



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Sudan

*3029th FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 26 July 2010*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council recognises the enormous challenges facing Sudan over the forthcoming months while noting the opportunities that exist for securing lasting peace and stability for the Sudanese people. In the context of this critical period, during the final stages of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the Council underlines the EU's readiness to support:
 - the upcoming referenda processes in South Sudan and Abyei through substantial technical and financial assistance,
 - peaceful implementation of the CPA, reaching an agreement on post-referendum issues and working towards long term regional stability,
 - the work of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel,
 - capacity building and assistance to meet the challenges faced by South Sudan,
 - efforts to address insecurity and reach a lasting peace settlement for Darfur,
 - the work of the International Criminal Court,
 - continued development and humanitarian assistance across Sudan.

P R E S S

The EU reiterates its commitment to coordinate closely with the Sudanese parties, the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), IGAD, the United States and other national, regional and international partners.

2. The Council reiterates its strong support to the full and timely implementation of the CPA, including the holding of the referenda on Abyei and on self determination in South Sudan in January 2011. The Council expresses concern over the delays and urges the Sudanese parties to make progress in key areas of CPA implementation such as the finalisation of the border demarcation and the organisation of the Abyei referendum. The Council calls upon the Sudanese authorities to continue the preparations for credible and inclusive popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile.
3. Ensuring peaceful and constructive relations between the parties irrespective of the outcome of the referendum is of crucial importance for the people of Sudan and the wider region. The Council welcomes the recent formal launch of the negotiations on post-referendum issues, engaging the main parties in Khartoum and Juba and calls on all parties to strive for inclusiveness in this process. The Council stresses the importance of reaching agreement before the referendum on South Sudan's self determination. It supports the AU High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan under the aegis of former President Thabo Mbeki. In that vein the Consultative Forum for Sudan plays a crucial role in supporting the efforts of the Sudanese parties to fulfil their commitments. In addition, the Council stresses the important role of the Assessment and Evaluation Commission.
4. The Council welcomes the establishment of the South Sudan referendum commission in view of preparing the referendum in South Sudan and urges all actors to expedite further preparatory work in particular with regard to voter registration. The EU remains fully engaged in supporting the preparations of the referendum, notably in close collaboration with UNMIS (United Nations Mission in Sudan). The Council underlines the importance of transparent and credible referenda which clearly reflect the will of the people and whose outcomes are accepted by all.
5. The Council expresses its readiness to send an EU Election Observer Mission to Sudan on time to observe all steps of the referendum process, including voter registration, and looks forward to receiving an early invitation from the Sudanese authorities. It recalls the recommendations made by the EU Election Observer Mission in the follow-up to the Sudanese elections in April 2010 whose central aspects should be taken into account when preparing for the referendum. This includes in particular the necessary improvements regarding voter registration, the neutrality of security services and armed forces, freedom of media and respect of Human Rights and regarding the transparency of the overall process.

6. The Council recognises that South Sudan faces significant development challenges regardless of the outcome of the referendum. The Council urges the Government of South Sudan to actively consider how it will address these challenges, notably those related to governance, rule of law, capacity building and the capability to deliver basic social services. The EU is strongly committed - through Union instruments and bilateral cooperation by Member States – to support the Government of South Sudan in addressing these issues. The EU also remains committed to intensive political dialogue with the Government of Sudan in Khartoum on issues of mutual concern.
7. The Council expresses concern about a pattern of increasing political repression and the deteriorating environment for civil and political rights in all areas of Sudan. It is, in this respect, deeply concerned about the recent closure of newspapers and the arrests of a number of journalists. It remains greatly concerned about the overall human rights situation in Sudan, particularly as regards Human Rights Defenders. Specific attention should be paid to the protection of children affected by armed conflict.
8. The Council calls on all parties to end hostilities in Darfur and is increasingly concerned about the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation. Attacks on civilians and on United Nations - African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) constitute a war crime. The increasing cases of abductions of humanitarian aid workers, both Sudanese and international staff, are unacceptable. The Council emphasises the particular responsibility of the Government of Sudan to take effective action against perpetrators and to bring an end to impunity. The Council calls upon all parties including the Government of Sudan to allow urgent, unimpeded access to all populations in need of humanitarian assistance. The Council supports the important role of UNAMID in Darfur, reaffirms the priorities of protecting civilians and enabling humanitarian access and calls on the Government of Sudan to remove all obstacles to UNAMID's full and proper discharge of its mandate.
9. The Council calls for increased international efforts in support of the ongoing AU/UN initiatives towards an inclusive political solution in Darfur, addressing the root causes of the conflict, ensuring the protection and promotion of human rights, justice and reconciliation and adequate participation of civil society. It expresses support for the AU/UN Mediation and welcomes its achievements so far, including efforts for increased participation of Darfurians, especially women, civil society organisations and internally displaced persons and refugees, in the peace process.
10. The Council welcomes the signing of a framework agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement towards a global peace agreement, calls on other rebel groups to join the negotiations and stresses the need for an all inclusive process that would lead to the conclusion of a comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur.

11. The EU remains committed to responding to the humanitarian needs in all parts of Sudan. Moreover, the Council recalls its decision on mobilizing decommitted funds from the 9th EDF (EUR 150 million) to address the needs of the most vulnerable populations in Sudan, in particular in the war-affected areas, including the South of Sudan and Darfur, in the border regions between North and South Sudan (the Three Areas) and in East Sudan. The funding complements ongoing development and humanitarian programmes in Sudan, including over EUR 500 million in development assistance committed since 2005 and over EUR 750 million in humanitarian assistance since 2003. In addition, support is provided under the Instrument for Stability (EUR 15 million) for the provision of basic services in South Sudan and the referendum process.
 12. The Council recognizes the regional complexity and the internal and cross-border implications of conflicts, as well as the challenges related to the Nile water resource issue. The EU will ensure enhanced diplomatic efforts with the AU, League of Arab States (LAS), IGAD and the East African Community (EAC) to foster regional integration.
 13. The Council recalls that war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes of genocide are the most serious crimes of concern to the international community and that impunity for these crimes can never be accepted. The Council reiterates its support for the International Criminal Court (ICC) and calls upon the Government of Sudan to cooperate fully with the ICC in accordance with its obligations under international law."
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