

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

SUDAN

FEBRUARY 16, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

SUDAN CONSOLIDATES DIPLOMATIC LEGITIMACY AND MILITARY MOMENTUM WHILE PROJECTING CIVIL STABILITY AMIDST PROTRACTED CONFLICT

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

On **February 16, 2026**, Sudanese state media projected a resurgent government transitioning from defensive to a civil restoration and international diplomatic offensive. High-profile participation in Munich and Geneva, a 'Tripartite arrangement' with US, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and commitments from **WHO** and **IOM** aim to re-legitimize the state and delegitimize the RSF as 'terrorist gangs'. Military successes in West Kordofan and civil 'law and order' efforts in safe areas like Omdurman are highlighted, alongside an economic pivot to Blue Nile mining to build a resilient 'war economy'.

MILITARY MOMENTUM: Targeted Degradation & De-legitimization



SAF DESTROYS RSF AIR DEFENSE
(West Kordofan) - Reclaiming Air Superiority



KEY GOVERNANCE: ARMED CONFLICT & MILITARIZATION

- SAF Special Task Forces (Jowala) for deep-reconnaissance.
- Moral & political messaging frames army as only legitimate power.

DIPLOMATIC LEGITIMACY: International Offensive & Statecraft

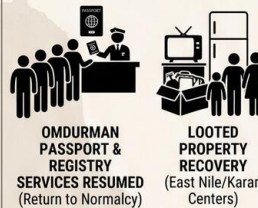


Framing conflict as global security priority; Securing health & migration deals; Tripartite for sovereign-based peace, not equal-party talks.

KEY GOVERNANCE: DIPLOMACY & GLOBAL HEALTH

- Aggressively courting Turkey & Germany for post-war expertise.
- Tripartite framework signals state is primary actor.
- WHO cooperation framed as 'Health Sovereignty' & malaria eradication project.

CIVIL STABILITY & ECONOMIC PIVOT: Restoration, Resources & Governance



BLUE NILE REGION
(95% Target Success)

ECONOMIC PIVOT TO MINING:
Resource-Driven Sovereignty & 'War Economy'

KEY GOVERNANCE: MACROECONOMICS & TRADE

- Blue Nile positioned as economic engine (Gold/Chromium).
- Shift to 'regulated mining' to replace informal sectors susceptible to extortion.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS, RISKS & FUTURE OUTLOOK

THE NARRATIVE: STATE vs. MILITIA CHAOS



Systematic de-legitimization of RSF as non-political 'outlaws'. Government projects inevitability through administrative acts.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT (Short to Long Term)



KEY RISKS & BLIND SPOTS



- Rebel Counter-Infiltration (Sleeping Cells)
- Mining Sector Instability (RSF Raids)
- Diplomatic Fatigue
- Informal Economy Collapse
- Public Health Emergency (Cholera)
- Blind Spots:** Darfur ground truth, Inflation/Currency, Wagner Group role absent, SAF internal dissent ignored.

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DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

On February 16, 2026, the Sudanese state media apparatus projected a narrative of a resurgent government successfully transitioning from a purely defensive posture to one of civil restoration and international diplomatic offensive. Central to this narrative was the high-profile participation of Sudanese officials at the Munich Security Conference and diplomatic hubs in Geneva. The state emphasized a "Tripartite arrangement" involving the United States, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia as a cornerstone of its strategic diplomacy, while simultaneously securing technical commitments from international organizations like the WHO and IOM to rebuild the country's shattered healthcare and migration infrastructure. This diplomatic push seeks to finalize the transition of the state's status from a "party to a conflict" back to a sovereign governor recognized by the international community, specifically de-

legitimizing the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) as "terrorist gangs" without legal standing.

On the military front, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) reported significant tactical successes in West Kordofan, specifically the destruction of sophisticated air defense systems used by rebel militias. These strikes are framed as part of a broader strategy to regain total air superiority and clear the path for ground liberations. Domestically, the government is making a concerted effort to demonstrate the return of "law and order" in liberated or "safe" areas such as Omdurman and the East Nile. This is evidenced by the massive effort to recover and return looted property to citizens and the resumption of vital civil services, including passport and national ID processing. Economically, the state is pivoting toward its resource-rich regions, particularly the Blue Nile, to sustain the war effort through expanded gold and chromium mining, signaling an attempt to build a resilient "war economy" independent of embattled urban centers.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

International Diplomatic Offensive

- The Sudanese delegation participated in the [Munich Security Conference](#), framing Sudan's conflict as an international security priority and securing bilateral meetings with global leaders.
- Negotiations in Geneva led to agreements with the [WHO, IOM, and UNHCR](#) for the restoration of health services and the management of displaced populations.
- The government highlighted a "Tripartite arrangement" involving the [US, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia](#) to facilitate a peace initiative based on sovereign control rather than equal-party negotiations with rebels.

