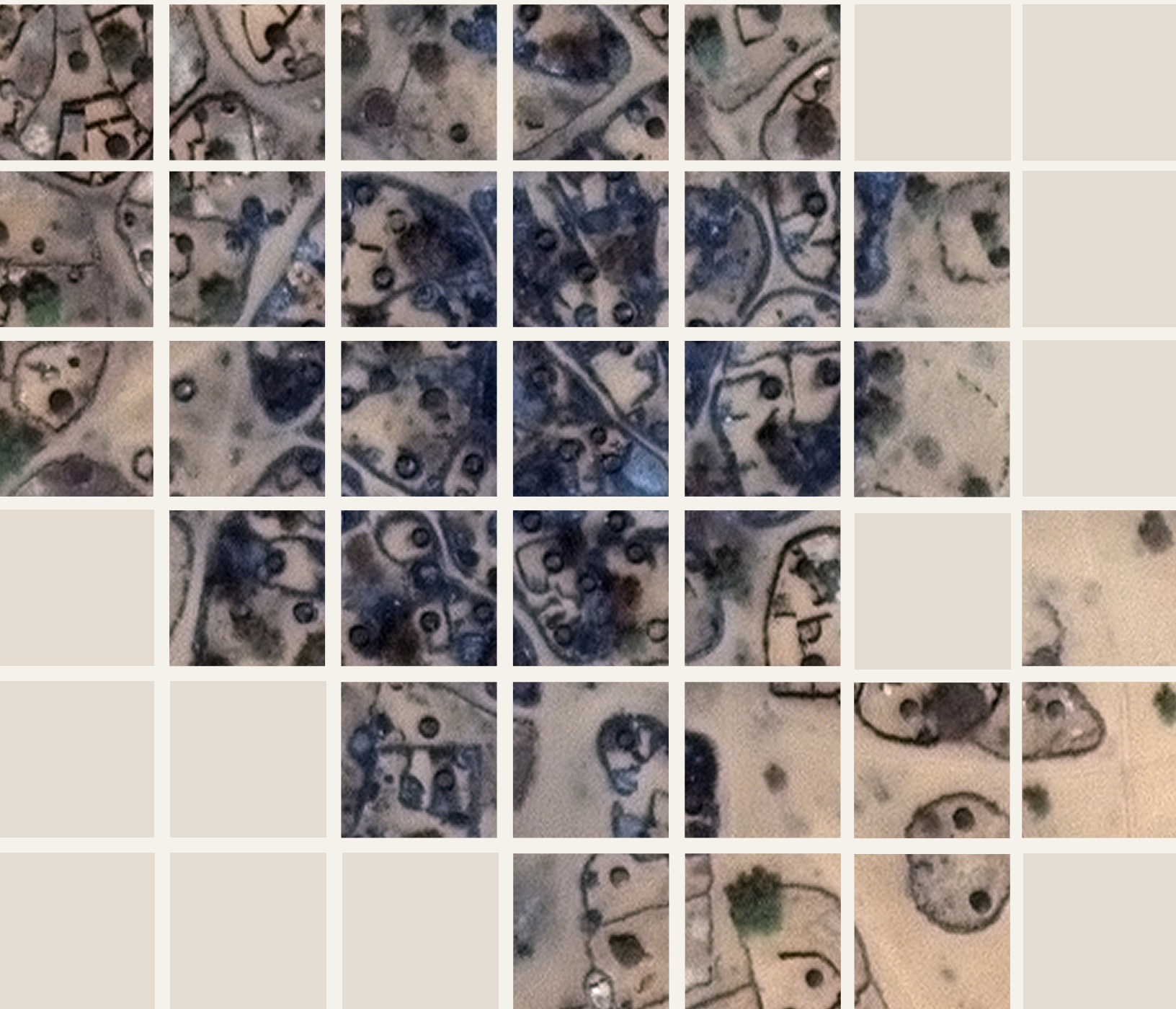


Bombed & Burned

Darfuri Civilians Flee East Jebel Marra En Masse



Satellite Sentinel Project

Monitoring the Crisis in the Sudans

