



Outcome Statement of the High-Level Dialogue with Sudanese Civic Actors on the Situation in Sudan

On 15 July 2023, in partnership with the Government of Kenya, the Africans for the Horn of Africa Initiative (Af4HA), a coalition of African civil society groups committed to working collectively on the crises in the Horn, convened a High-Level Dialogue on the situation in Sudan attended by representatives of thirteen States from around the world¹; the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union Commission (PAPS, AUC); the Peace and Security Cluster of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the African Union (ECOSOCC – AU); the Secretariat of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the African Union (ECOSOCC – AU), and several civil society actors from across the African continent.

The High-Level Dialogue followed three days of consultations by Sudanese civil society actors and marked three months since the start of the conflict. Key highlights emerging from the consultations that preceded the high-level dialogue were presented.

First, it was acknowledged that the war in Sudan has inflicted unimaginable human suffering. Urgent response to end the conflict is required. A number of ceasefire agreements have been negotiated, but none has held so far. Mediation efforts have been convened under the auspices of the governments of the United States of America (USA), Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), but none have achieved tangible results.

Collective experiences from different parts of the continent show that engagement from African governments on African crises is essential in order to provide the context and support to mobilise both regional and international responses.

In this context, we call on African States, both through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU) and through broader support to take urgent steps to stop the bloodshed and deliver on the needs of the Sudanese people for peace, lifesaving humanitarian assistance, a transition to democracy and good governance and accountability. In this context, Sudanese civic actors at the meeting were pleased to hear commitments from the Government of Kenya and other States present to continue dialogue with civil society and to continue to work for peace in Sudan.

The priorities articulated and discussed by Sudanese civic actors in attendance at the meeting were:

- **Most urgent is to stop the war.** Some of the calls articulated by Sudanese actors to all actors involved in mediating and end to the war included:
 - Put pressure on the warring parties to stop the fighting.
 - ‘Follow the money’, by imposing wider sanctions on the warring parties and their backers, including Sudanese Islamists elements believed to be playing a key role in mobilising fighters.
 - Publicly name and shame the Sudanese Islamists and other actors fueling the war.
 - Declare a no-fly zone over Sudan to protect some populations and minimize the flow of arms from external sources, while taking into account the need to ensure humanitarian aid flows are not impeded.
 - Impose an arms embargo and close pathways for arms to enter Sudan.

¹ States present were Kenya, Comoros, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mozambique, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Norway, Canada and Finland.



- **There is a need to consolidate the diversity of mediation processes.** Participants called on IGAD and the AU in particular to take the lead in bringing the warring factions and all others affected by the war to the table.
- **There is an urgent need to ensure that humanitarian access and assistance reach the millions of civilians in need.** In order to do this, relevant actors should:
 - Ensure that survivors of Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) access medical aid and other support.
 - Create humanitarian corridors to allow for the delivery of aid.
 - Protect and support service providers and human rights defenders.
 - Ensure that the rights of those in flight, both Sudanese and foreigners, are protected by keeping borders open for those who need to flee.
 - Recognize that Sudanese civilians are currently playing the most critical role in providing response to humanitarian needs, and scale up support by the international community of these efforts.
 - Recognize that civilians at the frontline of offering humanitarian needs are exposed to serious risks and to take measures to ensure their safety.
- **A civilian-led political process that can put Sudan on to the path to a genuinely democratic and civilian government is necessary to resolving the conflict.**
 - Civilian engagement is critical to the success of all mediation processes.
 - All actors must recognise that currently there is no constitutionally mandated representative that can legitimately represent all Sudanese civilians. Various frontline CSO coalitions and trade unions represent important constituencies and should be supported to organise themselves better and be included in mediation efforts.
 - International community support to civic actors necessary for more effective engagement with mediation and transition processes.
- **Ensure accountability for ALL crimes committed**, including potentially new genocide in Darfur.
 - Create a Commission of Inquiry to collect evidence of the violations.

END.

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About Africans for the Horn of Africa Initiative (Af4HA)

Africans for the Horn of Africa Initiative is a solidarity platform established to amplify citizen action and voice in the response to, and resolution of, the crises that increasingly plague the Horn of Africa. The Initiative was born out of recognition of the need to facilitate and strengthen engagement by Africans in ongoing processes seeking to address conflicts and governance challenges in the Horn of Africa region. The Initiative is led by four non-governmental African organisations; Atrocities Watch Africa (AWA), Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU), the African Leadership Centre (ALC) and the International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI).