



## Planning for Peace in Darfur

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There has been measurable progress over the past few months on resolving the crisis in Darfur - the GOS has accepted UNSCR resolution 1769 and released Suleiman Jamous, the major rebel factions met in Arusha in August, and talks are now set for Libya.

But we have a lot of work to do between now and the start of talks in late October  
Several critical issues and challenges lie ahead:

- Participants should be realistic about the talks, not everyone will get everything they want and expectations are very high
- Rebels need to repair internal divisions and hammer out a common position before talks
- All invited rebels need to attend the talks
- Violence needs to stop - both the government and rebels have been launching attacks and this is incredibly damaging
- We need to find a way to include voices of ordinary people in Darfur - IDPs, tribal leaders, Arab groups, women, local NGOs - in the talks
- The international community needs to continue to use all our pressure and leverage to keep the talks moving in a positive direction
- And we cannot forget that peace in Darfur, and ultimately all of Sudan, hinges on the successful implementation of the CPA

#### What do we want out of the talks?

At a minimum, any new agreement must address the core needs of ordinary people in Darfur, including:

- Effective security arrangements that offer civilians protection from marauding government backed militias and bandits and that take heavy weapons out of the hands of the government backed militias and rebel forces
- Compensation for victims of the crisis
- Guarantees of land and property, which affect livelihoods
- Reconstruction and long term development to address one of many causes of the conflict

These are the issues that IDPs raised with me and other envoys in the camps.

Ultimately, what will truly transform Darfur, along with the rest of Sudan, are successful elections in 2009 as stipulated under the CPA. Guarantees on how those elections will be run should be a focus of the negotiations, which will address some of the rebel demands on power-sharing.

Finally, we need to carve out a clear role for AU-UN peacekeeping forces in implementing the peace agreement.

We have two important earlier agreements, the CPA and the DPA, which serve as evidence that it is possible to negotiate a political settlement to resolve Sudan's profound problems.

If the Sudanese government made a more serious effort to implement the provisions of these two agreements, it would be a powerful incentive to the rebels to negotiate more seriously.

#### Who will participate?

##### **Rebels**

Ironically, one of the biggest obstacles to the talks right now is not the government of Sudan. It's a handful of rebel groups. Some rebel groups are acting responsibly and trying to participate in the process. Others are refusing to participate, despite significant international pressure.

Still others continue to use violence to enhance their position prior to the talks. Particularly disturbing in this regard is the recent attack by the JEM and SLA/Unity in Kordofan that killed over 40 police officers and triggered retaliatory government bombings in Haskanita.

For those rebels who are committed to talks, we must ensure that they have the help and space they need for internal dialogue so that they can consolidate their positions prior to the start of negotiations.

Despite important progress in Arusha, there are still serious divisions among rebel groups and between political leaders and field commanders. We must work to find a way to help the rebel groups repair these divisions and establish effective channels of communication.

##### **Civil Society**

On a recent trip to Darfur, my most important discussions were with tribal elders, people in camps, women's groups, and local NGOs. They are frustrated with political bickering among rebel leaders and if the rebel leaders don't step up and represent them on the issues they care about most - security, compensation, the return of their land, and development - they are ready to represent themselves.

##### **Arab Groups**

Another obstacle to peace is escalating violence among Arab tribes in Darfur. They are fighting over land they have taken from Africans, they are fighting over Arab-owned land, and in some cases, they have joined the rebels and turned their weapons against the government.

Hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced this year, and a lot of that displacement can be traced to Arab on Arab violence.

Many Arabs in Darfur did not participate in janjaweed atrocities and do not believe the government represents them. We must be sure that Arab tribes are included in talks or the war may continue regardless of a political settlement.

#### What is the role of the international community?

One of the most encouraging developments has been watching the international community come together in support of current AU and UN efforts. China has played a very useful role behind the scenes in using its leverage to get the government to accept UNSCR 1769 and to participate in upcoming talks. It has also committed 300

engineering troops to the Hybrid Force.

We have also used our influence to press rebel leaders to attend talks and to encourage the GOS to take constructive steps, such as the recent release of Suleiman Jamous. One of the major topics of discussion for the upcoming New York talks will be how we as an international community continue to use our influence and leverage to keep the talks on track and keep all the parties at the table.

Together with our allies, we are discussing measures, including sanctions, to discourage anyone, on any side, from taking actions that jeopardize the talks. This includes the Government of Sudan, rebel groups, and breakaway rebel factions who signed side deals with Khartoum for personal gain.

#### **Comprehensive Peace Agreement**

Let me make a final point on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which while not the focus of this talk, is a key requirement for any lasting peace in Sudan. Implementation of the CPA is significantly behind schedule, and its failure risks a return to war between the north and south.

The CPA is an historic agreement, but significant obstacles remain in terms of implementation including:

- Limited progress on Abyei, one of the three disputed areas of great traditional importance to the largest southern tribe
- The failure of the GOS to redeploy forces by the July 9 deadline
- Delays in the formation of Joint Integrated Units
- Delays on key legislation and funding needed for the census and elections

We must all do our part to get the CPA back on track, and we are hopeful that incoming SRSG Ashraf Qazi will be helpful in this regard. We also must reinvigorate the Assessment and Evaluation Committee (AEC) mandated to monitor CPA implementation.

#### **Conclusion**

In closing, let me say that I am more optimistic now than I have been in a long time. But it is a guarded optimism. We have seen some improvement on the part of the Government of Sudan - they have accepted the Hybrid, improved the operating environment for aid agencies, and have agreed to talks - something I was not sure would happen several months ago.

Many important rebel factions are committed to talks and are doing the hard work necessary to build unity and develop a common negotiating position. Important voices that were not included in the Abuja round of negotiations - IDPs, women's groups, tribal leaders, and local NGOs - are explicitly included in this round of negotiations.

And the international community is united behind the AU-UN team and is committed to taking necessary positive and negative measures - including the possibility of new sanctions - to ensure that talks stay on track.

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