

Darfur: Towards New Strategy to Achieve Comprehensive Peace,

Security and Development

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Introduction

The conflict in Darfur has taken new dynamics that represent a challenge and an opportunity for achieving peace at the same time through coordinated effort and advance work. This effort is not limited to negotiations but includes consultations among Darfur society over their concerns to realize comprehensive and lasting peace.

The situation in Darfur is complicated by the divisions among the rebel movements and impacted on dividing the civil society in a parallel way. The growing obstinacy of the movements and its continuous split, beside the inflexibility in positions of the Darfur effective civil and armed parties in general, led to disagreement among the movement to reach a common ground for their demands. The continuous competition among the armed groups further complicated the negotiation process.

In general, there was a change in the violence pattern in Darfur. The rebellion maintained low profile and vanishing sometimes, and in many cases the takes the shape of criminal activity. However, there are pockets of insecurity due to banditry and lack of commitment to the ceasefire by armed factions. The month of May 2010 has witnessed an incidental increase in violence as a result of collapse of ceasefire agreements signed between Justice and Equality Movement and the Government. It became obvious that signing agreements with the armed rebel movements alone is not enough to address security problems. Therefore, it is necessary for us to take a new approach in dealing with the root causes of insecurity and not only conciliating with the divided rebel factions.

The humanitarian needs for the vulnerable sections of Darfur society still a priority, and the government is continuing its efforts to meet that needs in coordination with UNAMID and international partners. However, the continuation of insecurity, the environmental threats, and the fluctuating political and local situations still threatening the humanitarian access, and may lead to a new crisis. So, it is important to continue efforts and direct the humanitarian activity towards resettlement of war-affected persons, provision of security in their villages of origin, and assisting them to sustain self-reliance.

The regional partnership is considered as necessary to achieve peace in Darfur, as the conflict would not exist or last without influential regional interventions. The Government of Sudan still worried about the attitudes of some countries in the region, and it is negative intervention in Darfur peace process even if it had the good intention to do so. The Government of Sudan will continue its endeavors to gain the cooperation of the neighboring countries, and hope to repeat experience of Sudan- Chad normalization which has had positive impact in deescalating violence in Darfur.

Regarding the International Community responses, we receive controversial messages from calling for peace by one hand and the extreme messages by the other. For example, the oppressive and unjustifiable ICC decisions, and the attitude of some lobby groups. Some governments of the concerned countries remain incapable to send a clear message in support of peace. As a result, false information was sent on situation in Darfur without responding to, and that has negatively affected conceptions and policies.

To support peace process, the Doha and with regional and international support has availed a forum for negotiation between the government and the rebel movements since 2007. The forum was initiated by the State of Qatar and supported by the League of Arab States, the African Union and the United Nations. The forum is led jointly by Qatari Government and the UN and AU Joint Mediator. The Doha forum remains the only agreed venue for the negotiation between the government and the rebel movements despite constraints faced the forum throughout the last year including the competition between the regional powers, limitations of the mediation process, and continuous split of the rebel movements. Therefore, and for more comprehensive peace process, the mediations started an important consultation process with Darfur civil society and that should be completed by an extensive internal process.

Another important development came to reality after national and states elections of April 2010. New leaderships that represent various opinions and interests of Darfur came into power through elections. Those elected officials have necessary authorities in the states and national parliaments, and not only they represent the needs of local communities in Darfur but they also have the power for setting legislations and take the actions to implement it. And because those elected officials are truly reflect the ethnic diversity of Darfur people; they should be part of the peace process with a higher degree.

The deployment of UNAMID forces as a unique mission between the African Union and the United Nations has a positive role in promoting security. The UNAMID also continues to provide constructive contribution to the peace process. The Government of Sudan believe that the mission has a lot to offer, and should utilize its ultimate capacity to promote peace, reconciliation and development.

