

## UN urges Sudan to carry out "credible" investigation into killing of Nyala protesters

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August 3, 2012 - (KHARTOUM) - United Nations human rights body, the [High Commissioner for Human Rights \(OHCHR\)](#) urged the Sudanese government to launch an independent investigation into the [killing of protesters, mainly high school students, during anti-government demonstrations](#) in South Darfur.

"We urge the Government to promptly launch an independent and credible investigation into the violence and the apparent excessive use of force by security forces," said Ravina Shamdasani, who was speaking to reporters in Geneva.

"We call on the Government to unequivocally condemn excessive use of force to suppress protests, and to hold accountable those who were responsible for the fatalities and injuries," he added.

Sudanese authorities said eight people were shot dead by the police on 31 July when school students took the street, for the first time in Darfur region since the start of [anti-austerity protests](#) in the country on 16 June 2012.

Sudan's justice minister formed an investigation committee to probe the circumstances that triggered the use of live ammunition against peaceful protesters. The five-member panel are also tasked to prosecute the responsible parties for excessive use of violence before the courts.

Amnesty International (AI) on Thursday said Nyala Public Hospital had confirmed the wounds of the bodies admitted to the morgue were consistent with those caused by 5.56mm and 7.62mm automatic rifles.

In Paris, the French foreign ministry said deeply concerned by the crackdown on Nyala protests.

France "took note of the Sudanese government's willingness to launch an investigation to determine those responsible for shooting into the crowd," said the statement which urged Khartoum to prosecute the "perpetrators in the timeliest fashion".

The OHCHR, on the other hand, urged Khartoum to respect the "legitimate right" of people to freedom of expression and assembly.

[High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay](#) had earlier called on Sudanese authorities to ensure that demonstrations are allowed to proceed peacefully and for restraint from all sides.

Shamdasani called on the Sudanese authorities to "immediately and unconditionally" release the protesters detained from the Nyala protests, adding that that human rights staff of the hybrid peacekeeping mission in Darfur ([United Nations - African Union Mission in Darfur](#)) will continue to monitor the situation.

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