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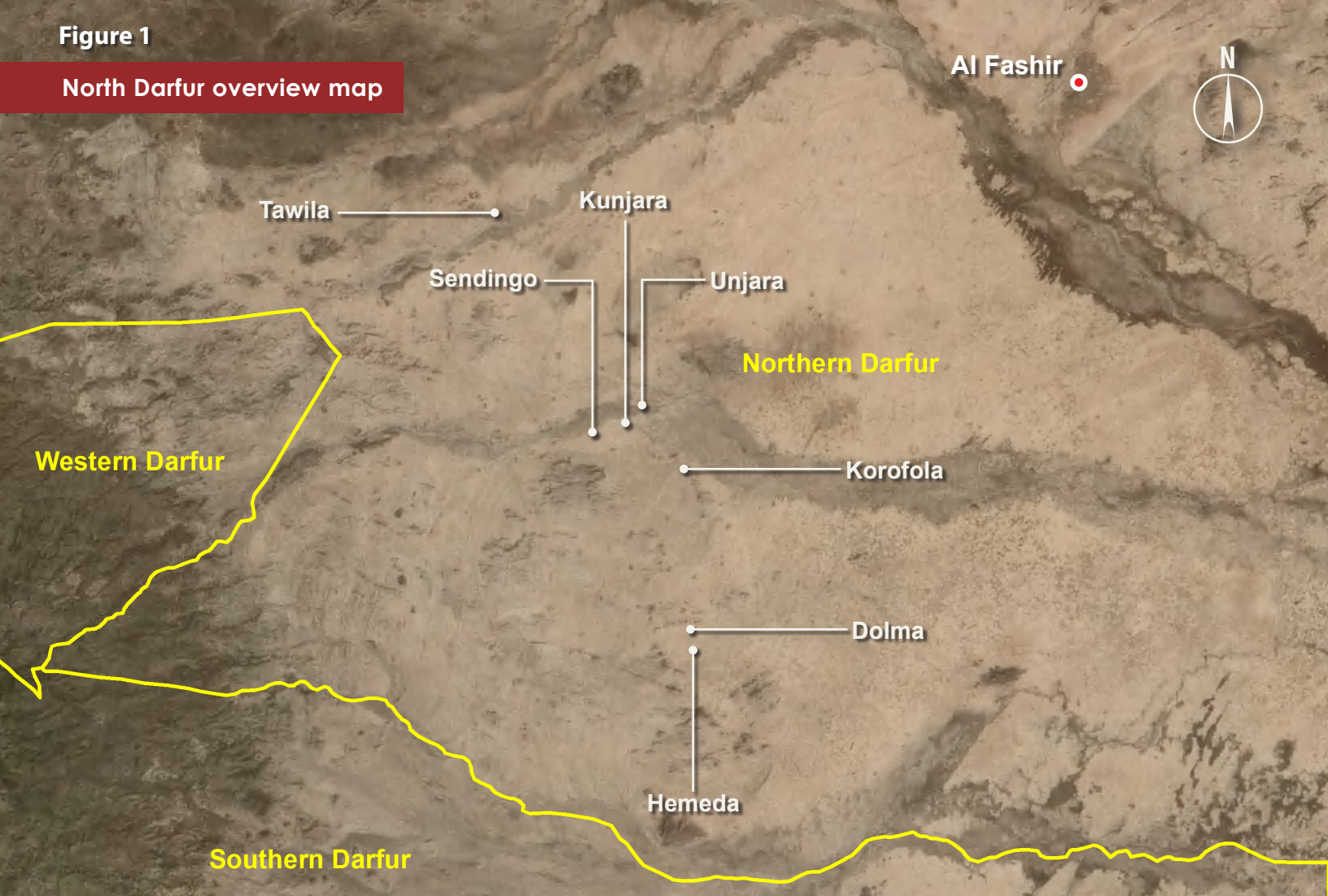
March 2014

COVER: DigitalGlobe imagery of Hemedra, North Darfur State, Sudan, from March 21, 2014.

