Sudan is now travelling along a very serious and complicated path, especially after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 failed to achieve a just peace and democratic transformation. That agreement has led to the secession of South Sudan, and the renewal of armed conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, with an increase in the severity of the violence affecting Darfur. All of these problems have increased the suffering of millions of Sudanese people due to mass killing, displacement and lack of basic needs.

Sudanese civil society with its different components has demonstrated a symbolic presence through all these processes, which have aimed to find peaceful settlements to the ongoing conflicts. However, the role of civil society has not been entirely effective in shaping Sudan's future. Even in the rare cases when some of CSOs representatives were allowed to take part, they came as part of the negotiating parties, the National Congress Party (NCP) or the Armed Movements. Thus, these organizations have become part of the problem instead of part of the solution, which would allow them to look for solutions that are more than superficial in nature.

Nowhere did this become more obvious than the call for the National Dialogue, which was announced a few months ago and followed by rounds of negotiations between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the armed movements. During this process and in addition to movements, such as the Sudan People Liberation Movement -North (SPLM-N); the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM); the Sudan liberation Movement, Mini Minawi (SLA-MM), and the Sudan Liberation Movement Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW), some parties to the negotiations tried to include some elements of civil society under different names, such as "stakeholders" or "friends of the movements," and so on. However, this representation was selective and tended to distort the role of civil society in the same way that can be found in Naivasha, Abuja, and the Doha peace process. That participation has been marked by failure due to the absence of a clear vision of civil society in the issues which been negotiated, with the important issues related to the transition to a just peace and democratic transformation based on the separation of powers, human rights, civil and political freedoms, with a focus on the cultural and economic rights. In the absence of a clear vision by civil society organizations, based on their long history of civic activism, their participation will be doomed to simply a decorative function and failure. The depth of crises facing Sudan today are not attributable to the absence of negotiations, but due to the lack of vision and political will to address the challenges ahead. It is obvious that lack of vision and commitment will result in a long negotiation process and will simply make the situation more complicated. As a result, the outcome is unlikely to be an improvement on previous ones.

The positive and constructive engagement of civil society as one of the pillars of the proposed dialogue in Sudan is important step, which will contribute to breaking this
vicious circle. The involvement of civil society organizations that understand the reality and the impact of the armed, civil struggle and that deal directly with people affected who suffer from these conflicts will play positive role in providing the needed breakthrough that will lead to a sustainable comprehensive solution.

For all these reasons, we see the importance of having a negotiating platform in which civil society can express their views on all the issues and contribute to achieving the main objectives of the peace processes in stopping the on-going wars, just peace and democratic transformation. Given their experience, we contend that CSOs are able to positively contribute ideas, which address the roots causes of the Sudanese crises. Their role is not a substitute to the negotiating parties, but it is complementary. Our fear is that some international or regional powers might impose settlements, which will not lead to a comprehensive and sustainable solution, in ways that they have done before in Naivasha and Abuja and Doha.

Below we highlight some of the issues and the key themes underlying the ongoing negotiations in, and main issues currently raised in Addis Ababa, which can be summarized as follows:

1. Security arrangements and humanitarian issues
2. Political, and administrative arrangements in conflict areas;
3. Others Issues, which are directly, related to the conflict zones;
4. How to participate in the national dialogue and its agenda.

This agenda clearly reveals that the current negotiations process is dealing with the crises in exactly the same manner and approach that was used in Naivasha, Abuja and Doha processes, which is the piecemeal and excludes the needed steps to put the country on the path of genuine democratic transition. Thus, all the important steps been restricted to the agenda of the National Dialogue, which is highly flawed. Moreover, any negotiations that are following the steps of Naivasha process will depend on the credibility of the National Congress Party (NCP), which is questionable -- at least for the armed movements which are negotiating with the government now. Even worse, this kind of agenda ignores the issues of restoring the rights of people affected by conflict and bringing justice to victims of the genocide and mass killing in conflict zones.

