

Important Statement about Sudanese Peace Talks in Abuja, Nigeria

Date: June 8, 2006

To African Union, United Nations, European Union, President Obasanjo and People of Nigeria, USA, Canada, Save Darfur and All Civil Society and Human Rights organizations and Individuals Concerned about Darfur, we undersigned are representative of Darfur and other Sudanese civil society organizations and Sudanese experts concerned about the way the talks are ending in Abuja and we have therefore decided to present you our position and the position of most Darfurians and other Sudanese. Again, the suggestions that we provide below also present the opinion of the majority of Darfurians as well as many other Sudanese.

We would like you to know that none of several tens of thousands of Darfurians in Canada and USA is happy with the document that has been adopted by the mediators as the final peace agreement; out of 79 articles and reaction messages that are published in www.sudaneseonline.com during the last two days concerning the document and its signature by Minni Arku Minawi, only two have commended it and all others were outrageous reactions and even many of them went as far as describing Minni Minawi as betrayer. Moreover, a quick study published by Alkhaleej newspaper on June 7, 2006 shows that none among the Darfurians in Khartoum whom the newspaper interviewed was happy with the peace deal and opinions of some Sudanese political parties published in www.sudanil.com described the peace deal as irrelevant to the disaster that Darfurians have gone through. Furthermore, the telephone calls that we have been receiving from Darfurians and Sudanese all over the world confirm that 90% of Darfurians and over 70% of other Sudanese consider the document as flawed and therefore unacceptable. Many Darfurians went as far as describing May 5, 2006 as the day of mourn for all Darfurians except some clan politicians such as Minni Minawi and individual opportunists such as Dr. Abdelrahman Musa Abbaker.

Consequently, the document is unacceptable to Darfurians and to Sudanese. Therefore, it needs substantial changes before Darfurians adopt it. We respect the efforts made during the production of the document, its adoption by the AU and the support that it got from the international community, but it is like a dress that does not fit the person for whom it was made and consequently it needs some adjustments. We heard that Abdelwahid Annur, Khaleel Ibrahim and their delegates were told: "Just take it or leave it!" We think that it is unfortunate that such language is addressed to individuals negotiating on behalf of the victims of genocide. The text can be amended even if most of the mediators believe that it is perfect. They see it in an outsider's viewpoint but we see it in an insider's viewpoint. They may want an instant solution, but we want a lasting one.

Based on what we have provided above, we strongly support the position of lawyer Abdelwahid Mohamed Ahmed Annur and doctor Khaleel Ibrahim until most of the following items are genuinely addressed in the peace document:

- 1) Guaranteed and adequately financed return of all indigenous Darfurians who have been forced out of their areas of origin since 1990. The definition of the international community to the problem of Darfur as a sudden explosion in February 2003 is faulty and will provide irrelevant solution and will lead to further complication of the situation. We therefore suggest that a commission including parties to the conflict and international community be formed to undertake the procedural issues related to repatriation.
- 2) All groups that have been imposed by the government on areas that are not their own should evacuate those areas to their legitimate owners. Khartoum is responsible for finding them other places and as many of them are not Sudanese Khartoum can arrange for their repatriation. The question to the authors of Abuja agreement is: "How can you repatriate the internally displaced Darfurians and Darfur refugees outside the country if their homeland areas are still occupied by the Janjaweed and their clans?"
- 3) Individual compensations to all refugees and displaced people that have been suggested by Mr. Abdelwahid Mohamed Ahmed Annur is not from his own invention, it is what all Darfurians insist in. The amounts of 300,000,000 and 200,000,000 that have been suggested by the authors of Abuja document are completely irrelevant to the damage done and population displaced.
- 4) The commission that will be responsible for the establishment of Darfurians' historical rights on their tribal lands should also include a third party, that is to say, individuals assigned by the international community.
- 5) We strongly support Abdelwahid Annur and Khaleel Ibrahim in their position of one Darfur. The idea of three Darfurs is part of the National Congress Party's plan of "divide and destroy" so that they can rule the country for ever. We do not see any logic behind the National Congress Party's insistence in Darfur being three Darfurs other than what we have mentioned above; yet, Darfur was one state until 1994. The question which we raise to the arbitrators in this issue is: "What is the logic behind accepting the South Sudanese right for one region; yet denying the same right to the Darfurians; however, Darfur was an independent kingdom until February 1916? What makes Darfurians deserve less?" Darfurians did not say that they want an independent Darfur; but the suturing (cut and paste) games of Khartoum will definitely push Darfurians to it.
- 6) We want as more autonomous Darfur as possible in exchange for the three cabinet ministers, and the three state ministers and 12 members of appointed undemocratic assembly all that is part of Khartoum's politics of suturing. In exchange, we want that governor of Darfur and 80 percent of the ministerial and all other positions in one Darfur be filled by the movements of Darfur. The assistant president or whatever name Khartoum wants, is fine at this stage but he/she should be elected by the people of Darfur and his responsibility should be the follow up of the execution the peace agreement. All Darfurians should elect the person who will occupy that position so that she/he can do his/her job with confidence.
- 7) Darfur should be as autonomous as possible to have the right to develop its own educational plan (from daycare to university), its own independent police, independent legal system, sign trade agreements with neighboring countries, etc.