Targeted Degradation of Rebel Infrastructure

- SAF forces carried out a "special operation" in [Abu Zabad, West Kordofan](#), destroying a Chinese-made mobile air defense system used by the RSF.
- Military analysts claim that [80% of the RSF's original "basic forces"](#) have been neutralized, with the remaining combatants described as foreign mercenaries or localized gangs.

Civil Restoration and Looting Recovery

- The Ministry of Interior established large-scale centers in [East Nile and Karari](#) for the recovery and return of citizen property looted during the conflict.
- Passport and civil registry services have officially [resumed in Omdurman](#), signaling a return to administrative normalcy in the capital's twin city.

Economic Pivot to Mining

- The Sudanese Mineral Resources Company reported a [95% success rate](#) in annual targets within the Blue Nile region, focusing on gold and chromium.
- Strategic plans for 2026 include opening new mining blocks and [upgrading the geological map](#) to attract foreign investment in "safe" zones.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- The SAF is emphasizing the transition of "Special Task Forces" (Jowala) into deep-reconnaissance and [behind-enemy-lines operations](#) in Kordofan and Darfur.

- Military spokespersons are utilizing "moral and political" messaging to frame the army as the only [legitimate representative of the Sudanese people](#), explicitly rejecting the RSF's legal status.

Macroeconomics & Trade

- The Blue Nile region is being positioned as the nation's economic engine, providing [80% of the country's chromium](#) and significant gold reserves.
- Government policy is shifting toward "regulated mining" to replace the informal traditional mining sectors that were [susceptible to rebel extortion](#).

Diplomacy & Statecraft

- The Sudanese state is aggressively courting [Turkey and Germany](#) for technical expertise in energy and logistics to support post-war reconstruction.
- The "Tripartite" framework is being used to signal to the African Union and UN that the [Sudanese state is the primary actor](#) in any future peace settlement.

Global Health & Biosecurity

- The government announced a strategic project for the [eradication of malaria](#), claiming that eliminating the disease would increase GDP by 40% through improved workforce productivity.
- Cooperation with the WHO is being framed as a [health sovereignty issue](#), ensuring the state controls the distribution of vaccines and treatments rather than NGOs.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Narrative of "Statehood vs. Militia Chaos"

A dominant theme across all transcripts is the systematic de-legitimization of the RSF. State media no longer refers to the RSF as a belligerent in a civil war, but as "terrorist gangs" and "outlaws" [without a political platform](#). This is paired with the physical manifestation of statehood: the resumption of passport services, the return of stolen televisions to citizens, and the collection of taxes from mines. By focusing on these mundane administrative acts, the government is attempting to project an aura of inevitable victory and administrative competence to both domestic and international audiences. The [return of citizen registry services](#) in Omdurman is perhaps the most potent symbol of this "return to normalcy."

Resource-Driven Sovereignty

The economic focus has shifted from the agricultural heartlands (which are currently battlefields) to the mineral-rich peripheries like the Blue Nile and Red Sea regions. The state is consolidating its hold on the mining sector to fund its operations. The strategic focus on [chromium and gold](#) highlights a move toward hard-commodity-backed governance. This "mining-first" strategy serves a dual purpose: it generates immediate revenue for the SAF and provides a tangible economic anchor for foreign partners (like Turkey or the Gulf states) to remain invested in the government's survival.

Information Warfare and the "Munich Offensive"

Sudan's participation in the Munich Security Conference is being framed as a breakthrough that "shattered rebel narratives." The government is using international forums to characterize the RSF as a threat to [global maritime security and regional stability](#), rather than just a local insurgent group. This attempt to globalize the threat of the RSF aims to trigger international sanctions and interdiction of the militia's supply chains, which the government claims are [supported by specific regional actors](#).

