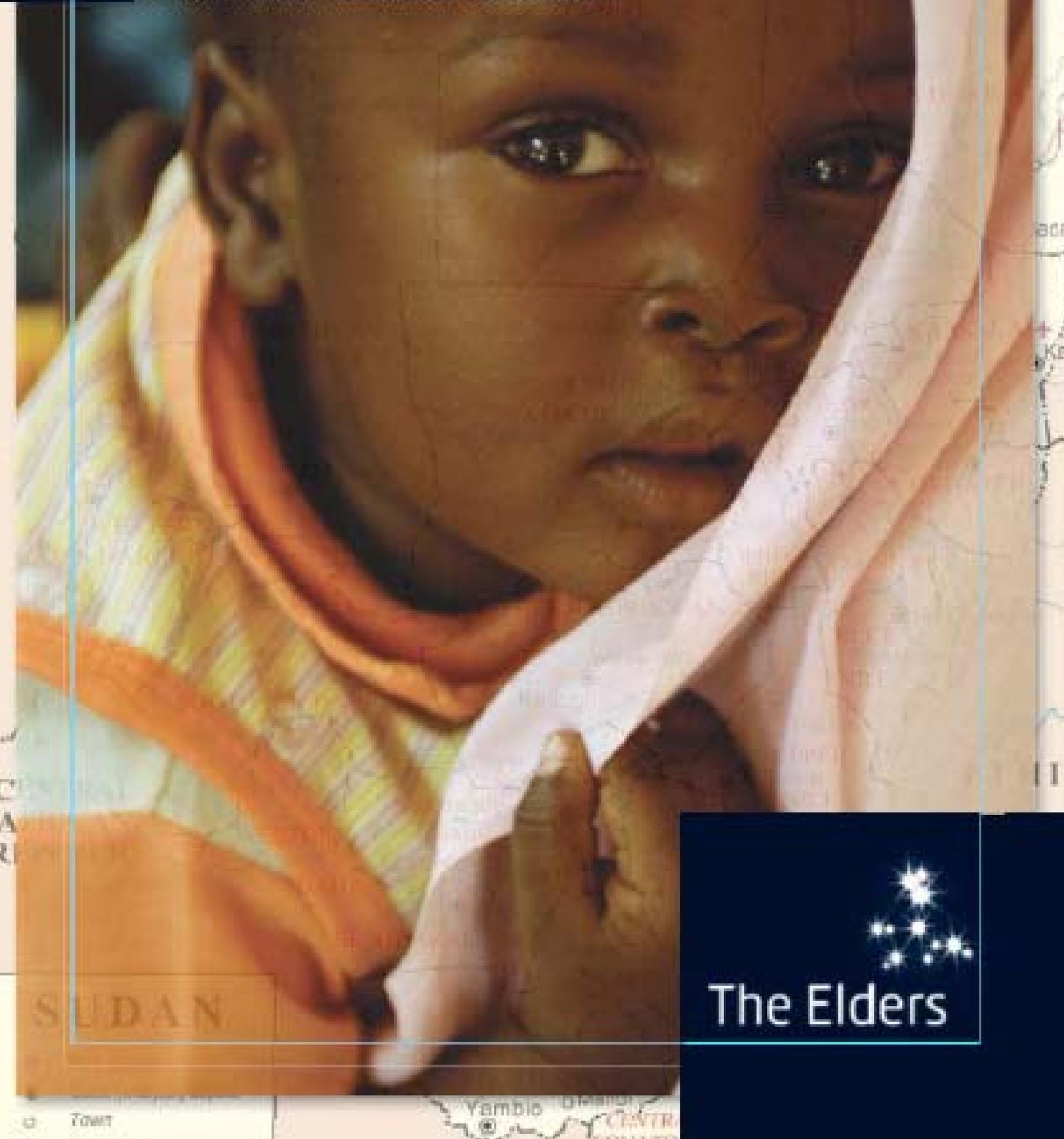


Bringing Hope,
Forging Peace

The Elders' Mission to Sudan



The Elders

Dear Friends:

We chose to go to Sudan for The Elders' first mission because we could not turn our eyes from the humanitarian crisis, and we wanted to join with the many people around the world who have worked to stop the atrocities, protect the people, and contribute to peace.

Our mission offered us a chance to listen, learn and report on the views of the people of Sudan. The four of us do not represent governments or intergovernmental organizations. We represent thirteen Elders from around the world. We act only as individuals and a group of men and women who have lived long, learned much, and are united in the belief that we must do everything in our power to contribute to bring peace where it is absent, justice where it has been denied, and dignity where it is under attack. We want to amplify the voices of people who are not heard and give hope to the marginalized and help to the peacemakers.

While in Sudan we heard from a wide spectrum of voices, some optimistic and helpful, some weary by life's difficulties. They shared with us countless stories of pain, frustration and anger at the continuing violence and conflict in their lives. In every camp, city or town, people stood before us in the midst of such horror with dignity and conviction and asked us to tell their stories and urge the world to act.

The international community has taken many steps—pressed by the people of the world—in the last few years to try to bring peace and justice to Sudan. We must continue to work together to end the violence and secure a brighter future for all the people of Sudan.

Therefore, with humility, we submit our report on Sudan. We wish to acknowledge the support and advice of the United Nations and the African Union and our appreciation to our many Sudanese hosts for their hospitality. We also credit the immense support and friendship of our Founders, in particular those who joined us on the mission: Richard Branson, Shannon Sedgwick Davis, Randy Newcomb, Pam Omidyar and Amy Robbins. We could not have had such a productive mission or drafted this report without the tireless support and expertise of our staff: Robert Pastor, interim co-director of The Elders; Gayle Smith, senior advisor; Semhar Araia, program officer; Sara Latham, communications director, and our logistics team, Penelope Williams, Rick Jasculca, Andrew Jasculca, Laura Vonderhaar and Karla Bailey; and, finally, Maria Pahigiannis, Jeffrey Lunstead, Anthony Elmo, Siobhan Farey, Marguerite Jimenez, and Mana Zarinejad, who helped support the mission and prepare the report.