The African Union and through its peace initiatives, has established the AU Panel on Darfur (AUPD) and later the AU High Implementation Panel on Darfur (AUHIP) both presided by President Thabo Mbeki in order to assist in addressing peace and stability issues in Darfur and Sudan at large. The government as it is welcoming these contributions is ready to work with both bodies who presented constructive suggestions in their reports and documents.

Taking all these developments into account, the government realizes the necessity of establishing a new realistic and effective strategy for achieving peace, security and stability in Darfur. The government knows that it is responsibility in the first hand to achieve that as sovereign government, and will take the lead in initiating and implementing the new strategy and its set objectives. However, the government will welcome any constructive proposals from the regional and international partners, taking into consideration that, the current situation represents a challenge and an opportunity for all concerned parties to reach an internationally recognized and supported peace agreement. Meantime, continuous support and development of new initiatives should be directed to help in accomplishing the political process in Darfur.

Without simplifying the causes of the conflict or the target solutions, the government suggests finding a peaceful solution to the situation through efforts based on five axes: Security; Development; Resettlement; Reconciliation; and Negotiation. Based on the above, the comprehensive political process should work towards addressing the causes of the conflict including development, environmental degradation, arms flow, and the political claims such as inclusive and fair distribution of wealth and power. The political process will also address the conflict effects such as insecurity, displacement, divisions among Darfur society and armed movements in cooperation with the partners and people of Darfur.

It is also important for us to know that the most pressing issue for Sudan in the coming few months is the referendum for self-determination in the south. Although the referendum maybe looked at as a separate issue, but it has consequences on Darfur and can affect the peace process in Darfur as Darfur might be a source of tension between north and south, and such tension may probably complicates the efforts for reaching solution for the Darfur conflict.

Objectives and Priorities

The main objective of the new strategy is to achieve comprehensive and peaceful settlement that restore life in Darfur and enable efforts for development in the area. The priority is to achieve security for all people of Darfur, and to provide assurances and incentives for IDPs to return to their homes and to provide development support to people in their areas of origin. To achieve these main objectives, a number of strategies will be adopted including:

- To nationalize the political process in Darfur that enable a wider range of the society participation to ensure last and successful solution. This requires mobilization of representatives of all societal and political components inside Darfur, and encouraging them to lead the initiative in searching for peaceful solution to the conflict. The political process should also address the specific causes and the effects of the conflict including issues identified during consultations to ensure that solutions will be realized.
- To promote security on the ground by establishing cohesive measures in collaboration with UNAMID to address the insecurity and assure tranquility for people wherever they are. This contains combat of banditry and other kinds of illegal attitudes, retrieving trust between people and the security forces, and deployment of police forces where required.
- To speed up of the safe, voluntary and sustainable return of the IDPs, resettlement of the refugees and provide support in all fields.
- The government will undertake procedures to implement political and developmental projects on the ground. This includes close collaboration with the local communities to plan and implement the projects that contribute to balanced development in the area, and to ensure the availability of the necessary resources that assure normal livelihood for nomads.
- To work closely with UNAMID, the Joint Mediator, and the AUHIP to assure good facilitation and organization of the consultation processes among Darfur society sectors and gauge their views on the controversial issues and enable them to express their concerns and to contribute positively in addressing the roots of the crisis.
- To implement justice for all through national mechanisms and in close cooperation with Darfur society sectors. This requires paying of compensations, retrieving the properties to the victims based on the spirit of justice and reconciliation.
- To restructure of humanitarian operation in order to shift the focus from relief to development at the long run.
- To mobilize regional and international support to promote the gained benefits from the peace processes and any agreement reached in the future.
- To promote reconciliation among Darfur society components, and utilizing the native mechanisms to resolve the conflict and restoration of harmony and cooperation between Darfur society sectors.

- To work with all partners and in consultation with Darfur society to reach lasting and comprehensive political agreement for Darfur taking to account the previous negotiations and agreements.