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

The internal narrative is one of "popular mobilization" (Al-Istifrar), where the citizenry is encouraged to view their struggle as one of existential survival. However, underlying the bravado are clear signs of internal strain. The massive effort to return looted property in [East Nile](#) suggests that social order was completely decimated in these areas, and the government is now in a race to restore trust before the population reaches a breaking point. The reliance on regional leaders and tribal groups, such as the [Awakening Council led by Musa Hilal](#), indicates that the central government is increasingly dependent on traditional and decentralized power structures to maintain control outside of major SAF garrisons. The state's emphasis on "martyr ceremonies" for Batch 46 [commemorating 280 fallen officers](#) serves as both a tool for nationalistic cohesion and a stark reminder of the heavy human cost the officer class is paying, which could lead to future internal friction if the war stagnates.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

Sudan's global posture is currently defined by "Aggressive Engagement." The state is no longer waiting for international mediation but is actively trying to shape it through the Munich and Geneva channels. The framing of the "Tripartite" alliance with the [US, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia](#) is a clear signal that Sudan views its future through a pro-Western/Arab bloc lens, contrasting with the RSF's alleged ties to mercenaries and non-state actors. The government is also leveraging "medical diplomacy," using its cooperation with the WHO as a way to [bypass political blockades](#) and receive technical assistance that can be dual-purposed for civil stabilization. The posture toward the African Union remain skeptical, with the state demanding a [return to the AU](#) only on its own terms and with its sovereignty fully recognized.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The Sudanese economic environment is transitioning into a bifurcated "safe zone" economy. While the national economy has suffered a massive contraction, the government is aggressively exploiting mineral resources in the East and South to maintain liquidity. The project to eradicate malaria is framed as an [economic stimulus](#) that would theoretically boost GDP by 40%, though this remains highly aspirational given the current security landscape.

Key Economic Vectors

- **Mining Output:** Blue Nile region provides [80% of national chromium](#); Mineral Resources Company achieved 95% of annual revenue targets.
- **Infrastructure Debt:** Direct appeals for international investment in [energy and clean water](#) infrastructure were made at Munich and Geneva.
- **Resource Mapping:** Modernization of the [geological map](#) is underway to identify 20+ new mining blocks for chromite and gold.
- **Civilian Property Recovery:** Massive logistical operations are underway to [return looted assets](#) to citizens, an attempt to restart localized household economies.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The day's reporting indicates a consolidation of power around the military-administrative elite, with a focus on figures who can bridge the gap between military operations and international diplomacy.

- **Dr. Kamil Idris:** Effectively acting as the state's primary international envoy, leading the [Munich and Geneva delegations](#), signaling a shift toward a more sophisticated, diplomatically-focused leadership tier.
- **General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan:** Portrayed not just as a military leader but as a [national unifier](#), visiting frontlines and overseeing civil property returns to bolster his domestic mandate.
- **Dr. Amer Mohammed Al-Hassan:** Serving as a key strategic analyst and former spokesperson, his frequent appearances provide the [intellectual framework](#) for the SAF's military operations and de-legitimization of the RSF.
- **Musa Hilal:** The leader of the Awakening Council is being brought back into the state fold as a [crucial regional ally](#) against the RSF in Darfur and Kordofan.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

Sudan TV's editorial hierarchy for the day was strictly focused on "State Resilience." The lead stories were the Munich Security Conference and the recovery of looted property in Khartoum, creating a juxtaposition of high-level international status and local "law and order." Military successes were presented as surgical and inevitable, with significant airtime given to the [destruction of RSF air defenses](#). Buried or minimized stories include the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Darfur and the specific details of civilian casualties in SAF-held areas. The tone was one of disciplined nationalism—skeptical of foreign intervention but welcoming of "sovereign-to-sovereign" cooperation. Conspicuous by their absence were any mentions of negotiations that might involve a power-sharing agreement with the RSF; the only "peace" discussed is one based on the total [dissolution of the militia](#).

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The world is framed as a theater where Sudan is fighting a "War of Dignity" on behalf of global stability against "foreign-backed mercenaries." Regional neighbors like Egypt and Saudi Arabia are portrayed as steadfast brothers, while the AU is viewed with cautious skepticism.

COUNTRIES and LEADERS

- **United States / Donald Trump:** Portrayed as a critical pillar of the "Tripartite arrangement." The mention of [Trump's leadership](#) (likely referring to the legacy of the Abraham Accords or specific 2026 US policy) suggests Sudan's reliance on US-brokered regional frameworks.

