



Security Council

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Identical letters dated 3 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Allow me, as Chair of the Group of Arab States, to express the Group's deep appreciation for your intensive efforts to find sustainable solutions to the unfolding situation in the Sudan. The Group supports the efforts of the current Government of the Sudan to strengthen peace, security and stability in Darfur in accordance with the Juba Peace Agreement of October 2020, in which the Government aspires to play the lead role in cooperation with its partners in the peace process.

In view of the current discussions in the Security Council on renewing the mandate of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to Security Council resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#), I should like, on behalf of the Group of Arab States in New York, to clarify the position of the Group, which is based on the resolutions of the League of Arab States at the ministerial and summit levels and can be summarized as follows.

1. The Security Council adopted resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) imposing sanctions on the Sudan in 2005, against the backdrop of heavy armed conflict in the Darfur States between the Sudanese Government forces and the opposition forces at that time. The resolution was adopted in view of the complex humanitarian situation resulting from that conflict. The Security Council imposed an arms embargo on Darfur and introduced targeted sanctions against individuals believed to have influenced the course of events.

2. Given the nature of the current security and political situation, not only in Darfur but in the Sudan as a whole, the sanctions imposed on the Sudan under Security Council resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) are no longer commensurate with the facts on the ground today, as compared with 2005 when they were imposed. Darfur has been able to move beyond the state of war and the previous security and political challenges. The transitional Government has made considerable efforts to strengthen peace, security and stability in Darfur. Chief among those efforts was the achievement of the Juba Peace Agreement in October 2020. The Government is currently working to implement the provisions of the Agreement, in cooperation with its partners in the peace process, with a view to achieving a sustainable peace in Darfur. Moreover, under the Juba Peace Agreement, former leaders of armed groups have been appointed to governmental, ministerial, regional and state-level positions. There is no longer, as there was in the past, a war between the Sudanese Government and armed movements in Darfur that would cause the Security Council to need a Panel of Experts to monitor the implementation of sanctions.



3. The Sudanese Government has put in place several plans and measures to tackle the political, security and humanitarian situation in Darfur. The transitional Government has adopted a national plan to collect unlicensed weapons. It has carried out a campaign and collected large numbers of weapons, which were disposed of and destroyed in the presence of a significant number of foreign ambassadors accredited to Khartoum and representatives of United Nations entities and other international organizations. The purpose of the plan is to put an end to threats against civilian lives. Its implementation will definitely help strengthen stability and security, ultimately bringing an end to any potential threats.

4. At the humanitarian level, the Government has adopted decisions and guidelines to guarantee freedom of movement and access for humanitarian organizations. There are no longer any bureaucratic or procedural obstacles that could hinder humanitarian action. For instance, access has been facilitated to regions controlled by the Abdul Wahid Muhammad al-Nur movement in Darfur and the Abdelaziz al-Hilu movement in South Kordofan. The Panel of Experts reporting to the Security Council thus no longer has anything to monitor or observe. In the meantime, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) has been established. It includes United Nations agencies and programmes, and its mandate and strategic priorities include humanitarian affairs.

5. The Juba Peace Process relies on a comprehensive, practical approach aimed at tackling the roots of the conflicts in Darfur. It includes five components to cover the five main tracks. Another, distinct agreement was reached concerning national issues involving the future governance of the country, its constitution, and equitable political participation. Eight protocols were concluded addressing power-sharing; wealth-sharing; ceasefires and security arrangements; justice, accountability and reconciliation; compensation and reparations; development of the nomadic and herder sector in Darfur; land and *hawakeer* (traditional tenure rights); and internally displaced persons and refugees.

6. The Sudanese Government is acting out of a sense of responsibility and national duty. In so doing, it relies on limited financial resources, as the international community has not fulfilled its pledges with regard to the peace process in Darfur. The Sudanese Government has repeatedly announced that it is committed to implementing the Agreement as provided and to tackling the remaining social and security challenges. Numerous reconciliation conferences have taken place in recent months among tribes in West and South Darfur, leading to tangible successes in addressing certain disputes regarding land and the return of displaced persons and refugees to their villages. Some recent reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council have emphasized the considerable positive effect of those reconciliation processes, which have helped bring back security and stability to Darfur.

