in part.

It added: "The fighting, which began in Khartoum, quickly spread to other parts of the country, displacing millions of civilians, crippling essential services, and triggering one of the world's worst humanitarian crises."

Mr Museveni, in the State House statement said, reiterated his long-standing position that sustainable peace in Sudan can only be achieved through dialogue and a shift from divisive politics.

He warned against what he described as the 'politics of identity', saying such an approach only deepens divisions.

"When I last came to Sudan, I met [former] President Bashir and advised against the politics of identity for the politics of interest. Identity politics is poisonous. It does not yield good results. What is important are shared interests that unite people," he said.

Controversy

Mr Museveni met Gen Dagalo in his capacity as head of a high-level committee that was appointed by the Afri-



President Museveni (right) meets with Gen Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), at State House, Entebbe on Friday. PHOTO/INTERNET/X

Museveni meets Sudan rebel leader

GENESIS OF THE WAR

What started as a disagreement between the army chief Gen al-Burhan, the chairman of the Transitional Sovereign Council and his deputy, who later formed and led the RSF militia, Gen Dagalo, in April 2023, escalated between May 2024 and October 2025. This has led to the death and displacement of thousands of people.

The US accuses the RSF of perpetrating horrific ethnic killings, torture, starvation, sexual violence, and widespread

"The United States is committed to working with the international community to achieve a lasting peace in Sudan, which has been afflicted by a brutal civil war between the RSF and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF). The conflict has provoked the world's worst ongoing humanitarian crisis with over 150,000 killed and more than 14 million displaced," the February 19 statement added.

Background

What started as a disagreement between the army chief Gen al-Burhan, the chairman of the Transitional Sovereign Council and his deputy, who later formed and led the RSF militia, Gen Dagalo, in April 2023, escalated between May 2024 and October 2025.

Then, the RSF and its allied militias maintained an effective siege of El-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur and the SAF's last stronghold in Darfur and engaged in relentless attacks on the city and the surrounding internally displaced person camps.

Over these 18 months, the RSF gradually tightened its siege, increased indiscriminate strikes, and built an earthen wall around the city to prevent food aid from entering.

These actions, the US said, trapped about 260,000 civilians, hence widespread outbreaks of disease and famine.

"While engaging SAF-aligned forces in intense urban warfare, RSF fighters perpetrated a horrific campaign of summary executions, torture, and sexual violence. These targeted civilians based on their ethnicity, irrespective of gender and age. The RSF massacred civilians attempting to flee El-Fasher and those seeking refuge. Once it fully captured the city on October 26, the fighters accelerated its systematic and widespread killings..." the statement read.

President Museveni, during the engagement with Gen Dagalo at State House Entebbe, called for negotiation and emphasised the need for African-led solutions to African problem urging all parties to prioritise peace over military confrontation. Gen Dagalo acknowledged that Sudan continues to face serious humanitarian and institutional challenges as a result of the conflict and stressed the need for peaceful resolution.

atrocities, including war crimes and genocide.

Mr Scott Bessent, the Secretary of the Treasury, in a February 19 statement, said: "The United States calls on the Rapid Support Forces to commit to a humanitarian ceasefire immediately. We will not tolerate this ongoing campaign of terror and senseless killing in Sudan."

"Without a swift end, Sudan's civil war risks further destabilising the region, creating conditions for terrorist groups to grow and threaten the safety and interests of the United States," he added.

The US sanctions follow indictments of the same people by the United Kingdom on December 12, 2025 and the European Union on January 29, 2026.