Sincerely,

Desmond Tutu
Chairman, The Elders

Lakhdar Brahimi

Jimmy Carter

Graça Machel

Executive Summary

Convened on July 18, 2007, in South Africa by Nelson Mandela, Graça Machel, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, The Elders include 10 other world leaders who have joined together to confront seemingly intractable crises and to share their wisdom on global challenges.

For its first mission, four of The Elders traveled to Sudan to assess the situation in Darfur and affirm the group's support of the fragile peace negotiated between North and South Sudan in the two-year-old Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). We began our trip in Khartoum, where we met with Sudanese President Omar el-Bashir, other government officials, and representatives of opposition political parties, the United Nations, the African Union, the diplomatic community and international organizations, including humanitarian agencies. We then went on to Juba, where we met with the leadership of the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS). Finally, we flew to Darfur to meet with tribal leaders, women's groups, civil society leaders, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). We sought the opinions of all we met and shared our own frank assessments with both the powerful and the powerless.

We learned that Sudan is at a turning point in its history. It could sink into a new spiral of violence if the CPA breaks down and if the conflict in Darfur worsens. Or it could follow the promise of the CPA and the bold statement of the United Nations in its Security Council Resolution 1769 and find its path to democracy and peace.

Recommendations

We join with all those who have moved the world community to pay attention to Darfur and Sudan. As Elders with long and diverse experiences, we know the world has within its power the ability to help protect the people of Darfur from further violence, bring peace to communities torn apart, and contribute to guiding the country toward democracy and human security. We believe that this power must be applied, collectively and swiftly, to end the untold suffering of millions of innocent Sudanese.

- **Immediate Ceasefire.** Lawlessness and insecurity has bred a culture of violence throughout the camps and the rest of Darfur. The conflict is escalating—with aerial bombardments, the increased flow of arms, and the growing incidence of looting and theft further threatening the camps. Women and young girls are often subjected to rape and gender-based violence. Because these violations often go unreported, the perpetrators act with impunity. **The Government of Sudan, Darfur rebel groups and Janjaweed militias must commit and adhere to an immediate ceasefire, disarmament and return to the rule of law.**

- **Inclusive Peace Must be the Priority.** Achieving a viable and long term peace in Sudan—in Darfur, the South and elsewhere—requires a sustained commitment to inclusive dialogue and mediation, backed by the international community. **The Darfur negotiations must include all parties to the conflict, both armed and unarmed. Additionally, the CPA must be honored by both parties and implemented according to schedule for all of Sudan, including Darfur.**

- **Democracy is Key.** Democracy has to be the centerpiece of a sustainable peace. Full civic participation and free elections provide the best means of ensuring that human rights are respected, that disputes are solved peacefully, and that human security is assured to all. We are pleased that the Carter Center has been invited to monitor the electoral process. **To fulfill the promise of democracy and good governance, the government should fully fund the national census and consult with all parties to develop a new electoral law and institutions prior to the 2009 elections.**

- **Rapid Deployment of Peacekeeping Force.** UNAMID, the hybrid United Nations/African Union peacekeeping mission for Darfur authorized by the UN Security Council, must be fully equipped and deployed according to schedule. To date, the international community has not provided the civilian and military equipment and other support necessary to ensure UNAMID's success.

Existing pledges must be honored and specialized support provided on an urgent basis. At the same time, the Government of Sudan must live up to its commitments and accept that UNAMID will be a predominantly African force with non-African support.

• Humanitarian Agencies Must be Free to Operate. At present neither Darfur's citizens nor the international and Sudanese humanitarian workers dedicated to assisting them are safe from direct attacks by bandits, rebels, militia and government forces. Raids on civilians and attacks on the camps continue. For any party claiming to champion the human rights, dignity and security of Darfur's people, the reality on the ground is a stark reminder that their actions do not match their words. **All parties must take immediate steps to protect civilians and humanitarian operations. The Government of Sudan must honor its responsibilities and enforce the rule of law by adhering to the Joint Humanitarian Communiqué so that humanitarian operations can continue without interference or disruption.**

Executive Summary, Arabic

الموجز التنفيذي

كما قابلنا أعضاء من الهيئة الدبلوماسية وكذلك ممثلي المنظمات الدولية، بما فيها الوكالات الانسانية. بعد ذلك توجهنا إلى جوبا حيث التقينا بقيادة حكومة جنوب السودان. وفي الأخير، سافرنا إلى دارفور للقاء بشيوخ القبائل وبالجمعيات النسائية وزعماء المجتمع المدني وكذا الأشخاص المرحلون داخليا. وقد إلتمسنا الرأي من كل الذين قابلنا كما أطلعنا الجميع على حد سواء على تقييمنا الصريح للوضع.

لقد أدركنا أن السودان يقف عند نقطة تحول في تاريخه، فإما أن يغرق في دوامة عنف جديدة في حالة انهيار اتفاق السلام الشامل وتردي النزاع في دارفور. أو أن يستجيب لتطلعات اتفاق السلام الشامل وبيان الامم المتحدة الجريء الذي تضمنه قرار مجلس الامن 1769 ليسلك طريقه الى الديمقراطية والسلام.

عقد اجتماع بتاريخ 18 يوليو 2007 في جنوب افريقيا، وضم كل من نلسون مانديلا وغارسا مينشل والقس ديسموند توتو، في إطار مبادرة الخيرين التي تشمل عشرة زعماء عالمين آخرين، اجتمعوا ليتعاونوا جميعا لمواجهة الأزمات التي تبدو مستعصية، وكذلك بغية تبادل آرائهم المتبصرة ورشدهم حول التحديات العالمية.

