



Oslo Donors' Conference on Sudan 2005

Sudanese Women's Priorities and Recommendations to the Oslo Donors' Conference on Sudan¹

11-12 April 2005

¹ These recommendations are an outcome of a consultative process culminating in a Symposium on Women's Rights and Leadership in Post-Conflict Sudan, held in Oslo 10 April 2005, under the auspices of Government of Norway, the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

We, the Sudanese women delegates from all regions, comprising representatives from the Government of Sudan, the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), civil society and academic institutions, met in Oslo on 10 April 2005 with the objectives of defining our priorities in advocating for donor support for gender equality and women's rights in post-conflict Sudan. We met under the auspices of the Government of Norway, the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). This effort was also supported by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union, South African Women in Dialogue, the UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador for Africa and other United Nations agencies.²

Guided by UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, the African Union Protocol on Women's Human Rights, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, the IGAD Gender Policy, as well as other existing commitments, principles, goals and actions set out in the various national, regional, continental and international instruments on women's human rights

Cognizant of the huge impact of war on women and women's human rights, the erosion of capacities of women and the fundamental divisions that war creates;

Deeply concerned by the continued existence of conflict in some parts of Sudan, especially the Darfurs, and its impact on women and children;

Recognizing women's role in peace-building, peacemaking, reconstruction and sustaining families and communities amidst the ravages of war, poverty and HIV/AIDS and women's fundamental human right to be full and equal partners in all sectors and at all levels, from local through national, but *bearing in mind* the different status of women in the different areas of Sudan;

And *lauding* the effort made to mainstream gender throughout the JAM, while *underlining* the importance of women-specific programmes and projects;

We the women delegates do recommend the following minimum urgent priorities and actions for reconstruction during the interim period:

I. GOVERNANCE AND RULE OF LAW

- Adhere to equal citizenship rights and obligations for women and men.
- Recognizing the principle of 50% equal representation for women and men as enshrined in the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality and the IGAD Gender Policy, but cognizant of the context, situation and issues at stake, we recommend 30% as a minimum threshold for women's representation at all levels and in all sectors. This includes:
 - Immediate inclusion of at least 30% representation by women in the Constitution-making and review processes.
 - A minimum representation of 30% for women in decision-making positions at all levels, including transitional institutions and all commissions established under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).
- Support urgent legislative reform in the area of political, economic and family rights.

² Mrs. Zanele Mbeki from South African Women in Dialogue; Hon Phoebe Asiyo, UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador for Africa; and Atsede Zerfu, Programme Manager Gender Affairs/IGAD; the JAM team; DPKO; UNFPF; UNICEF; UNHCR; and UNDP.

- Support urgent programmes for addressing negative customs and practices which continue to foster women's marginalization and exclusion in all spheres of life.
- Support and enhance women's effective political participation and leadership at all levels, including within political parties with a strong and urgent support to capacity building for women's leadership.
- Ensure the representation of women in the monitoring mechanisms of the CPA and all peace missions.
- Ensure women's full participation in the Darfur peace process in compliance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the African Union Protocol on Women's Human Rights.

II. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- Ensure the protection of women and girls in terms of safety from sexual and gender-based violence, especially in war-affected areas.
- Create and strengthen institutional mechanisms so that women and girls can report acts of violence against them in a safe and confidential environment.
- Enact legislation to protect women from sexual and gender-based violence and to end impunity for perpetrators thereof.
- Increase ease of access to support services for survivors, including psychosocial counseling and ready availability of post-exposure prophylaxis kits.
- Recognize the importance of HIV/AIDS in relation to human security as outlined in Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) and ensure adequate education and awareness-raising, prevention and treatment on HIV/AIDS, specifically in connection with gender-based violence.
- Collect and consolidate research and data on the impact of gender-based violence on women and girls, including as a result of armed conflict.

III. CAPACITY BUILDING AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Establish a Ministry of Women and Gender Equality with full resources, as provided for in the Comprehensive peace agreement, and create gender divisions in all other sectors.
- Establish a women's fund within the Multi-donor Trust Fund (MDTF) for women-specific programmes, and ensure a formal role for women's organizations in the management and disbursement of funds.
- Enhance capacity of women and women's organizations to provide support services, engage in policy and be fully involved in the reconstruction effort.
- Strengthen capacity of all national institutions of gender equality/equity (at all levels of development)
- Establish women's resource centres for refugees, internally displaced women and returnees at state, provincial and district levels.
- Build capacity for gender planning, gender analysis and gender-responsive resource allocation in all institutions and at all levels.