Re-direction of peace Process

Considering the mentioned objectives, the peace process requires radical re-direction taking into account challenges and opportunities concerning Darfur conflict. Since the lasting peace is not expected without participation of those who are not directly parties to the conflict but suffer its effects, the peace process in Darfur should be managed internally by involving the real affected persons in addition to peace makers in Darfur with the Government of Sudan leading the efforts.

The Doha forum remain the only venue for negotiation with the Darfur rebels but the mediation needs to overcome the problems appeared in the last months in particular the continuous changes and splits among the rebel movements.

To meet that end, the Government of Sudan needs to shift the focus of the peace weight to the inside in a way that meets the needs of Darfur people and allows their effective participation. Towards that, the government encourages conduction of internal consultations and preparation for Consultative Forum in Darfur by the mediation to complete the negotiation process, which enables Darfur citizens to express their concerns. So, the final political agreement will be formulated by the directly affected persons of the conflict. That will not only promotes which was agreed upon on Darfur peace but also advances the Darfur society concerns and help to get rid of external factors of the instability.

This should not be interpreted as exclusion of the external partners from the political process, but it is an effort to make their involvement closer to the real concerned people. The government will call for harmonization of Doha forum with other initiatives including the AUHIP and UNAMID for the sake of achieving comprehensive peace.

To restructure the negotiation process, the mediation in Doha is working to arrange for consultations in Darfur where its results will support Doha negotiations to assist the concerned parties reaching comprehensive and lasting and internationally supported peace with assistance from the UN-AU Joint Mediator. The objective of the Darfur Consultative Forum is to enable those who did not take arms to participate in the negotiation and that approach will set conditions for lasting and satisfied end to the conflict.

The absolute objective of the negotiation is to prepare comprehensive political agreement that addresses the different issues of the concerned people in Darfur. Therefore, all conflicting parties in Darfur should be invited including the armed parties to sign the comprehensive political agreement, and to participate in an inclusive initiative to settle the conflict and to overcome the causes and effects of the conflict.

The comprehensive political agreement should include ceasefire, security arrangements, reconciliation, power sharing, wealth sharing and other issues identified by Darfur communities through the consultative forum. The agreement should be backed by the internal and non-governmental institutions in Darfur, and should gain the international community support and to be protected by the United Nations and African Union from spoilers. The partners should adhere to the importance of negotiations in determining the

issues that need to be resolved, and develop ideas on the programmes and processes to be settled and to address the concerns of all concerned parties in a fair and decisive way.

Commitment to the Signed Agreements

The government, and with its serious endeavor for negotiation towards new settlements, remains obliged with the previous signed agreements and its implementation particularly the parts related to security, integration and political participation. Inconsistency between these obligations and any agreement to be reached through Doha forum must be avoided. The overall objective is to make peace through multiple axes that accommodate all Darfur components in order to achieve an accepted political settlement. The government, beside the already signed agreements, reiterates its commitment to the Sudan People's Initiative that represents the views of the majority of Sudan people, and seeks to use it as a ground for Darfur Consultative Forum.

Security

The security measures represent the basic responsibility of any government, and the specific job of a sovereign state to execute law and order, and to preserve rights and achieve justice for people. The Government of Sudan will take precautionary and decisive measures to provide security to all citizens in Darfur, and to achieve that, we will cooperate with international partners led by UNAMID and in accordance to their mandate. To address the different root causes of insecurity in Darfur, the following steps must be implemented:

- i. Finalizing the preparation of a detailed and comprehensive security Strategy that realizes stability, promotes peace, and reconstruction in cooperation with the recently elected local administrations and with full consultation with all concerned parties in Darfur.
- ii. Determining preventive measures to address the state of insecurity and to achieve stability in the region.
- iii. Working towards reaching security measures with the neighboring countries similar to the security agreement between Sudan and Chad in order to stop the arms flow and to restrict the movements of the armed rebel groups to ensure no new sources of instability are there.
- iv. The government to begin disarmament process and with all armed groups as part of its strategy for peace building.
- v. Protection of civilians and IDPs in particular in partnership and collaboration with UNAMID.
- vi. The government will work towards protecting all areas in Darfur from armed groups through enhancing the capacity of the security organs and strengthening and activating the borders monitoring mechanisms. The government will also work for negotiating ceasefire agreements with the respondent rebels, and to finalize the integration the forces of the signatory parties to the DPA and DOC into the Sudanese Armed Forces.
- vii. There will be consultations with our partners during the finalization and implementation of the security measures. The support will be determined according to the need.