لتنفيذ المهمة الأولى، سافر أربعة من الخيرين إلى السودان لتقييم الوضع في منطقة دارفور ولتأكيد دعم المجموعة للسلام الهش بين شمال وجنوب السودان الذي يضبطه اتفاق السلام الشامل المبرم منذ سنتين. بدأنا جولتنا بالخرطوم، حيث التقينا بالرئيس عمر البشير ومسؤولين آخرين من الحكومة وممثلي الأحزاب السياسية المعارضة، وممثلي الأمم المتحدة والإتحاد الافريقي،

التوصيات

• **ضرورة النشر السريع لقوة حفظ السلام.** إن بعثة الأمم المتحدة والاتحاد الأفريقي لدارفور (اليوناميد) وهي بعثة مشتركة تجمع بين الأمم المتحدة والاتحاد الأفريقي مفوضة من طرف مجلس الأمن، يتعين تجهيزها بشكل كامل ونشرها حسب جدول زمني. إلا أنه وحتى الآن، فإن المجتمع الدولي لم يوفر بعد التجهيزات والقوات المدنية والعسكرية ووسائل الدعم الأخرى لضمان نجاح مهمة (اليوناميد) في دارفور. فهناك تعهدات يجب الوفاء بها كما يستلزم توفير الدعم المتخصص بشكل عاجل. وفي نفس الوقت، على حكومة السودان أن تفي بالتزاماتها وأن تقبل بأن تكون (اليوناميد) مشكّلة من غالبية قوات أفريقية دون دعم أفريقي.

• **ضرورة السماح للمنظمات الإنسانية العمل بحرية كاملة.** في الوقت الحاضر، لا مواطني دارفور ولا العاملين في المنظمات الإنسانية السودانية والدولية المخصصة مساعدتهم في مأمّن من الاعتداءات المباشرة للصّوص، والمتمردين والملبّثيات والقوات الحكومية. فالغارات تشن على المدنيين والهجمات على المخيمات مستمرة. فنقول لأي طرف يدعي نصرة حقوق الإنسان والكرامة والأمن لشعب دارفور، أن الواقع الميداني يعد بمثابة تذكير صارخ بأن أعمالهم لا تتطابق مع أقوالهم. فعلى كافة الأطراف أن تتخذ خطوات فورية لحماية المدنيين والعمليات الإنسانية. وعلى حكومة السودان أن تضطلع بمسؤولياتها وأن تفرض سيادة القانون وذلك بالالتزام في بلاغ رسمي إنساني مشترك حتى يتسنى للعمليات ذات الطابع الإنساني الاستمرار بدون تدخل أو تعطيل.

إننا ننضم الى كل الذين سعوا إلى تحريك المجتمع الدولي لكي يولي الاهتمام لدارفور والسودان. وكخبرون بتجاربنا الطويلة والغنية، ندرك أن للعالم القدرة على المساعدة لحماية شعب دارفور من المزيد من أعمال العنف وجلب السلم للجماعات الممزقة ، كما يوسع العالم المساهمة في توجيه البلد نحو الديمقراطية والأمن الإنساني. لذا فنحن نعتقد أنه يتعين استخدام هذه القدرة بصفة جماعية وعاجلة ، لإنهاء المعاناة اللامحدودة للملايين من الأبرياء السودانيين.

• **وقف إطلاق النار الفوري.** لقد ولدت الفوضى وانعدام الأمن ثقافة العنف في جميع أرجاء المخيمات وبقية دارفور. فالنزاع

يزداد حدة بسبب القصف الجوي وتدفق الأسلحة المتزايد وأحداث النهب والسرقة المتوالية التي تهدد المخيمات.

كما أن النساء والفتيات يتعرضن للاغتصاب والعنف، ولأن هذه الانتهاكات غالبا ما تمر دون الإبلاغ عنها، لذا فإن مرتكبيها يفلتون من العقاب. فعلى حكومة السودان وجماعات متمردية دارفور وملبّثيات الجنجاويد الالتزام بالدخول في وقف إطلاق نار فوري، ونزع السلاح والعودة إلى سيادة القانون.

• **السلام الشامل يجب أن يكون الأولوية.** لتحقيق سلام عملي وطويل الأمد في السودان ودارفور والجنوب والمناطق الأخرى، يستدعي الإلتزام الدائم بالحوار الشامل والوساطة، المدعومة من طرف المجتمع الدولي. فمفاوضات دارفور يجب أن تشمل كافة أطراف النزاع ، المسلحة وغير المسلحة على حد السواء. كما يجب أن يحترم اتفاق السلام الشامل من قبل الطرفين وأن تنفذ أحكامه حسب جدول زمني في كافة السودان بما في ذلك دارفور.

• **الديمقراطية هي الحل.** يتعين أن تكون الديمقراطية هي محور السلام الدائم. إن المشاركة المدنية الكاملة والانتخابات الحرة توفر أفضل السبل لضمان احترام حقوق الإنسان ، وأن تحل الخلافات بطرق سلمية ، وبأن يكون الأمن الإنساني مضمون للجميع. ونحن سعداء بأن مركز الرئيس كارتر قد تمت دعوته لرصد العملية. ومن أجل الوفاء بالتعهد بتعزيز الديمقراطية والحكم الرشيد، يتعين على

Bringing Hope, Forging Peace

The Elders' Mission to Sudan

Sudan on a Knife Edge

The future of Darfur, and indeed the whole of Sudan, sits on a knife edge. On one side, peace is within reach, and innocent civilians could finally be secure. On the other side is a new cycle of violence and despair with devastating consequences for the entire country.

The fate of the people of Sudan is precariously balanced on that edge.

