

## Sudan

<b>Country name</b>	Sudan
<b>State title</b>	Republic of the Sudan
<b>Name of citizen</b>	Sudanese
<b>Official languages</b>	Arabic ( <i>ara</i> ) and English ( <i>eng</i> ) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Country name in Arabic</b>	جمهورية السودان (Jumhūrīyat as Sūdān)
<b>State title in Arabic</b>	السودان (As Sūdān)
<b>Script</b>	Roman and Arabic scripts are both used
<b>Romanization System</b>	Not required for geographical names in Sudan
<b>ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3)</b>	SD/SDN
<b>Capital (Conventional name)</b>	Khartoum <sup>2</sup>
<b>Capital in Arabic</b>	الخرطوم (Al Kharṭūm)
<b>Population/Area</b>	50,467,278 (2024 est.) / 1,861,484 sq km <sup>3</sup>

### Introduction

Sudan became an independent state in 1956. It was the largest country in Africa and the Arabic League until the secession of South Sudan in 2011. Situated in North Africa, Sudan has a coastline on the Red Sea and land borders with Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Central African Republic, Chad, and Libya.

The Blue Nile and the White Nile meet in Khartoum to form the River Nile, which flows north through Egypt into the Mediterranean Sea.

The country name is derived from the Arabic word for 'black'.

### Geographical names policy

Both Arabic and English are the official working languages of Sudan, and PCGN policy is to use the official Roman-script or English-language forms of toponyms. The US Board on Geographic Names (BGN) and PCGN take official spellings from the most authoritative source, although it should be noted that the spellings of Sudanese geographical names may not be consistent. The Sudan Survey Authority (SSA), established in 1899, one of the oldest in Africa, is the official governmental agency mandated by the Sudan government to undertake surveying, mapping and charting in Sudan.

<sup>1</sup> ISO 639 codes are given for languages mentioned in this Factfile.

<sup>2</sup> This is the name recommended for HMG use.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/#people-and-society>

**Language/s**

There are over 500 ethnic groups living in Sudan, speaking approximately 70 languages. Sudanese Arabs constitute 70% of the population. Arabic and English, Sudan’s official languages, both function as lingua francas.

