

27 April 2023 – While the news of the ceasefire in Sudan is welcome, the attack on Sudan's health infrastructure has escalated with the occupation of hospitals in Khartoum and Sudan's central public health laboratory by parties to the conflict.

The impact of these occupations and the violation of these vital health facilities is being felt by the lack of access by patients to essential health care and in the instant halt to the testing of critically important laboratory samples.

This laboratory is known to contain measles, cholera and multi-drug resistant tuberculosis pathogens, vaccine-derived poliovirus and other hazardous materials. WHO is concerned that untrained individuals could mishandle such infectious specimens, thereby infecting themselves and then others.

Nonetheless, the greatest risks to health in Sudan remain the ongoing violence, non-functioning of multiple hospitals and clinics, limited access to clean water, food shortages, and forced displacement of populations.

Health is a human right.

I urgently appeal to all parties in Sudan to immediately vacate all health facilities and to not hinder Sudan's critical public health functions. The provision of health care, including the vital work of laboratories, must be assured.

Moreover, I call on all parties in Sudan to protect health workers and health infrastructure, and to commit to protecting health care services and public health functions in any conflict situation.

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