This is the moment of truth for the people of Sudan and it is a moment of truth for the international community. Only with the commitment of all the parties inside Sudan and the determined involvement of friends, allies, neighbors and fellow citizens can the people of Sudan find their way to peace.

We traveled to Sudan from September 30 to October 4, 2007—to Khartoum, then to Juba in the southern region of Sudan, and finally to El-Fasher, Nyala, and Kebkabiya in Darfur. We went as members of The Elders, a group convened by Nelson Mandela, Graça Machel, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and ten other influential world leaders. The Elders was created to confront seemingly intractable crises, to share wisdom on global concerns, and to help build a future shaped by our common humanity. The concept of The Elders is rooted in tradition and reflects our desire to help contribute to a better world.

We do not represent governments or intergovernmental organizations. We act only in our individual capacities as men and women who have lived long, learned much, and are united in the belief that we must do everything in our power to contribute to bring peace where it is absent, justice where it is being denied, and dignity where it is under attack.

We chose Darfur as our first mission because it is a blight on the conscience of humanity; because it is in Africa, where The Elders' initiative was launched; and because this is a moment when resolution and justice are possible and failure is unacceptable. We believe that the world has within its power the ability to help protect the people of Darfur from further violence, bring peace to communities torn asunder, and contribute to putting Darfur and all of Sudan on the path to stability, tolerance and democracy.

We believe peace is possible because the various parties to the conflicts have already taken steps that many had felt were inconceivable—the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed by the Government of Sudan in Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) in January 2005; the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), which was signed by the Government of Sudan and one rebel group, Minni Minawi's faction of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) in May 2006; the agreement between the Government of Sudan and the United Nations (UN) to protect humanitarian workers in March 2007; and finally, UN Security Council Resolution 1769 to deploy a robust peacekeeping force to protect civilians, approved unanimously in July 2007. Taken together, these small steps combine to a great leap, and no one should minimize their significance as they could—if properly implemented—end the untold suffering of millions of innocent Sudanese. Each step is at risk. Those with the greatest stake in failure or success—the people of Darfur—are united in their demands for security, peace, and justice.

Framework for Security and Peace

The crisis in Sudan is a crisis of governance—or rather the lack of it. Darfur is an impoverished region where increased pressure on land and water has given rise to growing tensions, and where the central government has rejected the legitimate demands of the people to participate in their nation's decisions and to share in its new found oil wealth. In the wake of a rebellion in 2003, grave crimes against humanity were perpetrated against innocent people. Armed militia—known locally as the Janjaweed—were given license by the government to assault the people and displace them from their homes.

At the same time, Darfur is home to a war that pits the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) against a growing array of armed rebel movements. With peace still elusive, a growing number of armed rebel groups are fighting one another. They are attacking humanitarian workers, the civilian population whom they claim to defend, and the African Union (AU) forces in order to obtain money, vehicles, fuel, and weapons. It is a humanitarian crisis with hundreds of thousands of people killed, over 2 million uprooted and forced to live in makeshift displaced or refugee camps in Darfur or Chad, and more than half of Darfur's total population adversely affected in some way. Darfur's youth are being deprived of the freedom to live as children, and its women and girls are subjected to unbearable humiliations and far too often, even to horrible rapes and other gender-based violence.

Finally, Darfur's current crisis stems from a peace agreement that has failed to keep the peace. The signatory parties have violated the DPA and the non-signatories have yet to accept or negotiate its terms.

We learned that neither the crisis in Darfur nor its resolution exists in isolation. Sudan's many crises are interconnected. In particular, the future of Darfur is intertwined with the future of Southern Sudan and the success—or failure—of the CPA.

The CPA brought an end to over two decades of brutal war in the South and paved the way for peace by providing for representation in the Khartoum government by representatives of the South, establishing a new and more equitable mechanism for sharing Sudan's national resources and wealth, setting the stage for national elections in 2009, and offering the people of Southern Sudan the opportunity to vote on their future status in a referendum scheduled for 2011.

Many of the core principles of the CPA are relevant to Darfur. Most importantly, the promise of national elections in 2009 offers the people of Darfur and the entire country the chance to elect their representatives at both the regional and national levels. The success of the CPA is Darfur's dream; its failure is Darfur's nightmare.

The international community, meanwhile, has committed to provide two of the other critical ingredients for progress. The first is the deployment of a hybrid peacekeeping force — United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID)—mandated to protect the citizens of Darfur and composed of UN and AU forces. The second is a reinvigorated peace process, mediated by the UN and the AU, which was launched in Libya on October 27, 2007. It is our strong belief that the resolution of the multiple crises in Sudan require success on three fronts: (1) the implementation of the CPA, including elections, (2) the swift deployment of a peacekeeping force in Darfur with the mandate and capabilities to provide security and civilian protection, and (3) a sustained and credible peace process in Darfur. Our mission was designed not simply to do our own analysis. Its purpose was fundamentally to listen to the people on the ground, for at the core of Darfur's crisis is the simple fact that those who have the greatest stake in the future have the least voice in defining it.

Listening to Darfuris

In Darfur our aim was to talk to as many Darfuris as possible—women’s groups, youth, traditional leaders, local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) representatives, teachers, and residents of the Internally Displaced Persons’ (IDP) camps. In at least one case, local government security forces attempted to restrict us from meeting freely with the people of our choice, but we did not accept this. This incident sent a message that was received by senior government officials, and we reinforced it by saying that we expected that nothing untoward would happen to the people we met or the humanitarian workers of the UN and other organizations who helped arrange our meetings.

We listened to as many people and leaders from the region as we could in the limited time we were able to spend on the ground in Darfur. We visited three sites—El-Fasher, Kebkabiya, and Nyala—and met with people from local IDP camps. What impressed us the most was the consistency, coherence, and emotional weight of all of the messages we heard.

