



THIRD MEETING OF THE SUDAN–SOUTH SUDAN CONSULTATIVE FORUM

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 29 MARCH 2012

COMMUNIQUÉ

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1. The Sudan – South Sudan Consultative Forum (SSSCF), initially established as the Sudan Consultative Forum on 8 May 2010, held its third meeting at the African Union (AU) Headquarters in Addis Ababa, on 29 March 2012. The meeting was co-chaired by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, and the United Nations (UN) UnderSecretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous.
2. In addition to the AU and the UN, the following states and organizations participated in the meeting: (i) neighbouring countries of South Sudan and Sudan (namely Chad, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda); (ii) Benin, as the Chair of the AU; (iii) the permanent members of the UN Security Council – UNSC (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) , as well as South Africa and Togo as AU Member States on the UNSC ; (iv) Qatar, as facilitator of the Darfur Negotiation Process, and other bilateral partners, namely, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Japan, India, Italy, Norway, Saudi Arabia and Turkey; (v) the Intergovernmental Authority on Development – IGAD (Secretariat and Chair); (vi) the World Bank, the League of Arab States, and the European Union (EU).
3. The meeting was convened to review progress made and challenges encountered in the post-secession negotiations between the Republic of South Sudan and the Republic of Sudan and in the search for lasting solutions to other situations of concern, as well as to strengthen mutual understanding and identify common ground on the support SSSCF members can give to the two countries as they strive toward a peaceful and prosperous future.
4. Participants heard presentations from the representatives of the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan. These were followed by an interactive discussion. Participants also received presentations from the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Sudan and South Sudan, the AU/UN Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the Head of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).
5. Participants welcomed the Republic of South Sudan to the Consultative Forum, and congratulated the Government and people of South Sudan on achieving independence. Participants recognized the gracious manner in which the Government of Sudan had recognized the outcome of the referendum.
6. Regarding the post-secession negotiations, Participants stressed the overriding principle guiding the relations between Sudan and South Sudan, namely the establishment of two viable and mutually supportive states, at peace with one another. This principle was agreed by the Parties in 2010 and endorsed by the AU and UN.

7. Participants commended the efforts of the AUHIP in facilitating the negotiations on post-secession issues, with due respect for the territorial integrity of both countries, and noted that the technical work to identify and develop mechanisms for resolving each of the issues under discussion has been done. What is needed now is the political will and leadership by Sudan and South Sudan to take the steps that we all recognize to be necessary.

8. Participants commended the Parties for reaching agreement on a number of outstanding issues of the post-secession negotiations, and for the new spirit of cooperation displayed during the last round of negotiations in mid-March. They welcomed the significant progress made on security arrangements, including the 29 June and 30 July 2011 Agreements on Border Security, and the February 2012 Memorandum of Understanding on Non-Aggression and Cooperation. In this regard, Participants stressed the importance of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism (JPSM), which is the principal mechanism between the two states, charged with oversight on all security matters, and urged the Parties fully to operationalize it as soon as possible. Recalling UN Security Council resolution 2032 (2011) of 22 December 2011, Participants urged the Parties to resolve outstanding issues relating to the operationalization of Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM) and noted the readiness of UNISFA to support it.

9. On Abyei, Participants commended UNISFA for its support in maintaining a secure environment in the area, and the work of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) in addressing outstanding issues. They also welcomed the efforts of UNISFA to create a conducive environment for inter-community dialogue, as a prelude to reconciliation between the NgokDinka and Misseriya communities. At the same time, Participants noted with concern the deadlock between the Parties in taking action to implement fully the 20 June 2011 Agreement *on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of Abyei Area*, and called upon them immediately to redeploy all armed forces from the area and to establish the Abyei Administration, which is essential to provide an environment for the return of refugees and displaced persons, the safe migration of pastoralist groups, and the commencement of recovery activities. Participants stressed the need for frequent and regular meetings of the AJOC to address all outstanding issues, and appealed to both Presidents to address as soon as possible the issues blocking the full implementation of the 20 June Agreement. They also stressed the urgent need for international humanitarian access and assistance to facilitate the return of displaced communities.