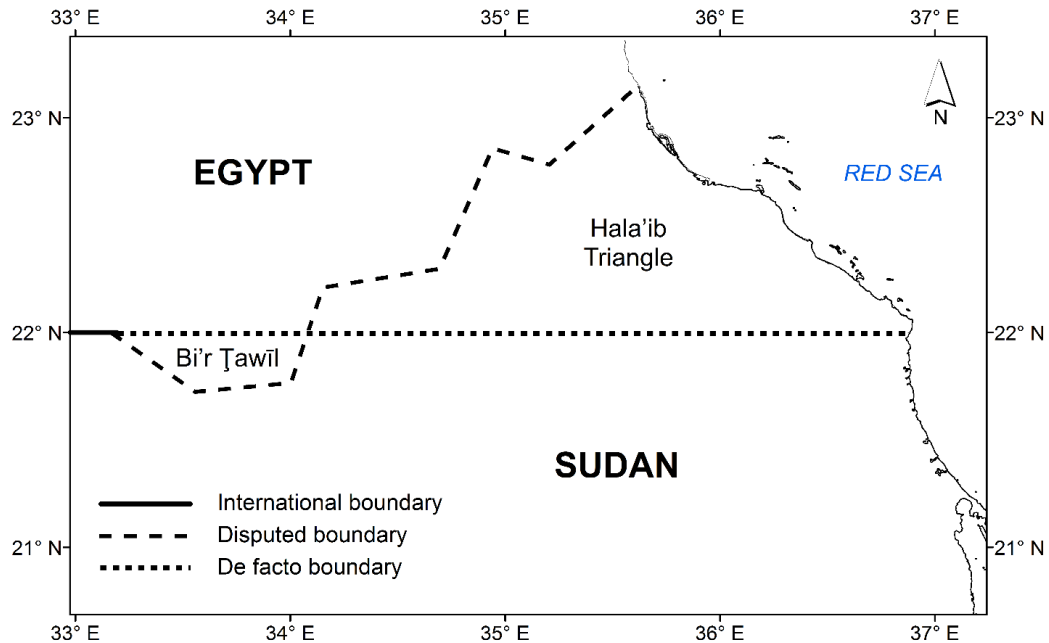
**Boundary Issues/Toponymic Disputes**

**Hala’ib Triangle**

The UK government position on the boundary between Egypt and Sudan is that there is an international boundary and an administrative boundary. The international boundary, agreed between the British and Egyptian governments in the Anglo-Egyptian conventions of 1899 relating to Sudan (‘the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement’), runs along the 22nd parallel between the Libyan border and the Red Sea (with a small salient northward in the area of Lake Nasser). The administrative boundary, established in 1902, includes a large disputed salient to the north of the international boundary. This area should be labelled as Hala’ib Triangle. Any label depicting the Hala’ib Triangle area as "Under Sudanese Administration" should be removed, as this area is currently (de facto) administered by Egypt. The Bi’r Ṭawīl trapezoid, south of the international boundary, which is claimed neither by Egypt nor Sudan, should be labelled as Bi’r Ṭawīl.

On UK government maps this area should be depicted as follows:

- a) The 1902 line should be shown with a broken symbol, representing “Disputed Boundary”.
- b) The 1899 line west of the 1902 line should be shown as a solid or “Full International Boundary”.
- c) The 1899 line east of the 1902 line should be shown with a broken line (different to the Disputed Boundary symbol) representing a “De facto Boundary”.
- d) Where required, the Bi’r Ṭawīl trapezoid will be coloured/shaded as pertaining to Egypt.
- e) Where required, the Hala’ib Triangle will be coloured/shaded as pertaining to Sudan.



Note: this map is for illustrative purposes. It is not to be taken as necessarily representing the view of the UK Government on boundaries or political status.

**Abyei area**

The Abyei area limits run north of the current *de facto* boundary between Sudan and South Sudan, between the points along that line at 9°36'45"N, 27°54'20"E and 9°40'25"N, 29°00'00"E. The sovereign status of the entire Abyei area (which itself is defined) is disputed as it continues to wait for a referendum (as agreed to in principle through the 2004 Protocol on the Resolution of the Abyei Conflict in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement), although there is currently no indication that any such referendum is planned. On mapping, Abyei is to be defined by an encompassing boundary and to be annotated simply as "Abyei area" (use italics). The boundary should be shown with a unique, broken line symbol, except for the southern edge which should continue to be shown as the Sudan - South Sudan *de jure* boundary until the status of Abyei is decided.

**Map of Sudan**



Note: this map is for illustrative purposes. It is not to be taken as necessarily representing the view of the UK Government on boundaries or political status.

## Administrative structure

Sudan currently has 18 states (*ara*: wilayah/wilayat) at first-order administrative level (ADM1), these are subdivided into districts at second-order (ADM2) level.

As mentioned above, the spelling of place names in Sudan can be inconsistent. This Factfile lists the recommended Roman-script spellings of the names of the states of Sudan and their administrative centres<sup>4</sup>. It incorporates the two newest states created in Darfur by means of a January 2012 decree; and includes the state of West Kordofan, which was reinstated in 2013, having been dissolved in 2005 (its area was subsumed into North Kordofan and South Kordofan). The forms East Darfur, North Darfur, North Kordofan, South Darfur, South Kordofan, West Darfur and West Kordofan are now preferred, in accordance with the prevailing nomenclature used in official Sudanese English language sources. Although the English forms Eastern Darfur, Northern Darfur, Northern Kordofan, Southern Darfur, Southern Kordofan, Western Darfur and Western Kordofan are sometimes seen. The name Northern State remains unchanged.