Without question or exception, the paramount concern of all of the Darfuri civilians with whom we spoke is security. They cannot return to their homes not just because most have been destroyed, but because they know it is unsafe. Their accounts of life in the camps demonstrate that security remains a problem even for the displaced. Their camps are attacked. They and their families are attacked when moving outside camp perimeters. They live in fear that escalating conflict between government, Janjaweed, and rebel forces will further destabilize their already fragile lives.

We found the accounts of people’s flight to the camps and their lives as displaced people chilling. We have dozens of stories, but we will try to capture their collective plight in a few examples. Women and men alike told us that traditional authority is fast breaking down in the camps, where most residents are entering their fifth year of residence. To call these “camps” is to be generous; in most cases, people are living in ramshackle shelters constructed of small bits of wood, mud and torn plastic sheeting that neither shields them from the elements nor offers them privacy. The able-bodied are without work or hope of securing jobs. While the majority want to return home, they have neither the means nor, given the worsening security situation, the opportunity. While they expressed appreciation for the humanitarian assistance being provided, they want to free themselves from lives of dependence.

We were told that among children—who are, remarkably, able to access some educational programs provided by national and international NGOs—the cost of the crisis is dramatic and may be enduring. Their drawings are of guns and the Janjaweed; their games are shaped by violence. In some of the camps, we learned that youth gangs are emerging, mirroring the deepening ethnic divisions in Darfur and focused on attacking children who represent “the other.” Parents and community elders told us that their ability to guide the children is made more difficult by their inability to present a credible picture of the future.

More shocking were the consistent and persistent accounts of rape—of young girls, of mothers, and of elderly women. Women gave graphic accounts of sexual assault, in some cases. When alone with women from our delegation, they lifted their clothing to show their scars. They described rape as a growing norm, and fear of sexual attack as the primary impediment to undertaking their daily tasks of fetching water or gathering firewood. Some of the young girls we met were unable to speak, but others voiced their anger with the oppression embodied in rape: the humiliation of violation, the pain of violence and the constant distress of silence in a culture that tends to hide, rather than heal, this egregious crime against humanity.

While appreciative of the efforts and presence of AU forces, Darfuris are eager—and in some cases desperate—for the arrival of the UNAMID force. If anything, their expectations are dangerously high. They believe the mission will protect them from attacks, enable them to move freely outside the camps, and ultimately return to their homes. In essence, they believe—and hope—that the peacekeeping force will “solve” the problem of armed violence. They expressed

high hopes for the mission but conveyed considerable frustration that UNAMID has not yet been deployed and fear the consequences should deployment be unduly delayed.

While we share their confidence in the potential for UNAMID to provide protection, we are concerned by the high expectations vested in this large and complex mission. Significantly, the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of UNAMID before a comprehensive and durable peace agreement had been achieved. That agreement remains elusive.

There is not yet a peace to keep. UNAMID is urgently needed for civilian protection and cannot be expected to “solve” the crisis in Darfur or even successfully sustain its mission over time unless a viable peace agreement is reached and implemented. Darfuris know of the peace talks, but they are concerned that their views might not be represented. Repeatedly, they argued that neither the government nor the rebels can be trusted to represent them. Most were aware of and supported the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) group, an entity established in the DPA and designed to enlist the views of Darfur’s civil society. They said they can identify possible participants, but did not know if they would be asked. They appealed to The Elders to help them send civil society representatives to Libya and future talks. On the particulars of the peace talks, people spoke of three critical issues. First, we heard that compensation is important, but should include: (a) individual compensation to right particular wrongs, (b) mass compensation for the displaced, and (c) financing for the reconstruction of their homes and villages.

Second, we heard that people will not return home until they are assured of security and the disarmament of those who have displaced them. Third, we heard the strong view that all rebel groups should participate in the talks. Specifically, people spoke of Abdul Wahid Nur, the self-exiled leader of an SLA faction who is boycotting the talks. Nur, who currently resides in Paris, says that until the UN force has been deployed, he does not want to negotiate. Many of the people with whom we spoke described Nur as a patriot, but strongly expressed that he needs to attend peace talks and would betray the process by remaining in Paris. We also heard that some of his followers tried to prevent civil society representatives from participating in the peace process.

Finally, people expressed enthusiasm—and skepticism—about the elections scheduled for 2009. In the words of many, elections—if free and fair—would give them their voices back. No one we met had been consulted about the census or an election law, and some worried that the process could be manipulated to entrench the government or accommodate rebel leaders without ever addressing their concerns or interests.

Voices of Influence

In Khartoum, we met with influential Sudanese leaders, including members of opposition political parties, NGOs, and other citizens dedicated to bringing the Darfur crisis to an end. These meetings were striking for two reasons. First, people spoke frankly and without apparent fear of criticizing the government; second, and despite their displeasure with the government's policies, they had some hope for the future.

All of our interlocutors spoke of the underlying problems created by poverty and exacerbated by drought, accelerated desertification and the shrinking arable land available to a fast growing population. They spoke of three fundamental causes. First, Darfur's crisis is rooted in marginalization and poverty, and the failure of successive governments to ensure more equitable development and distribution of wealth. These longstanding problems, they told us, have been exacerbated by the discovery of oil, which has generated wealth for Khartoum, but has yielded few economic benefits for the rest of Sudan.

Second, most expressed the view that the emphasis on ethnic and tribal differences in Darfur is oversimplified. Several people suggested that the portrayal of a conflict between "African" and "Arab" tribes misrepresents the culture of Darfur, and exacerbates tensions by inferring that all of the Arab tribes are at fault. The absence of democracy is a significant problem. They told us that good and effective governance in Darfur required both free elections and the return to power and influence of some of Darfur's traditional leaders who have been recently replaced.