IV. ECONOMIC POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

- Formulate pro-poor economic policies and poverty eradication and wealth creation strategies that adequately address the needs and rights of women and girls.
- Ensure women's economic empowerment through access to entrepreneurship and loan programmes, economic opportunities and marketing, and by facilitating access of women-owned small and micro-enterprises to advisory services, appropriate technology and micro-finance.
- Support women's associations in the various economic sectors, with a special focus on agriculture and pastoralism.
- Formulate and implement laws for meeting women's ownership and access to property, especially land income and employment opportunities.
- Provide access to information on business opportunities in the reconstruction period, including by enhancing the capacity of women's organizations to implement donor contracts and by giving them priority as contractors.
- Cancel debt and ensure that the benefits of such cancellation benefit women, children and communities.

IV. LIVELIHOODS AND PRODUCTIVE SECTORS

- Provide appropriate knowledge, technology and support in women's efforts for food security and economic empowerment.
- Provide alternative financial farm credit to women and men (farming implements/ materials: fertilizers, seeds, hoes, wheel-barrows, ox-ploughs, and tractors, among others), and give priority to women farmers in view of the fact that they have a key responsibility of providing for their families.
- Supporting women's business and farmers' associations.
- Involve and grant full access to women combatants in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) processes, in line with Security Council resolution 1590 (2005).
- Prioritize allocation of targeted programmes to support the reintegration of (women associated with the war within the framework of DDR.
- Within the context of security sector reform, and particularly the police services, increase recruitment of women and establish special police units to deal with gender-based violence crimes and crimes against children.

V. BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES

Health

- Provide access to safe drinking water.
- Support programmes to halt the spread of communicable diseases and other public health issues, including the impact of environmental degradation on health.
- Enforce and/or enact laws to eradicate all harmful traditional practices that have an impact on the health of women and girls.

- Provide free comprehensive reproductive health services in every state, with at least one maternity hospital, well equipped with facilities and at least one ambulance for emergency cases.
- Support and facilitate the introduction of mobile outreach clinics and establish community-based pharmacies, to be managed and owned by the communities.
- Strengthen gender-responsive HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and access to antiretroviral drugs, including by establishing voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) centers at the community level and strengthening HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns throughout the country.

Education

- Provide free and compulsory primary education to all girls and boys.
- Support reform of the education system, including curricula (gender mainstreaming), training, feeding programmes and improved school environment.
- Reduce gender disparities in education enrolment and drop-out rates for primary, secondary, tertiary and post-graduate levels, with priority given to war-affected and marginalized areas.
- Provide education and training for adolescent girls.
- Establish a special scholarship and bursary fund for the education of girls, especially those from families with limited resources, widows and war orphans.
- Establish special education programmes and schools for children with disabilities.
- Promote and support accelerated adult education, adult literacy programmes and functional literacy that directly target women, particularly in South Sudan.
- Introduce and support vocational training opportunities for adult learners, targeting women in particular.
- Support multi-media information and communication strategies, especially radio services, for communities with high levels of illiteracy and limited access to communication infrastructure.

IN CONCLUSION

We call upon this donor conference to commit to principles of gender responsive resource allocation so that at least 80% of budgetary allocations and resource support to Sudan's reconstruction meet at least three of the following criteria:

- Directly benefiting women, contributing directly to women's empowerment and increasing women's capacities, opportunities and access to resources;
- Reducing gender inequalities in law, policy and practice;
- Directly benefiting young people, especially girls, in disadvantaged communities;
- Targeting rural areas.

We also call on the donor community to provide financial support towards the hosting of an all inclusive Sudanese Women's Conference that would define a coherent, long-term agenda and strategy for accelerating women's empowerment and gender equality/equity. We call on the support of IGAD, the African Union, the United Nations and especially UNIFEM to facilitate the hosting of such a conference. Such a conference should prioritize inputs from grassroots communities through Regional Preparatory Conferences, and must include the private sector,

civil society, non-governmental organizations, diaspora, returnees, refugees and IDPs, professionals and international personalities.

We call on the United Nations to engage women's organizations in support of the newly established UN Peace Keeping mission in Sudan, particularly with regards to awareness-raising and education about the role and mandate of the peacekeeping mission, UN codes of conduct, including disciplinary measures that govern behaviour of peacekeepers and about community strategies and safeguards to prevent any possible incidences of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers.

We call for dedicated funding to support an independent women's watchdog mechanism that will monitor implementation of the above recommendations.

And finally, we do appreciate the support provided by the Government of Norway and its institutions, the United Nations and especially UNIFEM in mainstreaming our participation and our concerns in this process and call for the recognition of institutions such as UNIFEM and IGAD in their capacities and mandates towards women.