Satellite Sentinel Project

Figure 1

North Darfur overview map



Boundaries and names used on this map for illustration purposes only

Introduction

New Satellite Sentinel Project (SSP) imagery provides independent confirmation of Sudan Air Force (SAF) bombardments in the mountainous Jebel Marra area of North Darfur, where civilians have been bombed for years.¹ (see Figure 1) The use of indiscriminate aerial bombardment in densely populated areas like East Jebel Marra constitutes a war crime under international law.² With these images, showing at least 17 bomb craters across six villages, SSP has confirmed the government's long-standing practice of indiscriminately dropping bombs that devastate civilians living in the area solely because it is currently controlled by rebel forces.

Ground attacks led by reconstituted Janjaweed forces are exacerbating the impact of the government's aerial bombardment campaign. DigitalGlobe Intelligence Solutions' (DGIS³) analysis of satellite imagery found evidence of both air strikes and ground attacks—some in the same location.

Figure 2

Overview of Dolma



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
February 5, 2014



Dolma, North Darfur State, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014

Villages burned in Janjaweed attacks

As SAF air strikes escalate, Sudanese government-backed Janjaweed militias are also burning and destroying villages in the area⁴ at a magnitude not seen since 2003. SSP imagery from March 21, 2014 shows more than 311 huts burned in six villages in East Jebel Marra.

DGIS found approximately 95 burned huts in the south-central section of Dolma, a small village approximately 63 kilometers southwest of the North Darfur capital of Al Fashir. The huts were burned between February 5 and March 21, 2014. (See Figure 2)

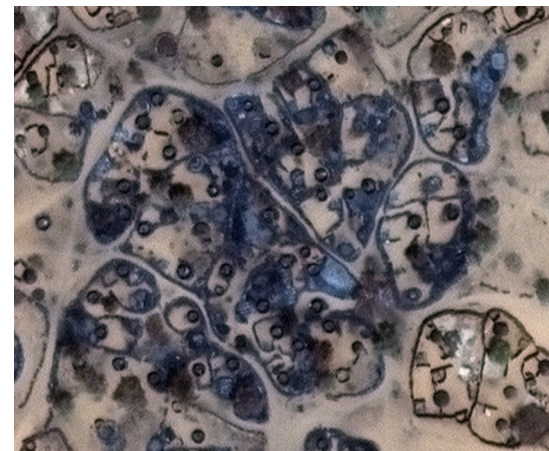
Some 6,000 government-backed Janjaweed fighters called the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) or Rapid Response Force (RRF) are attacking civilians and torching homes throughout the area.⁵ Adding a deadly new dimension to the violent attacks in Darfur, North Darfur's political power struggles for control of the state⁶ are pitting armed militias against one another as intercommunal clashes also erupt.

Figure 3

Overview of
Hemeda



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
February 5, 2014



Hemeda, North Darfur State, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014

According to eyewitness reports from March 16-20,⁷ the paramilitary RSF, a newly reconstituted Janjaweed force backed by the Sudanese government, are conducting vicious ground attacks as SAF conducts heavy airstrikes in this area.⁸

Striking among the damage visible from the sky, approximately 126 huts were torched in Hemeda, a town located two kilometers south of Dolma and 65 kilometers southwest of Al Fashir. A comparison of imagery between February 5 and March 21 shows that most damage was concentrated in the village center. (See Figure 3)

Before moving into North Kordofan and Darfur,⁹ the RSF had led attacks for the Sudanese government on rebels in South Kordofan¹⁰ and Blue Nile states. In late February RSF attacked more than 35 towns in South Darfur, killing and raping civilians as they torched homes.¹¹ RSF attacks across North Darfur have destroyed 16 villages west of Mellit town and 25 towns north of Kutum.¹²

Figure 4

Overview of
Unjara



Burned huts

Unjara, North Darfur State, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014