Third, they spoke of the difference between consulting the people of Darfur—whether in matters of national governance or peace talks—and including the people of Darfur. They viewed the DDDC group as critical, but insufficient, and repeatedly came back to the fundamental need for the electoral process to accelerate to permit genuinely free elections by 2009. While they support the peace talks, they expressed the view that both the Darfur talks and the negotiations that led to the CPA are flawed by the absence of unarmed political opposition and representatives of civil society.

In their view, the crisis in Darfur is part and parcel of a larger, national crisis and is one that if left unresolved will lead to long-term instability in Sudan and crisis for the entire region. The solution, they believe, must be both national in character and inclusive in practice. They view elections as the best hope, but expressed concerns both about the fragility of the CPA and about the failure of the government to fund the census that is required before elections can take place. They firmly believe peace is neither attainable nor sustainable unless it is built on a bedrock of democracy and free elections.

The International Voice

During the course of our mission, we also met with representatives from the UN, AU, diplomatic missions, and international NGOs operating in Sudan. To all of them, and especially the UN, we owe a debt of gratitude for their professionalism and support of our mission.

The UN and the AU were united in their views that much depends on the successful implementation of the CPA, both because it serves as a model and the potential inspiration for resolution in Darfur but also because it provides for a framework of federalism, secular government, and free elections. They were similarly united in the view—shared by diplomatic and NGO representatives—that the most urgent issue is security, and the rapid deployment of a fully equipped UNAMID force.

Finally, they share the view that peace talks are critical, and all parties, including Nur, must engage in order to ensure that a durable peace emerges.

Three main issues dominated the concerns of the international representatives with whom we met. First, all expressed grave concerns about the dispute over the composition of UNAMID and the international community's failure to ensure that the force is fully equipped. The dispute revolves around the degree to which UNAMID is an African force. UN Security Council Resolution 1769 declares explicitly that "the Hybrid operation should have a predominantly African character." The Government of Sudan accepted the resolution but is now demanding that UNAMID be an exclusively African force. General Martin Luther Agwai, present commander of the AU force who will soon command the UNAMID force, told us UNAMID needs non-African troops to succeed. AU President Alpha Omar Konare now fully supports this view. African governments have committed the majority of troops for UNAMID, but the force also needs heavy equipment and military units to manage it, and these are only available from non-African countries. In our meetings with senior officials, we strongly encouraged flexibility on the part of the Sudanese Government, but they insisted on an exclusively African force. It is essential and urgent that UNAMID—composed of a majority of African battalions supplemented by non-African units with the equipment and trained personnel necessary to support the mission—be deployed and start tackling the formidable logistical problems, even before it assumes its urgent mission to protect. For example, it needs to secure sources of water to support the troops without depriving the local population of this vital but already scarce commodity. Both the UN and the AU conveyed to us the urgent need to move quickly and avoid further deployment delays. They also expressed concern that the international community has yet to offer critical lift capabilities, in particular armored helicopter units, to support the mission. The costs of delay were underscored while we were in Sudan. When AU troops were attacked at Haskanita, the AU could not come to their immediate defense because it does not have its own armored helicopters. It took 18 hours to reach the soldiers to evacuate the wounded.

The second issue raised was the peace talks. Both the UN and the AU have placed a high priority on the talks between the Darfuri rebels and the government, but said that progress also depends on the successful implementation of the CPA and on convincing the main rebel groups to participate.

Third, all of our international interlocutors expressed alarm at the dramatic shrinking of the "humanitarian space" for international NGOs and their Sudanese partners operating in Darfur. They reported a surge in vehicle hijackings and assaults and of growing violence in rural Darfur. This makes it difficult and sometimes impossible for humanitarian workers to reach people and deliver food and medicine. This situation has only grown worse since our departure, with agencies forced to evacuate their personnel from some parts of Darfur in response to new attacks.

Since our departure from Sudan, we have learned from various sources that Sudanese government forces forcibly relocated hundreds of IDPs, including women and children from

various camps, including Otash, which we visited. We urge the Government of Sudan to cease these forced relocations. Relocations should be voluntary.

Voices of Power

We had numerous meetings with senior officials of the Government of Sudan and National Congress Party (NCP), including two with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. We also traveled to Juba to meet with the leadership of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and other officials from the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS). While the tensions between the Sudanese government in Khartoum and the SPLM are palpable, it is worth noting points of agreement.

Both parties say they do not want war. They do want to successfully implement the CPA. Both agreed that the problems in implementation revolve around several key issues, including the demarcation of boundaries, the Abyei conflict, the disposition of the SAF and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) forces, and the allocation of national resources, particularly those generated from oil revenues. Their common identification of the core problems provides the basis for negotiation and resolution.

However, the lack of trust between the two sides is eroding the capacity for compromise. Each holds the other responsible for delays and obstruction. If the Assistance and Evaluation Commission (AEC) established by the CPA could help bring the two sides to agreement, progress might be achieved, but the AEC reports only to President al-Bashir and its recommendations remain secret. Something more is needed. The SPLM requested outside mediation and welcomed The Elders to provide it, but the Government of Sudan in Khartoum appears unready to take such a step.

Both parties agreed to invite The Carter Center to observe the electoral process and the elections of 2009. However, the national census that was to have been initiated by now and is required as the first step in the electoral process, has not begun. Neither the government nor the international community has provided the financial resources to carry out this effort to date. On Darfur, the government expressed its view that the situation has improved, and reported that tens of thousands have returned to their homes. Both of those assertions were disputed by Sudanese in Darfur. President al-Bashir pledged to provide as much as \$300 million in compensation and for the reconstruction of Darfur, and said that his government intended to ensure that returnees had homes and livelihoods. The Sudanese government denied that it bore any responsibility for aerial bombardments of civilians or rape in Darfur, though many individuals asserted otherwise. The Sudanese government also said it would engage fully in the peace talks to try to bring the Darfur crisis to an end.