Below are the main issues for discussion as prerequisites to create the conducive environment for negotiation. As a start the government must immediately implement all the provisions of Sudan Interim Constitution of 2005, which includes the Bill of Rights and accordingly change all the laws to ensure their consistency with the provisions of the Interim Constitution, (including the decision to withdraw the citizenship of millions of Sudanese which is unconstitutional and illegal). We strongly believe that any government that is unable to apply its constitution will not be willing to implement any subsequent outcome of the negotiations. After that, a number of important steps need to be taken, include the following:
1. First and foremost we must adopt the principle of good governance, state based on citizenship, independent Judiciary system, democratic pluralism justice and accountability, and full separation of religious institutions from the state institutions, protection of religious institutions.

2. Sudan must adopt a decentralized system that is based on economic and social justice with fair representation for all the regions, in all level of government, with fair and equitable distribution of resources. It should at the same time adopt affirmative action to address historical injustices for regions affected by wars so as to achieve justice, representation and effective, cultural, economic and political participation of all sectors of the Sudanese people as that will lead to dismantling of all the factors which led to concentration of power and wealth and the marginalization of the majority of Sudanese.

3. Comprehensive and holistic national solution to the underlying causes which led to the conflicts in many regions of Sudan, mainly addressing the issue of land tenure, and accordingly addressing problems faced by pastoralists and nomadic groups in conflicts zones and other regions, without undermining the rights other local inhabitants. These actions should be taken according to Sudanese norms and historical traditions, which will form a basis for sustainable solutions to address regional and ethnic conflicts. In turn, these issues should provide a basis for the process of voluntary repatriation of displaced persons and refugees, while ensuring their protection based on international and humanitarian law and customs. There should be full compensation for individuals and groups, and a comprehensive reconciliation process based on the foundations of transitional justice and national and international criminal law, since that will pave the way for resettling all peoples affected by conflicts. All of this must come after the needed humanitarian assistance is provided as required by international humanitarian law and norms of the United Nations.

4. It should ensure impartiality of Sudan armed Forces (SAF) and all other security and law enforcement agencies with allegiance to the sovereignty of the state and protection of its borders and constitution, a process of demobilisation, re-integration and disarmament of armed movements with complete dismantling of the militias and other par-military groups established by the government.

We call on all Sudanese civil society in the Centre, the East, the North, the South, the West, and in the Diaspora, to endorse this document as its include the main principles and guidelines for the negotiations in order to reach common understandings and constructive engagement of civil society in developing the policies and programmes which are required to rebuild Sudan as a democratic, peaceful and tolerant country after ending the wars, eliminating their causes and dismantling the totalitarian regime.
The current political discourse which include the negotiations between the armed movements the NCP government and the call for national dialogue is fraught with many dangers and threats of failure due to the piece meal approach and partial settlement.

All the crises of Sudan need to be addressed simultaneously and holistically. The manifestation of the multiple crisis in Sudan, such as the laws, the relationship between the various authorities, political parties laws, judicial system reform, administrative decentralization, educational curriculum, women's rights, cultural rights, land reform, the rights of children, demobilization and reintegration, and the dismantling of militias, the return of displaced persons and refugees, and resettlement ... etc., are all important and urgent. However, the partial handling approach will end with incomplete and partial solutions, which will be unable to achieve our people’s aspiration for freedom, justice and peace. These facts underline the urgency and importance for all Sudanese civic and democracy movements to come together in support of this document and effectively contribute to developing it into policies, which lead to the establishment of lasting and sustainable peace, and to build a strong and sustainable democracy.

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Mayors of Darfur IDPs camps:

1. Mayor: Adam Yousief (Hissa Hissa camp, Sudan)
2. Mayor: Ismail Hamid Guma (Sudan)
3. Mayor: Arbab Fadiallah Shata (Ronfa Tasi Moroni)
4. Mayor: Abdul Karim Abdullah Tahir (Himyaria Camp)
5. Sheikh: Mohammed Yacoub Noor (sheikh associative, Sudan)
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