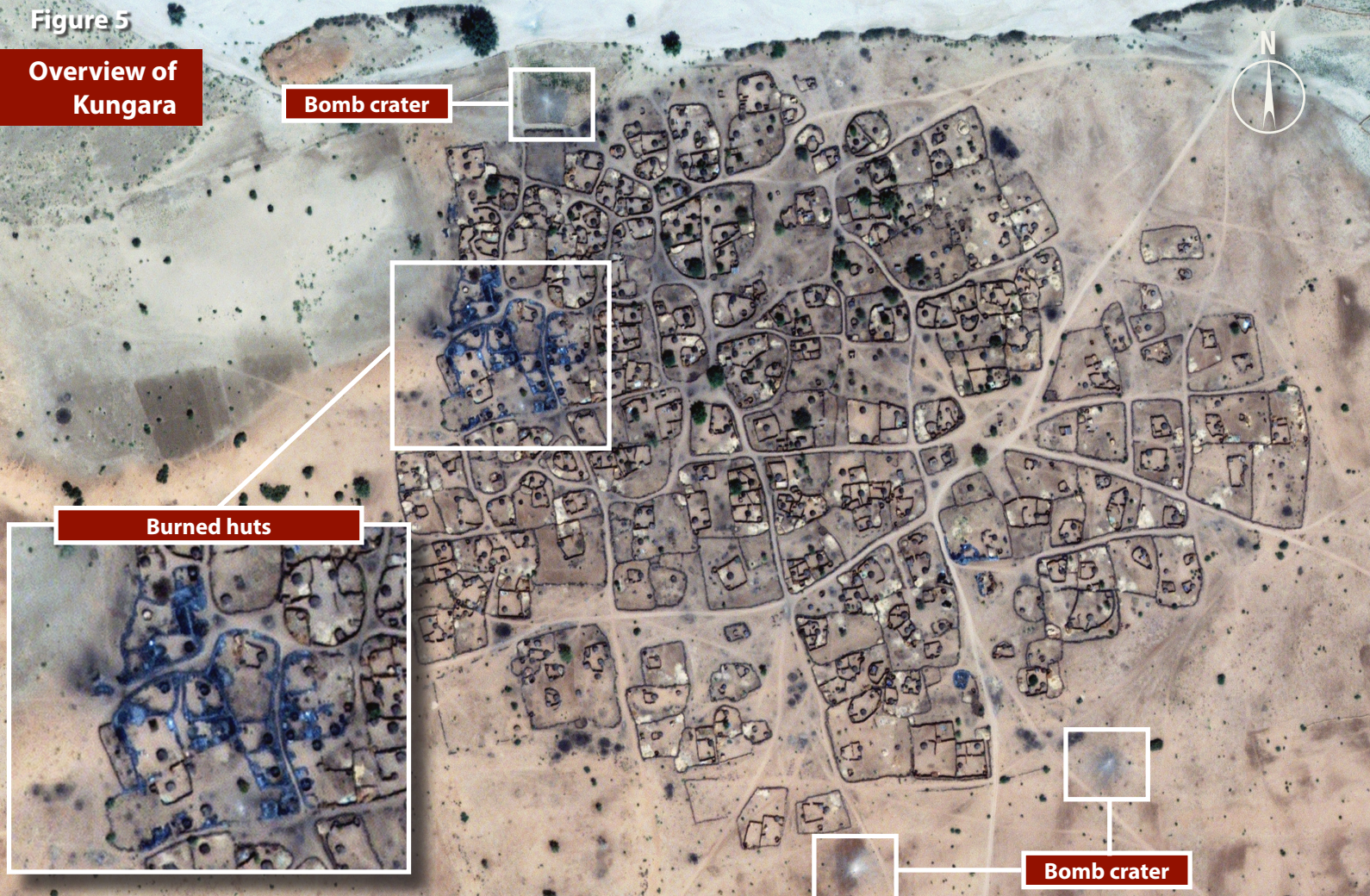
Approximately 20 huts were destroyed in the western part of Unjara, located approximately 51 kilometers west-southwest of Al Fashir. (See Figure 4)

Humanitarian organizations estimate 215,000 people are newly displaced across Darfur since the beginning of the year, with 146,000 people displaced from North Darfur areas.¹³ Some 35,000 newly displaced families, mostly children and women without food and water, are reportedly moving east toward the North Darfur capital of Al Fashir after fleeing villages burned to the ground near the town of Tawila.¹⁴

Elsewhere, the RSF ambushed and destroyed a camp for internally displaced people in South Darfur on March 22, burning to death a sheikh, abducting local leaders, destroying water sources, and torching homes and a hospital.¹⁵ The attack has displaced thousands of people, including many into North Darfur.¹⁶

Figure 5

Overview of
Kungara



Kungara, North Darfur State, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014