Our mission to Sudan did not allow us to meet with representatives of Darfur's many rebel groups, though Mary Robinson, a fellow Elder, had met with rebel leaders just prior to our departure. Based on our meetings with various actors in Sudan, it is clear that all of the rebel forces must be included in the search for a solution and live up to their responsibilities. As parties to the conflict, they must be represented at the peace table, and as organizations that claim to represent the interests of Darfur's people, they must be held accountable.

Our myriad discussions underscored that a national peace will be difficult to attain, and that its durability will require the sincere engagement of all parties—whether it be in Darfur or in Southern Sudan. We concluded from our meetings that the Government of Sudan must make a strategic choice between accepting the help of the international community or obstructing progress. The NCP, as the ruling party of the Government of Sudan, is endowed with authority and responsibilities. It has the power to choose to facilitate the rapid deployment of UNAMID and to strengthen its commitment to the CPA—or not. It is our sincere belief that the NCP and the Government of Sudan should use their power wisely and make the right choice.

To Move Forward—Conclusions and Recommendations

Ours was a brief but thorough mission to Sudan. We do not claim to be experts on either the crisis in Darfur or the challenges of ensuring the successful implementation of the CPA. We can, however, offer some conclusions rooted in both our collective experience and in hours of listening to both Sudanese and international stakeholders. Peace and justice are within reach. They cannot be realized unless all parties to the crisis in Darfur are part of its resolution and are fully supported by the international community. The steps forward include full implementation of the CPA, investment in the building blocks of democracy, and adjusting the negotiations on Darfur so that the agenda reflects the people's interests and not merely those of the armed parties. Trust is in short supply—in Darfur, in Khartoum, and in Juba. Confidence in the sincerity of one's adversaries is limited, and faith in the international community is shaky. In spite of this, hope for a better future remains strong. Many believe that only security, justice and a shared prosperity can break the destructive cycle of violence that now rules Darfur and threatens other reaches of Africa's largest country.

The political will of all parties to adhere to and uphold the rule of law is essential for peace in all of Sudan. Those marginalized within Sudanese society must be empowered. They cannot be excluded in the determination of Sudan's future. Specifically, we conclude:

- All parties should promptly agree to and implement a ceasefire;
- The end to the crisis in Darfur and the promise of peace for the people of Southern Sudan require that the CPA be fully implemented;
- The Darfur peace process requires the full participation of all parties, including all rebel leaders and citizens' representatives;
- Security demands the prompt deployment of a hybrid UNAMID force, fully equipped to fulfill its mandate; and
- Humanity demands the movements and operations of humanitarian agencies be fully respected.

Our recommendations are somewhat more comprehensive. As Elders, we base these recommendations on our own experience and our collective commitment to a more peaceful and just world. Our aim is neither to apportion blame nor to adjudicate; ours is simply to lend our voices to the disenfranchised, and to contribute in some way to a Sudan that can meet the aspirations of all her people. In order to protect Darfur's people, all efforts must be made to deploy UNAMID according to schedule and with the full capabilities required to undertake its mission. Getting there requires tackling two major obstacles. First, the Government of Sudan should now leave it to the AU, the UN and the newly appointed Senior Representative of the Secretary General and Force Commander—both of whom are Africans—to decide how UNAMID will be composed. This will fully respect the mandate of the UN Security Council Resolution 1769 and the extensive discussions during the past year between the AU and the UN. It is fully understood that the force will be predominantly African and will be reinforced by non-African units and equipment.

Second, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations reports that the international community has not yet made available the full range of equipment needed to sustain UNAMID. All countries that have pledged specific material support to UNAMID should urgently fulfill their commitment and make the necessary resources available. This is critical not only for success in Darfur, but for a new peacekeeping model—a hybrid UN/AU mission—that can serve global interests in the future.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement must be honored and its provisions implemented according to schedule. This is of critical importance to the Darfur crisis and central to peace and security in Sudan. Since our departure, the SPLM has announced the suspension of its participation in the GNU, with the sole exception of Vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit, and has presented to its partners in the NCP a list of requirements for future cooperation. Based on our consultations, we believe that the two parties have identified common problems in need of

resolution, and we expect that both will do their utmost to prevent a return to war. We urge them to get the implementation of the CPA back on track, to honor the word and spirit of the agreement, and to take the difficult steps towards lasting peace. It is incumbent upon the international community to assist them. We believe that there is urgent need to mediate three critical issues that will define the success or failure of the CPA—(1) boundary demarcation; (2) the disposition of troops; and (3) the allocation of national resources. As The Elders, we have offered our assistance, but believe that it is also necessary for world leaders to go beyond issuing statements. Providing advice, incentives and pressures will enable both parties to live up to their signed and stated commitments to peace.

Those who helped the Sudanese parties negotiate the CPA—the member states of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the AU, the UN and non-African powers—are duty bound to continue to provide the necessary help to implement that agreement. As a fundamental element of the CPA, we believe that much more attention must be given to preparing for national elections in 2009. Elections are the means by which the fundamental challenge of governance can be addressed throughout Sudan. Elections offer Sudan's political parties the chance to compete on their merits and offer Sudan's people the opportunity to participate in decision-making.

We are concerned that the census mandated by the CPA has not yet been initiated, and believe that the Government of Sudan must release the resources necessary to finance its implementation. But responsibility for free and fair elections does not rest with Khartoum alone. Those competing for power must be allowed to begin—now—to make the case to their people. Potential voters must begin—now—to participate and hold their leaders accountable. The Carter Center is prepared to send a team to monitor the entire electoral process, and we welcome other international groups to join them.

The peace process initiated in Libya must provide a forum for the non-violent resolution of Darfur's crisis. The credibility of peace talks depends on the full participation of all of the stakeholders.