Reconciliations and Justice

Reconciliations and justice processes require support and promotions that prevent the future eruption of conflict. The Darfur Consultative Forum will be the ideal forum to deal with reconciliation and justice

issues. The reconciliation and justice processes should be led by the societies of Darfur to address the root causes of the conflict and continuous mistrust and divisions among Darfur people.

The government will work to establish new forums for reconciliations, with the already existed mechanisms taking to consideration the traditional mechanisms and its contribution to conflict resolution throughout the history. In addition, the government will work to activate the role of the local elected officials to strengthen and promote the mechanisms of reconciliation and conflict resolution.

The government will carry out implementation of fair compensation projects for the communities affected by the conflict in Darfur and make use of the resources available for compensation and increase it when required.

The government acknowledges the psychological and feasible dimension of the justice and will remain obliged to the Darfur Special Prosecutor, and the National Courts to perform their responsibilities in a neutral manner.

From Relief to Development

The relief in Darfur became necessary due to emergencies and mass displacement. According to the norms, the relief is temporary measure and not permanent in Darfur. It is a top priority for the government to re-direct the humanitarian efforts towards rehabilitation and shifting from depending on the relief to development and self-reliance.

The government stays committed to the international conventions on humanitarian work and will fulfill its obligations to the signed agreements, and affirms the humanitarian needs for Darfur people are fully provided and all gaps are filled as well as facilitating humanitarian access to the secure places in Darfur. The relation between the government and the non-governmental organizations operating in Darfur should be consolidated through good intention, effective cooperation and mutual efforts to assist the people of Darfur, protecting their dignity and their self-reliance. Therefore, the voluntary, safe and systematic return of the IDPs to their home will be the lasting indicator of the successful solution of the conflict. The organization of the return is one of the government top priorities, and to achieve that, the government will join efforts with UNAMID and other partners to provide security and basic services to the IDPs and refugees in their areas of origin to ensure safe and sustainable return. The voluntary return efforts will also allow the concerned parties to provide development projects and basic needs for herders, IDPs and refugees.

Planning the provision of basic services is the main stimulus for development in Darfur through addressing the environmental degradation, preparing for long term development plans and addressing the historical deficiency in the basic infrastructures in Darfur. The real development will not be realized without peace but the government will prepare the ground for securing resources from local and international sources with continuation in implementing the previous projects and pledges or implementing new projects in the secure areas in Darfur, and provide the appropriate services to herders with special focus on creating an environment that assist the return of the IDPs and refugees.

The development will go together with the capacity building of civil service in Darfur to ensure better services provided to the people and to promote their security. Capacity building will be promoted together

with the informal institutions and encourages the involvement of the legislative and executive bodies as well.

Changing Perceptions and Clearing the Reality

The situation in Darfur has been exaggerated through false information about the conflict. This deliberately discrediting alongside with the propaganda made by the rebel groups has continued to shape the conflict and complicate the process of searching peace. To promote the peace process, it is necessary to change the conceptions on the Darfur crisis to match the reality on the ground, and to strengthen the positive perceptions among Darfur various societies. All parties including the partners, the humanitarian workers, media personnel and observers should reflect the reality; refrain from discrediting the reality and spreading false information that will contribute to disseminate the hatred and aversion among Darfur people and especially for the interested parties should write their reports from impartial and trusted sources who present in the ground.

We rely on our international partners to effectively cooperate in this field to strengthen the constructive and positive interaction that encourage dialogue among Darfur different components without encouraging the polarization and partial views. The concerned parties have to search for accurate and factual information in all Darfur related matters.