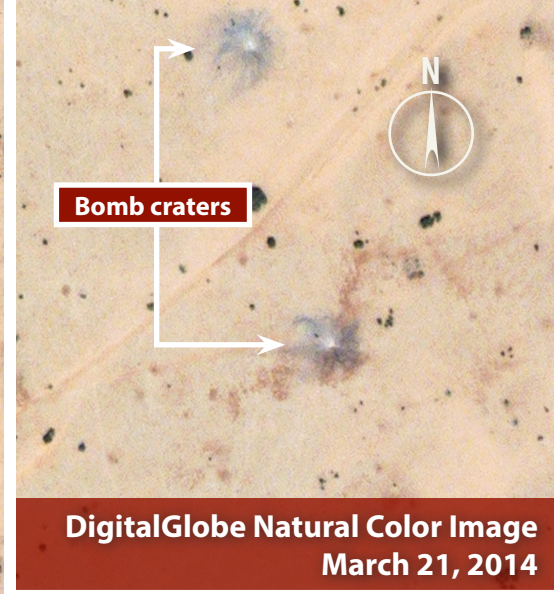
SAF air strikes

East Jebel Marra witnesses describe escalating, continuous successions of air strikes.¹⁷ Their accounts highlight SAF's "indiscriminate shelling towards the surrounding villages and farms almost daily" and intensifying bombardments for several consecutive days.¹⁸ In an area that has been under attack for years, the pattern of bombardment evident in the recently acquired satellite imagery confirms the indiscriminate nature of the attacks, offering further evidence of SAF war crimes in the area.

Confirming news reports,¹⁹ approximately 57 huts were burned on the western side of Kungara, also spelled Konjara. (See Figure 5) The town lies two kilometers southwest of Unjara and approximately 53 kilometers west-southwest of Al Fashir. Three more burned huts were observed throughout other areas of the small village. In addition to the burned huts, several munitions craters were identified around the perimeter of Kungara.

Figure 6

Overview of Sendingo



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014



Sendingo, North Darfur State, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014

Three munitions craters were observed on DigitalGlobe imagery acquired on March 21, 2014 just outside of the Sendingo, a town located 3 kilometers west of Kunjara and approximately 56 kilometers west-southwest of Al Fashir. (See Figure 6)

Aerial bombardment is a consistent feature of life in Jebel Marra, where Darfur rebel groups have retained control for years. Although they do not typically hold territory in Darfur, Jebel Marra has been a significant stronghold for a coalition of long-standing allies called the “Darfur joint resistance forces.” The groups, which are currently engaged in an active campaign against SAF, are also fighting to repel the recent RSF attacks.²⁰ The rebel coalition, all non-signatories to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, includes the Sudan Liberation Movement led by Abdel Wahid El Nur (SLM-AW), SLM-Minni Minawi (SLM-MM), and others.

Figure 7

Overview of
Korofola



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
February 5, 2014



Korofola, North Darfur State, Sudan
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image
March 21, 2014

Confirming news reports,²¹ DGIS analysis found evidence of indiscriminate bombing one kilometer north of the town of Korofola (also spelled Korofala), a town 51 kilometers southwest of Al Fashir. Five munitions craters are situated in a linear pattern, spaced consistently apart. This pattern indicates a multi-munitions airstrike in which bombs were delivered by aircraft, one after another, consecutively. Ten huts in Korofola were also found burned since February 5. (See Figure 7)

Civilians throughout East Jebel Marra and in other nearby North Darfur areas are being killed, wounded, beaten, kidnapped, and robbed in these attacks as they are massively displaced from towns under siege. In some places, internal fighting among forces loyal to rebel leader Abdel Wahid El Nur has also driven thousands from their homes and resulted in the deaths and injuries of civilians and torching of two large markets.²²

Conclusion

DigitalGlobe Intelligence Solutions estimates that the bomb craters visible in the imagery have appeared in the past two weeks, and sources within Sudan tell the Enough Project that SAF is now intensifying its air strikes on the area. East Jebel Marra is already suffering from a humanitarian blockade since, for years, government restrictions have prevented international aid workers from bringing food, medicine, or fuel.

