

Statement from the All Africa Conference of Churches on the urgency to fulfil the terms of the CPA

Urgent Message from the All Africa Conference of Churches on the need for the full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) for peace in the Sudan

The truth will set you free!

- Jesus, in the Gospel of John - 8:32

The **All Africa Conference of Churches** (AACC) has over the years accompanied the people of Sudan through prayers and active involvement in peace building efforts and advocacy, notably in the two landmark agreements for peace in the Sudan:

- the Addis Ababa Agreement (1972) and
- the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, CPA (2005).

Over the last months the AACC has received a number of appeals from the churches in Sudan calling for the urgent rescuing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)¹ The response to the appeals has been the mounting of two high-level Ecumenical Peace Missions to Khartoum (3-6 November 2009) and Juba (7-9 December 2009) organized jointly with the **Sudan Council of Churches** (SCC) to express solidarity with the people of Sudan, to listen to and dialogue with the **Government of National Unity** (GoNU) and the **Government of Southern Sudan** (GoSS) on a number of concerns; and to affirm the commitment of Churches in Africa in the continued search for a just and lasting peace in the Sudan.

The Peace Missions met with a number of stakeholders including the President of the GoSS (H.E. Gen. Salva Kiir Mayardit), ministers and advisors of both GoNU and GoSS, representatives of the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) as well as NGOs and Churches.

The following statement summarizes the major findings and the urgent call for action:

Implementation of the CPA

The mission is deeply worried that time is running out for the CPA and the level of implementation is alarmingly low and flawed. We are specifically concerned about the apparent lack of political will and the numerous efforts to derail implementation by one of the parties, namely the National Congress Party (NCP).

We therefore:

- Appeal to the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the friends of IGAD, to immediately take action and energise the implementation of the CPA and ensure that it is honoured in spirit and letter during the 13 months remaining.

Security situation

We are deeply appalled by the continued insecurity in the Sudan and especially the south where flow of arms to the different militia groups remains unabated, despite commendable disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts, and the recent violent crackdown on demonstrators in Khartoum who were calling for the passing of the vital laws. Further the lack of a resolute peace process for Darfur has enhanced humanitarian suffering with millions of innocent Sudanese displaced and facing indiscriminate violence (abductions, torture and rape).

We therefore:

- Appeal to the Sudanese Parties to restore security and avoid further destabilization of the country;
- Call upon the United Nations and African Union to set up mechanisms for monitoring and controlling the continuous flow of small arms and light weapons into the South Sudan, which poses a major challenge to human security and to the planned elections.
- Appeal to the AU to follow up the Report of the African Union High level Panel on Darfur (AUPD) in order to ensure peace and justice for the peoples of Darfur, as well as for the whole of Sudan and the region.

Elections and the Referendum

- The referendum shall be held before the end of the 6 year CPA period, which means before 9th of January 2011 when the people of southern Sudan will choose whether to remain in a united Sudan or to become an independent state. But before this elections are planned for April 2010. There are now legitimate fears that the election and referendum processes will be flawed and contested just like the recent census and registration processes. A major challenge and concern is that elections might be used to cause divisions and conflicts between southern parties and ethnic groups.

Numerous challenges are facing the elections such as the number of ballots (12 different ballots), to be handled by voters in Southern Sudan of whom 75-90% are illiterate and without current experience of voting. However, there is a strong resolve within Southern Sudan to go ahead with elections despite the fact that at the signing of CPA they raised issues pertaining to the possible disruptive nature of elections.

Therefore we:

- Call on all international stakeholders to recommit to the timeline of the referendum and to reiterate their full respect and support of the outcome of the decision made by the people of Southern Sudan.
- Request the international community to closely accompany the election process, helping to secure a coordinated, just and peaceful process that gives the people of Sudan the possibility to make an informed and free choice of its future leaders.

Resettlement and rehabilitation

We acknowledge that the wealth sharing provision in CPA has availed some resources even though not as anticipated. The GoSS is commended for the use of these resources for much needed infrastructure development and rehabilitation of social

services in Southern Sudan. However, the apparent injustice in resource distribution and levels of socio-economic development between the North and South cannot be over emphasized. The resettlement programs for refugees and IDPs have failed as resources have hardly been availed. The current insecurity and lack of tangible peace dividends does not reassure displaced persons/refugees to return to their homes.

A proper resettlement is necessary so that as many as possible may be able to make free and informed decisions in the coming elections and the referendum; as well as ensuring concerted efforts by all stakeholders to uphold the sanctity and dignity of human life.

We:

- Call on the international community to oblige by deploying the resources pledged for purposes of socioeconomic development and by all means address the apparent injustices prevailing in the Sudan in terms of development and human security.
- Urge the UN to ensure that the appropriate international agencies are mandated to resume the resettlement program and to ensure the security of all returnees together with the local governments.

Call for action

It is time for the world to hear the wake-up call and salvage the situation in the Sudan. As churches in Africa we believe that this urgency is a kairos moment that calls for action. We acknowledge that the responsibility for the full implementation of the CPA lies with the signatories of the agreement, the NCP and the SPLM, but our call is for all friends of Sudan to reengage in a strong political, economical and moral accompaniment at this critical time of history so that the CPA is rescued. Not only is the peace of Sudan at stake, but for the whole region.

As Churches in Africa we specifically appeal to the Ecumenical Movement, notably the World Council of Churches (WCC), the All Africa Conference of Churches and our members, as well as all people of faith, to step up the accompaniment for Sudan and continue to pray, engage and advocate for peace, truth, justice, reconciliation and development for all people of Sudan.

May the truth set us free to act justly for a lasting peace in the Sudan!

Rev. Dr. André Karamaga
AACC General Secretary

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South Sudan

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Sudan Focal Point-Europe