



## SIX MONTHS BEFORE CRITICAL REFERENDUM, SUDAN ALARMINGLY UNPREPARED

### **Ahead of major summit, new report warns that inadequate preparation is harming chance of credible referendum**

(14 July 2010) With six months until a referendum on Southern independence, Sudan is alarmingly unprepared according to a new report published today by a global coalition of 26 humanitarian and human rights organisations. The report calls for urgent action from African heads of state who will meet shortly at a major summit of the African Union in Uganda from 19 – 27 July. Ahead of the summit, international Sudan envoys will meet in Khartoum on 17 July.

In their new joint report *Renewing the Pledge: Re-Engaging the Guarantors to the Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement*, the global coalition warns: “*The clock is ticking fast towards what might be the most important date in modern Sudanese history – two referenda in Sudan that are likely to result in the breakup of Africa’s largest state.*” In addition to the referendum on Southern independence, another vote will be held simultaneously in the area of Abyei, to determine whether or not it will join Southern Sudan.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed on 9 January 2005, ending a civil war that lasted decades and killed nearly 2 million civilians. But few of the outstanding issues, such as agreements on oil and borders which were to be negotiated after the signing of the CPA, have been resolved. The CPA expires in less than a year, at which point all interim arrangements will run out.

A range of states and multilateral organizations, called Guarantors, pledged to help Sudan implement the CPA. The report warns that the Guarantors have only six months to fulfil that promise.

*“The CPA has held North and South Sudan together and ended one of the deadliest conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. A failed referendum could plunge Sudan back into war once more. The international community must now capitalise on the opportunity provided by the CPA and ensure that a free and fair referendum occurs,”* said Osman Hummada, Executive Director of the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies, a member of the coalition.

*“An agreement to share the revenues from oil was instrumental in achieving peace between north and south Sudan. As preparations begin for the referendum and possible Southern independence, it will be vital to resolve outstanding issues around oil in order to avert a return to war,”* said Rosie Sharpe from Global Witness, a member of the coalition.

While timelines slip in the South, violence has intensified in Darfur and human rights are being trampled in the North. The report warns that, over the past year, *“international attention has focused on Southern Sudan, neglecting the most important lesson of the past years: that Sudan’s multiple conflicts are best addressed holistically.”* The focus on Southern Sudan has come at the expense of other important issues such as democratic transformation, the unresolved conflict in Darfur, and other marginalized parts of Northern Sudan, including Eastern Sudan and the Three Areas.

The report also calls for Sudan to ensure that all Sudanese citizens, whether in the North or the South, are protected before and after the referenda. *“Threats that Southerners in the North might be deported or stripped of their citizenship if Sudan breaks up are deeply disturbing”* said Joel R. Charny, Vice President for Policy from Refugees International, a member of the coalition. *“With 1.5 -2 million South Sudanese in the North and a considerable number of Northerners in the South, this issue must be addressed before the referendum”* he continued.

The report contains a range of recommendations to the Guarantors to ensure a free and fair referendum is held on schedule. The report’s recommendations to the Guarantors include calls to:

1. Use the upcoming Consultative Forum meeting in Khartoum in July 2010 to agree to an urgent expansion of national and international efforts to prepare for peaceful, credible and timely referenda.
2. Restate publicly, clearly and collectively the internationally recognized right of the Southern Sudanese to self-determination. At the African Union Summit in Uganda from 19 – 27 July 2010, African Heads of State should reaffirm their unequivocal support for the right of Southern Sudanese to self-determination and pledge to recognize either outcome of a free and fair referendum.
3. Appoint a high-level individual to travel to Abyei, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan consistently over the next six months to ensure adequate preparations for the referendum in Abyei and the popular consultations in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan.

4. Persuade the National Congress Party of Sudan (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) to make public commitments that the rights to freedom of movement, residence and property currently afforded to all Sudanese citizens will be preserved regardless of the outcome of the referenda.
5. State clearly and publicly that international human rights standards must be respected in Northern as well as in Southern Sudan, and that the Guarantors will uphold their commitment to the goals of democratic transformation in Sudan.

### **EDITORS NOTES:**

Guarantors of the CPA include the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), African Union, European Union, Arab League, United Nations, Egypt, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom and the United States.

*“Renewing the Pledge: Re-Engaging the Guarantors to the Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement,”* is a joint report from 26 organisations from Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the US: Aegis Trust, African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies, Arab Coalition for Darfur, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Collaborative for Peace in Sudan, Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (Sudan), Cordaid, Darfur Consortium, The Enough Project at the Center for American Progress, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, Global Witness, Human Rights First, ICCO, International Federation for Human rights (FIDH), International Refugee Rights Initiative, Italians for Darfur, KACE (Sudan), Pax Christi IKV, Refugees International, Standard Action Liaison Focus (Sudan), Save Darfur Coalition, Sudan Democracy First Group, Sudan Forum Global Campaign Members (Norway), Sudan Human Rights Monitor, Sudanese Network for Democratic Elections, Waging Peace.

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