10. Participants drew particular attention to the issue of oil and Transitional Financial Arrangements and the importance of ensuring that the people of the Sudan and South Sudan did not suffer further from the shutdown of oil production and lack of agreement on these issues. In particular, they noted that the Parties had agreed that the economic gap in Sudan, consequent on the secession of South Sudan, should be bridged by three mechanisms, namely domestic measures taken by the Government of Sudan, transitional financial transfers from South Sudan, and international assistance. They expressed strong support for the sustained efforts of the AUHIP to find a compromise solution acceptable to both Governments.

11. Participants welcomed the progress made by the Parties in initialling an important agreement on nationality issues and the status of citizens of one country resident in the other. They welcomed the plans to convene, with the assistance of the AUHIP, the first meeting of the Joint High-Level Committee that is to oversee the implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Status of Nationals of the Other State. In the light of the impending end of the transition period for the regularization of the status of nationals in the other state, on 8 April 2012, Participants urged the Parties to extend the deadline, to enable nationals of the other state to obtain the documentation necessary for their regularization.

12. Participants also welcomed the initialing of the Agreement on the Demarcation of the Boundary and Related Issues, and called upon the Parties immediately to begin its implementation. Additionally, they stressed the need to agree to a process for resolving the status of the disputed areas along the common border, noting that this will go a long way towards addressing the security concerns along the border of the two countries.

13. Participants noted that, during almost two years of negotiations, the Parties' approach has been characterised by distrust and tactical considerations at the expense of the strategic interest of the two countries and the rights and welfare of their citizens. They emphasized that this approach increases the risk of armed conflict (as demonstrated by the very unfortunate and recent incident at the border between the two countries), in which neither Sudan nor South Sudan would be able to respond to the daunting challenges of development, democratization and good governance that confront them. Failure by the Parties to act swiftly and in the desired direction risks weakening international attention and support to peacemaking and peacebuilding in Sudan and South Sudan, with dire consequences for the two countries and the region as a whole. Participants therefore called on the Parties to sustain the new spirit of cooperation as articulated in the negotiations of mid-March.

14. Against this background, Participants stressed the need for the Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan to convene the planned Summit meeting as soon as possible, with the intention of moving rapidly to agreement on all outstanding issues. Participants and the international community as a whole expect Presidents Omar Hassan Al Bashir and Salva Kiir Mayardit to demonstrate the required spirit of compromise and commitment to good neighborliness, in order speedily to conclude negotiations on all outstanding issues, as the only way for the two countries to achieve their goals in terms of security, democracy and development, and meet the most basic needs of their peoples.

15. With regard to Darfur, Participants welcomed the signature by the Government of Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), on 14 July 2011. Participants stressed that the DDPD provide the basis for reaching a comprehensive political settlement to the Darfur conflict and welcomed steps taken by the AU and UN in support of further negotiations with non-signatories and the holding of an internal dialogue. Participants commended the two signatories for having undertaken a number of steps toward the implementation of the DDPD and expressed their readiness to support them further in implementing those aspects of the Agreement necessary to bring

concrete peace dividends to the people of Darfur, including returns and recovery. In this regard, Participants commended the efforts of the Implementation Follow-up Commission (IFC) to ensure the effective implementation of the DDPD. They stressed that a durable resolution of the Sudanese conflict in Darfur require that a holistic agreement among Dafurians be an integral part of a national process, and expressed their support of further efforts by the AUHIP toward this end.

16. Participants deplored the continued violence in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, its impact on the humanitarian situation of the affected civilian population and the fact that this conflict was souring relations between Sudan and South Sudan. Participants welcomed the initiative taken by the AU, the Arab League and the UN on humanitarian access, and urged the Government of Sudan to work with these organizations toward finalizing the initiative and implementing it without delay. Participants noted that the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile required a political resolution, and called upon the Parties to resume negotiations without further delay, under the auspices of the AUHIP.

17. Participants expressed concern that instability in some South Sudan states, Jonglei in particular, militia, and inter-communal conflict continued to threaten security. Participants reiterated their support to measures taken by the Government of South Sudan towards voluntary disarmament and in addressing the political, economic and social root causes of communal violence.

18. Participants emphasized the need to promote inclusive governance and democratic reforms in both Sudan and South Sudan, which would allow them to address the root causes of their internal conflicts.

19. Participants agreed that the co-chairs of the SSSCF will consult on the date and venue of its next session.