

Sudan Conference

May 27-29, 2011 in Hermannsburg, Germany

It is a fool who rejoices, if the neighbour is in trouble (African proverb)

Sudan in Transition 5: From Enemies to Good Neighbours?

After the Referendum for South Sudan: Two new countries, new hopes and fears

How best to contribute to peaceful Nation building

Organised by Sudan Forum e.V, and Sudan Ecumenical Forum/ Sudan Focal Point-Europe

Communique

An urgent call for peace and reconciliation

We, 140 participants of the Sudan Conference from 16 countries, representing Sudanese civil society and political parties, faith based organisations from inside and outside the Sudan, International Non Governmental Organisations and Institutes, Governments and Government agencies, after lengthy and frank discussions of the current and possible future socio-political situation in Sudan and particularly preparations for the forthcoming independence of South Sudan, the postponed Referendum for Abyei, events around the recent elections in South Kordofan; the Popular Consultation processes in Blue Nile and South Kordofan, as well as the situation in Darfur, are deeply concerned that

The coming few weeks will be decisive for whether after July 9 there will be two nations on the way to peace, development, democracy and justice, or whether all efforts shall have been in vain, and the people will be dragged into new wars once again. We urgently call for reconciliation on all levels and for a process of healing of memories.

Being aware that there are only a few weeks left to the independence of South Sudan, but armed conflicts having arisen after the peaceful Referendum, and LRA is continuing targeting civilians in Western Equatoria; the severe violence and human rights violations in Abyei; the Popular Consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile being behind schedule, alarmed by the severe human rights violations, the humanitarian situation and suffering of the people in many parts of the country, concerned about the lack of a genuine democratic transformation processes, and conscious of the lessons to be learned from neighbouring countries, we commit ourselves and call upon all stakeholders, governments, political parties and civil society organisations in and outside the country, **to put the citizens, their rights and physical security at the centre of attention, and to step up efforts to genuinely reconcile and to safeguard a peaceful transition and future for all people in North and South Sudan.**

We call upon the government of Sudan and the government of South Sudan to immediately stop all hostilities. We call for a withdrawal of the Sudan armed forces from **Abyei**, and SPLA to refrain from entering to the region, and for immediate unhindered humanitarian access. We recommend the resolution for the Abyei conflict in the spirit of the CPA and the ruling of the Permanent Court for Arbitration.

We call for a political dialogue between and within all political parties in **Southern Kordofan**, to reconcile their differences, and to start the process of Popular consultation.

But we note with concern, that the process of **Popular Consultations** might not meet the aspirations of the people in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, and that the bill does not provide a mechanism of arbitration in case the people feel their views are not taken serious.

We call upon the Government of Sudan to stop aerial bombardment and all forms of violence targeting civilians in **Darfur**, and to fully facilitate the work of humanitarian agencies. We ask the conflicting parties to respect human rights and international Humanitarian laws, to stop abducting people and endangering humanitarian workers and peacekeepers. We call upon the Government of Sudan and the armed groups in Darfur to pursue a genuine peace dialogue and to obtain the support of the civil society through participation in the peace process. We urge the mediators to avoid repeating the mistakes of the failed Abuja peace process, by keeping absolute neutrality, to regain and maintain trust, and to refrain from working out separate agreements with the warring parties.

We are alarmed by the fact that time is running out to settle the outstanding issues for the **post referendum settlement**, namely citizenship, boarder demarcation and wealth sharing We urge the

partners to the CPA, the NCP and the SPLM, to find timely solutions to the benefit of all people, and call upon the parties to provide an open and transparent process, keeping the citizens informed.

To safeguard the arrangements to be reached, and to **protect the civilians**, we call for the de-politicisation of armed forces in Sudan and to build up non-partisan conventional forces. The Governments of North and South Sudan have the prime responsibility to indiscriminately protect all civilians, and we vehemently urge them to ensure the protection of civilians. Only in the event they fail, international forces shall be involved. A new UNMIS mandate should take the successful Civilian Protection Monitoring Team (CPMT) and the Joint Military Commission (JMC) as the better exemplary model.

To avoid new conflicts and ensure sustainable peace, natural resource management and equitable sharing of resources should be a top priority at all levels in society – starting from the bottom-up. Oil is a key element for the wealth sharing arrangements. Whatever the outcome, issues of the severely affected **environment** with serious consequences for human beings as well as livestock, the compensation for lost land and property, and the transparency of contracts urgently need to be addressed.

The governments in North and south Sudan have been working on new Interim Constitutions in a non inclusive way. We call for a **process of constitution making** in both north and south that should be:

- Democratic involving all section of society, people driven leading to democratic transformation as people lead and internalise their rights and duties;
- Participatory, open and transparent in that people have the freedom to express their opinion and get included in the draft
- The people should own the process, the constitution itself and be ready to defend it against military and civilian coups;
- The process should not be hurried but should really be given time such that the majority of the people can participate.
- The Sudanese in north and south should dispose themselves to benefiting from the experiences of others as not to repeat their mistakes.

We also note with concern the lack of **development and the worsening humanitarian situation** in many places in Sudan, which constitute a further obstacle to a peaceful future. We urge the Governments in Sudan, and international and national NGOs, to regard the needs of the people with long term and flexible programs, including follow up activities, in a co-ordinated effort, based on proper analysis of needs, human resources, the social context and with the full involvement of local communities.

But all efforts will be in vain, if the people of Sudan will not be given the chance of genuine peace-building, Reconciliation as well as trauma healing, and to define their own destiny. Faith based organisation are well placed to keep on being engaged. We call for the full support to enabling and conducting such processes, which may require long term processes to result in proper Nation building in peace and justice.

Signed on behalf of the participants and organisers, Hermannsburg, Germany, May 29, 2011



Marina Peter, Sudan Forum e.V., SEF/SFP-E, June 27, 2010