The Role of Partners

The involvement of local, regional and international partners will be evaluated based on the real interests of the Darfur people. The government encourages the international partners whether states or organizations to support the comprehensive political process in a manner that recognizes the Sudanese lead of the sustainable solution.

UNAMID

The government and very specifically, considers UNAMID as a unique partner in the process of set up and implementation of its security, political, humanitarian and developmental initiatives, and appreciates the important role of UNAMID in achieving stability in Darfur. UNAMID still enjoys fruitful relationship with the government and has to continue providing support for facilitation the flow of humanitarian operations. The government and UNAMID need to work together to review the successes achieved by the mission, and to study the parts that need improvement. The two parties need to work together to strengthen the cooperation and in particular strengthening the central role of UNAMID in IDPs and refugees return and the reconstruction. The government expects UNAMID and other partners to play decisive role in this anticipated shifting from relief to development, and from maintaining the current situation policy to a more effective approach in overcoming the obstructions that hinder the achievement of security in particular areas in Darfur.

UNAMID will be the main partner in the new security strategy for more protection of the civilians without jeopardizing the Government of Sudan sovereign obligations. UNAMID should try its best and in collaboration with the concerned authorities, to utilize its properties to promote reconstruction and development in Darfur, and to complement the Doha forum efforts and support the political process in the ground as well.

AUPD and AUHIP

The government acknowledges the contributions made by the AUPD and AUHIP to support political process in Darfur and appreciate the great experience, the credibility and the good will the two bodies demonstrated. The government will continue strengthening its relationship and enlarging it with the AUHIP in search for lasting settlement for conflict in Darfur. In collaboration with UNAMID and AUHIP, a major role will be played to coordinate and prepare for Darfur consultations.

Other Partners

The other partners have an important role to play. The government expects the constructive involvement of the African Union, the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Conference, and their double efforts to address the remaining obstructions in the road to peace. The government praises the role of the State of Qatar in hosting and coordinating the Doha forum which should continue and be promoted and completed through other mechanisms. The other regional partners are expected to play more positive role in achieving peace without harmful and non useful interventions.

The international community has put Darfur in its top priorities but its participation in the positive solution remains limited, and many of its procedures are harmful and not useful like the intervention of the International Criminal Court and the attitudes of some rebels. The international community in order to play more positive role within the new strategy, a radical change is required in attitudes and roles, and specifically the shift is required from confrontation and hindrance role to more constructive cooperation. One example for the attitude change that could contribute positively is cooperation in shifting from relief to development.

Hundreds of millions of dollars were spent to keep the situation in Darfur as it is whether it's for IDPs relief or for the international agencies and organizations to stay. For the time being, the compensation and the voluntary return represent one of our needs. If the international donors pledged part of their resources to the compensation and voluntary return, that will be an encouraging indicator for the Darfur communities to accept return voluntarily and will assist in accelerating the solution to the conflict.

Implementation

The detailed plans for achieving this strategy are currently underway. As soon as consultations were finalized with the partners, and in the framework of government institutions, the start up of these projects can commence through practical and calculated steps on the ground.

It is important for the national agencies and institutions to initiate the implementation of the strategy, and the government will affirm the good implementations of and commitment to the strategy at all authority levels including the local levels.

The government will carry out unilateral decisive procedures when needed and is obliged to establish Darfur Consultative Forum and will inaugurate initiatives for achieving security, stability and development. The government shall invite the informal institutions and other partners who accept this strategy, to establish an Implementation Partnership for this strategy.

The strategy will be subject to regular review and is revisable based on developments in Darfur situations.

Timeframe

The concerned parties in Darfur will abide by specific timeframe to reach peace agreement and timeframe for IDPs and refugees return as well as any processes determined by any future peace agreement.

This timeframe will reinforce the opportunities to reach comprehensive peace agreement, and gives enough time for initiating important projects before the January 2011 referendum on south Sudan self-determination.

End