

December 17, 2021

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

RE: Recommended U.S. Engagement in Sudan Before and After December 19th

Dear Mr. President and Secretary Blinken,

All eyes are on Sudan as massive peaceful protests are expected across the country on December 19th. The 19th marks the start of the revolution in 2018 that removed General Bashir from power. The revolution is still underway as the people of Sudan continue the struggle for genuine freedom, peace, justice and democracy. The United States has a critical role to play in supporting the aspirations of the Sudanese people as outlined below.

Provide Civilian Protection

Since the October 25th coup, the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have responded with violence to peaceful protestors, resulting in 45 deaths and the injury of over 700. Today, a political seminar held by the Forces for Freedom and Change leadership was attacked with tear gas. Under the current agreement, freedoms of assembly and expression continue to be violated. In addition, violence and mass displacement in Darfur has escalated significantly, resulting in even greater numbers of deaths and injuries.

Please take these actions:

- Apply real pressure on SAF and RSF to ensure the safety of the peaceful protestors.

- Issue statements and post messages on social media in advance of December 19th to convey that you are watching, you support the right to protest peacefully, and you will support consequences for those who impede the democratic process through violence, arrests or by any other means.
- Apply pressure and urge allies to apply pressure on the military coup leaders to avoid disrupting internet access. Provide alternative means to internet access.
- Raise awareness about the crimes in Darfur and engage with the United Nations on providing effective civilian protection. Target illegal gold trade which is one of the main financial resources that support RSF militia, a driver of conflict, and penalize those who support the illegal gold trade.

Support Democratic Transformation

The people of Sudan are determined to establish a legitimate civilian transitional government that will lead to and facilitate free and fair elections. The people are saying no to the recent agreement between the military coup leader, General Burhan, and Prime Minister Hamdok and to any negotiations or partnerships with the military.

- Listen to and support the will of the Sudanese people. Take time and avoid getting ahead of their process. Initiating or supporting agreements with illegitimate and criminal actors in concert with regional anti-democratic monarchies undermines the credibility and influence of the United States as a democratic transformation ally, especially among Sudan's youth, the largest and most influential demographic in Sudan.
- Support legislation by Congress or issue an Executive Order that provides the necessary tools to impose consequences (targeted sanctions) on those in Sudan and in the region who impede the democratic process, commit atrocities or human rights abuses, or participate in and benefit from kleptocracy.
- Engage with and build the capacity of Sudan's Resistance Committees, the leaders of the peoples' movement. There is no better beneficiary of the U.S. commitment to democracy than the people of Sudan who consistently demonstrate extraordinary courage and commitment to peacefully achieving democratic ideals.
- Direct humanitarian or economic support through non-governmental channels until a legitimate civilian-led government is in place. Encourage a common international position and discourage unilateral decisions to direct economic support to a regime

that lacks legitimacy and is failing to address economic mismanagement. Focus on fighting corruption, increasing openness and transparency, and mitigating the impact of the transition on the people of Sudan.

- Engage, as conditions allow, on the reform of the security sector so as to facilitate a transition to a unified armed forces structure without multiple independent militias, with a single reporting line to the Council of Ministers and funded through a transparent budget process.
- Appoint a Special Envoy to Sudan. Effective U.S. engagement in Sudan requires full-time, experienced, senior-level diplomatic engagement to support the people of Sudan as they address the crisis created by the coup and navigate a way forward to democratic transformation.

Mr. President, as you said in advance of the recent Democracy Summit, democracy does not happen by accident. It requires that we defend, fight, strengthen and renew it. The Sudanese people are doing their part. We urge the United States to stand with the people of Sudan. Genuine democratic transformation is the best assurance for lasting peace and stability.

Respectfully,

Girifna

Sudan NextGen

Sudan Taskforce

Sudanese American Physicians Association

Sudanese American Public Affairs Association

Association of Sudanese-American Professors in America (ASAPA)

The Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa-SIHA

Never Again Coalition

Crane Center for Mass Atrocity Prevention

New York Coalition for Sudan

Pittsburgh Darfur Emergency Coalition

Darfur and Beyond

Our Humanity in the Balance

Jewish World Watch

Brooklyn Coalition for Darfur and Marginalized Sudan

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Mike Capuano, former Member of Congress and founder of the Congressional Caucus on Sudan and South Sudan

The Baroness Cox, Independent Member of the House of Lords

Jonathan Hutson, Writer and Human Rights Researcher

USESA (US – Educated Students Association)

Sudan Unlimited

cc: Senate Foreign Relations Committee

House Foreign Affairs Committee