7. It would have been logical and objective to end the mandate of the Panel of Experts before – or, at the latest, concurrently with – the end of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). At that stage, the justifications for retaining the Panel no longer applied; Darfur had moved from a peacekeeping phase to a peacebuilding phase. Nevertheless, the Panel's mandate was extended in Security Council resolution [2526 \(2021\)](#) for another year, up until March 2022. It was then extended again until March 2023. The new mandate includes, among others, follow-up to implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement and the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians in Darfur. The following points should be made:

(i) The Juba Peace Agreement includes a mechanism for monitoring implementation, namely the mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the Peace Agreement. Alongside the three guarantors, namely South Sudan, the United Arab Emirates and Chad, it is composed of neighbouring States, the African Union, the

United Nations, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the European Union. That is the mechanism defined by the signatories to the Agreement.

(ii) There is also a high-level mechanism for following up the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians in Darfur. The mechanism is under ministerial oversight and includes all relevant ministries and bodies. The mechanism has formulated a plan for the protection of civilians, which was transmitted to the Security Council. The mechanism submits periodic reports to the Security Council concerning implementation of the plan. It forwards copies of those reports to the Chair of the sanctions committee. The most recent such report was submitted in February 2023.

8. On 15 February 2022, pursuant to Security Council resolution [2620 \(2022\)](#), the mandate of the Panel of Experts was renewed for one year, up until March 2023. The outcome was linked to progress on benchmarks including political and economic governance issues; transitional security arrangements in Darfur; the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians in Darfur; and transitional justice and accountability. Those benchmarks are mostly not realistic, and could not be met even in some developed States.

9. The aforementioned information shows that there is no justification for keeping the Panel or the sanctions regime in place. Accordingly, we call on the Security Council to bring an end to the mandate of the Panel and lift the sanctions regime in its entirety. The Government of the Sudan has realized many achievements, including the following:

- Strengthening social peace and coexistence in Darfur, reconciliation processes, and civil administration meetings;
- Introducing practical programmes for transitional justice, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and addressing security breaches;
- Formulating a comprehensive civilian protection plan that has been transmitted to the Security Council;
- Establishing a National Peace Commission;
- Promoting the law on pastoralism and trails in order to curb friction between farmers and pastoralists, and identifying ways to secure the trails;
- Endeavouring to address environmental instability resulting from climate change;
- Establishing a national commission on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration;
- Distributing the second instalment of peacekeeping cars and vehicles, and establishing a civilian protection unit;
- Building capacities of members of regular forces;
- Securing camps for displaced persons and voluntary return villages;
- Fostering compliance with international law among leaders of displaced persons; establishing judicial institutions; providing legal advice and guidance to civil society organizations;
- Training the police to combat sexual violence.

10. The lifting of the sanctions imposed under Security Council resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) and relevant resolutions would enable the Sudanese Government to rebuild the capacity of its security forces and law enforcement agencies to maintain and promote peace, not only in Darfur but the entire region. The lengthy borders in the region are sometimes used by criminal gangs to engage transnational organized criminal

activities, including trafficking in persons and weapons. Sanctions have a direct and negative impact on the stabilization process.

11. The Group of Arab States strongly supports the legitimate requests made by the Sudan for the immediate lifting of the sanctions, without prior conditions or benchmarks, exactly as the Security Council has previously done in resolution [2444 \(2018\)](#). By so doing, the Council can enable the Sudanese Government to play an active regional role, as it did in the Political Agreement for Peace in the Central African Republic and the South Sudan peace agreements.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and circulated as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Alya Ahmed bin Saif **Al-Thani**
Permanent Representative