State name (ADM1)	Approximate centre point of state	ISO 3166-2 code	Administrative centre (PPLA)	Position of centre
Blue Nile	11° 09' N 034° 06' E	SD-NB	Ed Damazin	11° 48' 05" N 034° 21' 24" E
Central Darfur	12° 23' N 023° 18' E	SD-DC	Zalingei	12° 54' 33" N 023° 28' 14" E
East Darfur	11° 10' N 026° 30' E	SD-DE	Ed Daein <sup>5</sup>	11° 28' 02" N 026° 07' 54" E
Gedaref <sup>6</sup>	14° 15' N 035° 15' E	SD-GD	Gedaref	14° 02' 09" N 035° 23' 04" E
Gezira <sup>7</sup>	14° 36' N 033° 21' E	SD-GZ	Wad Medani	14° 23' 32" N 033° 31' 41" E
Kassala	15° 54' N 035° 39' E	SD-KA	Kassala	15° 27' 31" N 036° 23' 23" E
Khartoum	15° 48' N 033° 00' E	SD-KH	Khartoum	15° 35' 17" N 032° 32' 03" E
Northern	19° 18' N 029° 30' E	SD-NO	Dongola	19° 10' 54" N 030° 28' 37" E
North Darfur	16° 00' N 025° 30' E	SD-DN	El Fasher	13° 36' 59" N 025° 21' 23" E
North Kordofan	14° 41' N 029° 56' E	SD-KN	El Obeid	13° 10' 55" N 030° 13' 19" E
Red Sea	19° 58' N 035° 40' E	SD-RS	Port Sudan	19° 36' 56" N 037° 12' 11" E
River Nile	19° 00' N 033° 12' E	SD-NR	Ed Damer	17° 35' 56" N 033° 58' 19" E
Sennar <sup>8</sup>	13° 00' N 034° 00' E	SD-SI	Singa	13° 08' 54" N 033° 55' 52" E
South Darfur	11° 30' N 024° 40' E	SD-DS	Nyala	12° 02' 56" N 024° 52' 50" E
South Kordofan	11° 16' N 030° 50' E	SD-KS	Kadugli	11° 00' 40" N 029° 43' 06" E
West Darfur	13° 25' N 022° 40' E	SD-DW	El Geneina	13° 26' 34" N 022° 26' 56" E
West Kordofan	11° 50' N 028° 19' E	SD-GK	El Fula	11° 42' 43" N 028° 20' 46" E
White Nile	13° 30' N 032° 24' E	SD-NW	Rabak	13° 11' 17" N 032° 44' 37" E

<sup>4</sup> These are the Roman-script spellings recommended by both PCGN and BGN for UK and US use.

<sup>5</sup> Previous recommended spelling: Ed Da'ein

<sup>6</sup> The spellings Al Gedaref and El Gedaref may also be encountered for both the ADM1 and the PPLA.

<sup>7</sup> The spellings Al Gazira, El Gazira, El Gezira and Al Jazira may be encountered.

<sup>8</sup> Previously Sinnar

## Other Significant Locations

PCGN Recommended Name	Name in Arabic Script (for reference)	Conventional Name	Location	Feature Type
Bahr el Azraq (Blue Nile)	بحر الأزرق (Baḥr al Azraq) or النيل الأزرق (An Nīl al Azraq)	Blue Nile	Joins White Nile in Khartoum	River
Bahr el Abiad (White Nile)	بحر الأبيض (Baḥr al Abyaḍ) or النيل الأبيض (An Nīl al Abyaḍ)	White Nile	Joins Blue Nile in Khartoum	River
River Nile	نهر النيل (Nahr an Nīl)	River Nile	Flows through Sudan and Egypt, where it forms a delta and flows into the Mediterranean Sea	River
Red Sea	البحر الأحمر (Al Baḥr al Aḥmar)	Red Sea	22°N, 38°E	Seawater inlet
Lake Nubia or Lake Nasser <sup>9</sup>	بحيرة النوبة (Buḥayrat an Nūbah) بحيرة الناصر (Buḥayrat an Nāṣir)	Lake Nasser	22° 30' 0" N, 31° 51' 36" E	Lake
Omdurman	أم درمان (Umm Durmān)	Omdurman	15° 39' N, 32° 29' E	Populated place
Wadi Halfa	وادي حلفا (Wādī Ḥalfā)	-	21° 47' N, 31° 22' E	Populated place

<sup>9</sup> Lake Nasser is the name given to the larger portion of the lake, located in Egypt. Sudan calls the smaller part, in Sudan, Lake Nubia.

## Useful references

- Africa Geoportal – Sudan wilayah boundaries: <https://www.africageoportal.com/maps/9934a1067fe44b338fc259cc0166d63f/about>
- BBC Country Profile: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14094995>
- CIA World Factbook Sudan country summary: <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- FCDO Travel Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/sudan>
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO): [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)
- ISO Online Browsing Platform (OBP): <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui#home>
- Omniglot: [www.omniglot.com](http://www.omniglot.com) (for information on languages and scripts)
- PCGN Country Names list: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/country-names>
- Sudan Geoportal: [http://geoportal.gov.sd/about\\_en.html](http://geoportal.gov.sd/about_en.html) [currently inaccessible]
- States of Sudan (in Arabic and English): <https://www.presidency.gov.sd/ara/states-of-sudan>
- Unicode: [www.unicode.org](http://www.unicode.org)
- US Board on Geographic Names GEOnet Names Server: [Geographic Names Server \(nga.mil\)](http://GeographicNamesServer.nga.mil)
- US Library of Congress Country Study: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2014043450/>

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Compiled by PCGN  
[info@pcgn.org.uk](mailto:info@pcgn.org.uk)  
[www.gov.uk/pcgn](http://www.gov.uk/pcgn)  
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