- **Germany:** Framed as a [sympathetic host](#) and potential partner in humanitarian and economic reconstruction following the Munich conference.
- **Turkey:** Characterized as a [competent partner](#) in technology, mining, and energy, with its ambassador praising the return of the Sudanese government to Omdurman.
- **Egypt and Saudi Arabia:** Framed as "principled allies" essential to the [security of the Red Sea](#) and Sudan's sovereign integrity.

NON-STATE & CORPORATE ACTORS

- **Rapid Support Forces (RSF):** Consistently framed as ["terrorist gangs," "outlaws," and "foreign mercenaries"](#) with no legitimate political or military standing.
- **WHO/UNHCR/IOM:** Portrayed as [technical providers](#) that are now properly coordinating with the "legitimate" Sudanese state rather than operating independently.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The Sudanese state is engaged in a high-intensity psychological operation to maintain domestic morale. The "Property Recovery" broadcasts are a classic example of narrative seeding, where individual citizens are shown [reuniting with their belongings](#) to create a sense of inevitable SAF victory. The media is also weaponizing "legalism," arguing that because the RSF was dissolved by law, [they no longer exist](#) in the eyes of international law. This is a deliberate tactic to preempt any international pressure for power-sharing. The delta between this media "spin" and ground truth likely lies in the actual extent of SAF

control; while the media portrays Omdurman as "safe," the continued focus on [air defense strikes](#) in nearby Kordofan suggests the conflict remains highly fluid and dangerous.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Consolidation of a "Safe-Zone State":** The government will likely continue to formalize its administration in the East and North, effectively creating a "Sudan State" that ignores the conflict zones in the West except for aerial bombardment. This would lead to a de facto partition.
- **Escalation of Air Warfare:** Having targeted RSF air defenses, the SAF is likely preparing for a major [aerial offensive](#) to break the siege on Khartoum and El Obeid.
- **Mineral-for-Arms Swaps:** The aggressive push for mining in Blue Nile suggests the state will increasingly trade [gold and chromium](#) directly for military hardware from partners like Turkey or regional actors, bypassing traditional financial systems.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Expect a surge in civilian property returns and a propaganda push showing the [resumption of schools and hospitals](#) in Omdurman to attract displaced persons back to government-held areas. Military operations will likely focus on neutralizing remaining RSF mobility in Kordofan.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The "Tripartite" diplomatic track will likely lead to a [formal peace proposal](#) that demands RSF surrender as a prerequisite for any political talks. New mining concessions in the Blue

Nile will likely be signed with foreign (likely Turkish or Chinese) firms.

Long Term (1-5 Years): Sudan may transition into a highly militarized, resource-dependent state similar to regional models where the military controls [key industrial and mineral sectors](#) to ensure regime survival against future civil unrest.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Rebel Counter-Infiltration:** The push to bring civilians back to Omdurman and East Nile creates a risk of [RSF sleeper cell infiltration](#) disguised as returning citizens. Triggers: A major bombing or assassination in a "liberated" zone. Likelihood: High. Impact: High social destabilization. Mitigations: Strict biometric screening at civil registry points.
- **Mining Sector Instability:** The reliance on Blue Nile mining makes these sites high-value targets for RSF raids or sabotage. Triggers: An [RSF offensive toward Damazin](#). Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: Economic collapse of the war effort. Mitigations: Deployment of dedicated Mineral Protection Forces.
- **Diplomatic Fatigue:** The "Munich Offensive" may fail if Western partners see no progress in SAF ground operations. Triggers: Continued [stalemate in Khartoum](#). Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: Loss of international technical support. Mitigations: Demonstrable military "wins" in the next 30 days.

- **Informal Economy Collapse:** As the state formalizes mining, traditional miners may [revolt or defect](#) to the RSF if their livelihoods are threatened. Triggers: New restrictive mining regulations. Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: Localized insurgencies in safe zones. Mitigations: Profit-sharing agreements with local tribal leaders.
- **Public Health Emergency:** The focus on malaria eradication may be undermined by the total [collapse of the sanitation infrastructure](#) in war zones. Triggers: A cholera outbreak in Omdurman camps. Likelihood: High. Impact: Massive civilian fatalities and loss of state legitimacy. Mitigations: WHO-led emergency water projects.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- The transcripts do not mention the [actual ground situation in Darfur](#), which likely remains a catastrophic blind spot for the government's narrative of national control.
- There is no information on the [current rate of inflation](#) or the value of the Sudanese Pound, which is critical for assessing domestic stability.
- The role of Russia and the [Wagner Group \(or its successors\)](#) is conspicuously absent from the military analysis of RSF capabilities.
- The broadcasts fail to address the [level of dissent](#) within the SAF junior officer corps regarding the protracted nature of the urban war.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

The "Potemkin State": The recovery of property and resumption of services in

Omdurman may be a purely performative "Potemkin village" strategy designed to lure international aid. The ground truth might be that the [government control is tenuous](#) and solely reliant on heavy artillery rather than actual administrative presence. In this scenario, an RSF surge could collapse the "safe zones" overnight.

