

Sudan Troika. Joint Statement on Abyei, Southern Kordofan Elections, and Doha Peace Talks

Following is the text of a joint statement by the Sudan Troika (United States, United Kingdom, and Norway) on recent developments in Sudan, following the visit by Troika Development Ministers from May 7-8:

As we enter the final two months of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement's Interim Period, we call on the CPA parties to intensify their negotiations to finalize arrangements that will provide the basis for two stable, secure, and viable states living in peace with one another and their neighbors. We applaud the progress the parties have made thus far with the facilitation of the Africa Union High-Level Implementation Panel, but note that much work remains to be done. We call on the parties to approach the next two months with a renewed sense of urgency to resolve key outstanding issues, especially the future status of Abyei, before the end of the CPA.

We are especially concerned about the alarming situation in Abyei. Recent actions by both CPA parties run counter to President Bashir and President Kiir's agreement to resolve the situation peacefully through negotiation and the assistance of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel. The introduction by both sides of armed forces into Abyei has caused violence, including the death of 11 Northern JIU members, and more suffering for the local population. The parties should desist from these actions which represent a clear violation of the CPA. Moreover, at this critical stage we call on the leaders of the North and the South to refrain from inflammatory language and other acts that provoke the other side. We welcome agreement reached May 5 to immediately implement the Kadugli Agreements and withdraw illegal troops from Abyei. We also welcome the May 8 and 9 joint technical committee meetings held in Kadugli and Abyei, and urge the parties to ensure that the committee expeditiously fulfills its mandate to remove all illegal troops from Abyei. We urge both sides to avoid further escalation that could endanger the peaceful atmosphere of the CPA and ultimately make resolution of the Abyei issue more difficult. We reaffirm our commitment to support a peaceful negotiated final solution to the status of Abyei that builds on the CPA and is consistent with the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

We welcome the peaceful completion of polling for Southern Kordofan's elections, but are concerned about rising tensions in the state due to a delay in the announcement of preliminary results. We call on local and national leaders to take immediate steps to improve the security situation and exercise control over all armed security elements. We also call on the parties to work together to maintain calm as the preliminary results are announced and to refrain from prematurely declaring electoral victories. The parties should work together to resolve any election disputes peacefully through the courts. In order to maintain stability and promote long-term cooperation, they should build an inclusive government no matter the outcome. It is critical that the elections pave the way for the start of Southern Kordofan's popular consultations, which remain an important outstanding element of the CPA.

We have been encouraged by the recent renewal of face-to-face negotiations between the Government of Sudan (GOS) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in Doha. However, these talks have once again broken down due to inflexibility on each side. We urge GOS and JEM to re-launch these negotiations as soon as possible. The GOS, JEM and Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) must all seize upon this moment to bring lasting peace to Darfur by working to achieve an inclusive political agreement and a ceasefire. To do so, they must deal with the core pending issues in an expedited manner. We believe all Darfuri armed movements that remain outside of the Doha process should come to Doha, and welcome the invitations sent by the AU/UN Joint Mediation and Government of Qatar to several groups, notably the Sudan Liberation Army factions of Abdel Wahid Al Nur and Minni Minawi. We strongly encourage these leaders to associate themselves and their movements with these talks.

*Norwegian Foreign Minister Støre, UK Foreign Secretary Hague, U.S. Secretary Clinton;
May 10 2011*