The people of East Jebel Marra have withstood years of indiscriminate aerial bombardments and a blockade on humanitarian aid. Janjaweed forces now further threaten the survival of the most vulnerable people in this area, many of whom have been displaced repeatedly and isolated from life-saving assistance.

1. See research and analysis by Eric Reeves, including data on aerial attacks through June 5, 2012, available at <http://www.sudanbombing.org/>.
2. For a discussion of indiscriminate attacks as war crimes under customary international law see the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), "Definition of Indiscriminate Attacks," available at http://www.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_cha_chapter3_rule12 (last accessed March 2014). See also ICRC, "Protection of civilian persons and populations in time of war," available at <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/misc/57jmjv.htm> (last accessed March 2014).
3. DGIS was formerly known as DigitalGlobe Analytics.
4. Eric Reeves, "Khartoum's Assault on Humanitarian Organizations in Darfur Continues," March 19, 2014, available at <http://sudanreeves.org/2014/03/19/khartoums-assault-on-humanitarian-organizations-in-darfur-continues/>; Radio Dabanga, "Darfur's East Jebel Marra residents still prohibited from buying fuel, food, medicines in Tabit," March 9, 2014, available at <https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/68462>; SUDO UK, "Pro Government militias known as Rapid Support Forces Attack Civilians in North and South Darfur 23 March 2014," March 23, 2014, available at <http://www.sudouk.org/updates/2014/pro-government-attack-civilian-in-north-and-south-darfur.html>.
5. Sudan Democracy First Group, "Darfur: Three Intense Weeks of Deadly Violence and Destruction," March 17, 2014, available at <http://www.sudaneseonline.com/cgi-bin/esdb/2bb.cgi?seq=msg&board=10&msg=1395073432&rn=0>; Eric Reeves, "Janjaweed in Darfur Reconstituted as the 'Rapid Response Force,'" February 28, 2014, available at <http://sudanreeves.org/2014/03/01/janjaweed-in-darfur-reconstituted-as-the-rapid-response-force/>; Sudan Democracy First Group, "Rapid Support Forces in South Darfur," March 17, 2014, available at <http://www.sudaneseonline.com/board/10/msg/1395074607.htm>.
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7. Radio Dabanga, "Jebel Marra bombardments, attacks on Darfur towns intensify," March 20, 2014, available at <https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/69364>; Radio Dabanga, "Darfur's East Jebel Marra bombed after attacks," March 17, 2014, available at <https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/69118>; Radio Dabanga, "10,000 flee militia attacks on Darfur's East Jebel Marra," March 16, 2014, available at <https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/69023>.
8. Radio Dabanga, "Darfur's East Jebel Marra bombed after attacks."
9. Radio Dabanga, "\$3 million for withdrawal of North Kordofan's Janjaweed," February 14, 2014, available at <https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/66767>; Radio Dabanga, "Fear among South Darfur displaced as Rapid Support Forces arrive," February 24, 2014, available at <https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/67490>.
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11. Ludovica Iaccino, "Darfur Rampage: Government-Backed Militia Rapes and Kills Dozen," International Business Times, March 3, 2014, available at <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/darfur-rampage-government-backed-militia-rapes-kills-dozen-1438667>.
12. Radio Dabanga, "Dead, injured as more than 16 villages attacked in North Darfur," March 18, 2014, available at <https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/69196>; Radio Dabanga, "Attacks in North Darfur's Kutum displace more than 30,000," March 17, 2014, available at <https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/69111>.
13. U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Humanitarian Bulletin: Sudan" Issue 11, March 10-16, 2014, available at http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/OCHA_Sudan_Weekly_Humanitarian_Bulletin_Issue_11_%2810-16_March_2014%29.pdf.
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19. Radio Dabanga, "10,000 flee militia attacks on Darfur's East Jebel Marra"; Radio Dabanga, "Darfur's East Jebel Marra bombed after attacks"; Radio Dabanga, "Darfur's East Jebel Marra bombarded again; thousands displaced."
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21. Radio Dabanga, "Darfur's East Jebel Marra bombarded again; thousands displaced."
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Satellite Sentinel Project
conducts regular, intensive
monitoring of Sudan and
South Sudan to assess the
current human security
situation and identify
potential threats to
civilians.

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