The "Mining Trap": The pivot to mining in Blue Nile may be driving local communities [into the arms of the RSF](#) due to environmental degradation and state land-grabs. What the government portrays as "economic success" might actually be the fuel for a second front of the civil war in the South.

Black Swan Event: A successful [assassination of a top military leader](#) (like Burhan) while on a "morale visit" to a supposedly safe Omdurman registry office. This would trigger an immediate power vacuum and potential civil war within the SAF.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- Leverage the [Munich momentum](#) to secure non-military technical assistance that builds state capacity (e.g., judicial training for property disputes).
- Ensure that any "Tripartite" negotiations include [tribal leaders like Musa Hilal](#) to prevent them from becoming future spoilers.
- Formalize the "Mineral for Health" track with the WHO to ensure humanitarian aid supports long-term state [healthcare sovereignty](#).

For Private Sector/Investors:

- Opportunities exist in the [mining tech sector](#) in Blue Nile, but investors must demand sovereign guarantees and private security escorts.
- Regulatory compliance in Sudan is shifting rapidly toward [state-monopolized sectors](#); companies must align with the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company to ensure legal safety.
- Supply chains for [energy and water infrastructure](#) projects in "safe zones" (Omdurman, Port Sudan) will have high government priority and potential sovereign funding.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

The government is using executive decrees and the military council's authority to rewrite the legal framework for the wartime economy, particularly regarding [resource extraction and property rights](#).

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**
 - **Mineral Resources Act 2026 (Proposed):** A move to centralize all traditional mining into the [regulated Sudanese Mineral Resources Company](#) to capture tax revenue and prevent rebel extortion.
 - **The Civil Registry Restoration Decree:** Mandating the [re-issuance of IDs and passports](#) from Omdurman as the only valid legal documents for international travel.

• HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **Munich Press Briefing:** Dr. Kamil Idris detailing the [Sudan Peace Initiative](#) and de-legitimizing the RSF.
- **East Nile Citizen Forum:** Police officials explaining the [logistics of returning recovered TVs and appliances](#) to over 1,500 families.
- **Mining Sector Annual Review:** Dr. Mohammed Rahim Mohammed detailing the [95% achievement of mining targets](#) in Blue Nile.

KEY STORIES

- **Munich Security Conference Delegation:** Sudan's participation in the global summit to advocate for [sovereign legitimacy](#) and highlight the "Tripartite" US-Egypt-Saudi peace framework.
- **East Nile Property Recovery:** A massive police operation in [Khartoum State](#) to return looted household goods to citizens, aiming to restore civil order.
- **Blue Nile Mining Success:** Reporting on the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company's [95% success rate](#) in the Blue Nile region, focusing on gold and chromium as war finance.
- **Kordofan Air Defense Strike:** SAF destruction of [RSF air defense platforms](#) in West Kordofan using precision strikes to reclaim air superiority.
- **Omdurman Service Resumption:** The official reopening of [passport and civil registry services](#) in Karari, Omdurman, processing over 1,500 daily applications.
- **Tripartite Peace Initiative:** Analysis of a [US-led \(Trump-linked\) diplomatic track](#) to stabilize Sudan through a three-way agreement with Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

- **Malaria Eradication Project:** A strategic initiative launched with [WHO support](#) to eliminate malaria and boost national GDP by 40%.
- **Batch 46 Martyr Commemoration:** A high-profile event honoring [280 fallen officers](#) from the Sudanese military college, emphasizing the army's sacrifice.
- **Awakening Council Integration:** Musa Hilal's public [denunciation of the RSF](#) and alignment with the state's "War of Dignity."
- **Turkish-Sudanese Energy Cooperation:** Negotiations with Turkey for [clean energy infrastructure](#) projects in "safe" northern and eastern states.
- **Al-Siyal Project Launch:** Development of an [agricultural and humanitarian hub](#) in South Madani to support displaced populations.
- **Karari ID Issuance:** The start of [national ID card issuance](#) for citizens who lost documents during the occupation of Omdurman.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

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