- 8) The percentages of the amounts that will be invested in Darfur from the federal revenues should be precisely defined in the agreement otherwise they will end up as mirage in the desert.
- 9) The share of the local people, municipalities, provinces and the region of Darfur in the subsurface resources (minerals) should be precise. We insist in the settlement of the aforementioned items in Abuja so that future conflicts, which might be more costly, can be avoided.
- 10) The agreement to be reached should be endorsed by strong guarantors. In addition to AU which is the mediating body we urge international bodies such as UN, other regional bodies such as EU and democratically sustainable countries (USA, United Kingdom, Norway, Canada, France, Netherlands, etc.) that usually take initiative in peace making, peace keeping and protecting to endorse it.

We reiterate that the position taken by Abdelwahid and Khaleel is the position of the majority of Darfurians and any peace deal without their endorsement will be incomplete because they are more popular among Darfurians and other Sudanese than those who left the demands of Darfurians down and signed it only to satisfy their individual greed. According to a recent statement by Minni Minawi's spokesman, Mahjob Hussein, at www.sudanile.com, Minni Minawi's faction is: "... is the main faction and it is the one that will keep the security and order in the region and the small movements have to be careful about their press conferences and media releases otherwise they will be punished." We believe the above quoted statement is a sign of the beginning of anarchy. Minni Minawi's faction might have the support of some soldiers but only the support of a handful of civilians because of its leaders' arrogant claim that the soldiers are the only legitimate representatives of the people of Darfur and their cause.

We are not sadists, but our knowledge of the problem of the region and its population compelled us to come out with this statement which we believe will contribute towards finding more lasting and sustained solution to the problem.

Authors:

- 1) Baballa Haround Nour-----Fur Cultural Revival, New England, USA, member of New Sudan School
- 2) Gamal A. Adam ----- York University, Canada, Member of New Sudan School
- 3) Elhadi Adam----- Fur Cultural Revival, New England, USA
- 4) Saida Nourdeeen-----Fur Cultural Revival , New England, USA
- 5) Abdelrazig Adam----- Darfur Association of Canada (member)
- 6) Ameera Abbo----- Darfur-Canadian Women Association (member)
- 7) Amir Idris----- Fordham University, New York, Member of New Sudan School
- 8) Bakri Abdalla-----McMaster University, Canada, Member of New Sudan School

- 9) Issa Jumma----- Darfur Association of Canada (executive, Calgary)
- 10) Mariam Gumma----- Darfur-Canadian Women Association (member)
- 11) Lomumba Tito Emam----- Human Rights Activist, Ottawa
- 12) Hashim Badr Eldin----- Member of New Sudan School.
- 13) Yahya Adam----- Darfur , Greater Toronto, Canada
- 14) Dr. Jane Kani Edward----- New York, USA