First and foremost, this means that all rebel leaders must engage. If any claim to speak for the people of Darfur, it is imperative that they do so at the peace table and not just by force of arms. The Government of France, where Nur has been living for the last couple of years, informed us they were doing everything in their power to encourage him to participate in negotiations.

The success of the peace process hinges on the ability of the negotiators and the armed parties to hear and take into account the views and aspirations of the citizens they claim to represent. We were impressed by the DDDC group, and by the ambition of its facilitators to ensure that the views of civil society are fully reflected in any agreement governing a future peace. We urge them to act quickly to bring civil society into the peace process and to provide space to pursue the people's interests. We are eager and willing to help in this effort. This is more than a point of principle. Successful implementation of any agreement requires the full understanding, acceptance, and participation of the citizenry.

Finally, we hope that a comprehensive ceasefire will be the first order of business in the peace process. This could help build confidence to address the full range of complex and controversial issues that must be reflected in an agreement. We have confidence in the UN and AU negotiators, and hope that they will be aided by the international community in their efforts to sustain a peace process that will take time, patience and skill. We believe that while the negotiations cannot be open-ended, neither can they be rushed. Human security must be protected and expanded. While the people of Darfur wait for peace, they are dependent upon humanitarian assistance. While they wait for protection by UNAMID, they are dependent on the will and whims of those with the weapons. The internally displaced persons demonstrate great spirit and dignity in horrendous circumstances. Their pride and their ability to laugh in such an

environment humbled and inspired us, reminding us that they are not objects to be pitied. They are our sisters and brothers fallen on bad days.

We were moved by the dedication of both Sudanese and international humanitarian aid workers on the ground in Darfur. They are making enormous sacrifices and risking their lives to aid their fellow citizens, and facing sweeping obstacles each and every day. We in the international community have focused on moving forward with the deployment of UNAMID and resumption of peace talks; however, we have failed to provide the support the humanitarian workers need. It may prove impossible to prevent the armed combatants from attacking humanitarian operations until a ceasefire is in place, but it is entirely possible to shine a light on the violations of humanitarian law that occur on a daily basis, and to exert pressure on both the government, Janjaweed and rebels. Humanitarian affairs cannot be left on the sidelines, as humanitarian assistance is the only lifeline for the people of Darfur. Adherence to the March 2007 communiqué on humanitarian operations signed by the Government of Sudan and the UN for the NGO community must be addressed within the framework of the UNAMID deployment and the peace talks.

The world must confront the systematic rape of Darfuri women and girls. The Government of Sudan, local and traditional leaders and the men in the camps must acknowledge and put an end to this horrific reality. While stopping sexual violence is imperative, it is also our view that the incidence of rape is so prevalent that there is a need to provide increased assistance—including counseling and specialized medical care—for the women of Darfur.

Next Steps for The Elders and the International Community

We left Sudan, but Sudan did not leave us. We are haunted that the country might descend into another spiral of violence. We therefore remain committed to using whatever influence we can marshal to help prevent that, but we can only succeed if the people of the world remain engaged. The UN Security Council resolution authorizes the largest peacekeeping operation in the world today. These steps could not have occurred without the constant and relentless involvement of so many people all over the world. Young and old, people from rich and poor countries, all raised their voices and made a difference.

We call on the people of the world to remain engaged. Let us first declare what we are doing and will do and then offer our thoughts as to what we believe the good people of the world should do. First, we briefed the UN and the AU on what we did, what we heard, and what we hope they will do. The UN and the AU are principally responsible for peacekeeping and peacemaking. We do not want to replace or replicate their activities; we want to help them succeed.

Second, we strongly support the continuation of peace talks for Darfur that began in Libya on October 27, 2007. We have sent a clear signal—publicly and privately—that Darfuris who purport to be interested in peace cannot be called leaders until they come to the negotiating table and play a constructive role. We have encouraged the rebels to unite and present a common platform, and we have offered our support to the DDDC group's efforts to recruit representatives from Darfuri civil society organizations, women's groups, tribal and religious leaders. Over time, genuine peace will only occur if they help define the parameters of the talks. We are pleased that the UN and AU agree and have been working to ensure that these voices will be present at the negotiations.

Third, when the SPLM decided to withdraw from the GNU, we immediately phoned President al-Bashir and Vice President Kiir and urged them to agree to mediation. Both leaders pledged their opposition to another war. However, while the Government of Southern Sudan said it would welcome mediation, the Government of Sudan in Khartoum said that they will continue, for the present, to tackle the issue bilaterally with their Southern partners. We agree that it is better for parties to a dispute to solve their problems by themselves, but that is not always possible. The Government of Sudan says—and its Southern partners agree—that there is no trust between them. The Government of Sudan runs a serious risk of bearing responsibility if that lack of trust leads to a resumption of conflict. If they sincerely want to implement the CPA, both parties should accept mediation. Here, we need your help. Please communicate in whatever way to the Government of Sudan your hope that they will accept international mediation to resolve the many outstanding issues separating the North and the South. International mediators must be permitted to work privately with both sides but also issue public reports.

Fourth, we need a hybrid UN/AU force in Darfur with sufficient equipment and support. We need it now. We urge you to ask your government to increase pledges of troops, funding, and equipment. We urge the government in Khartoum to facilitate their entry in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1769.

Fifth, in the long-term, we believe that the only durable solution is one resting solidly on free and fair elections. This will not be easy. We appreciate the invitation to the Carter Center to monitor the electoral process, beginning with the new election law and the establishment of the Electoral Commission, and continuing through the entire electoral process.

Sixth, The Elders were founded on the belief that nations and citizens of the world have a "Responsibility to Protect" those who are defenseless. We urge all governments and individuals to address the concerns of the ordinary people of Sudan and to fund efforts to improve access to education for children in the displaced camps and to give them an alternative to the gangs.

Seventh, there can be no peace without accountability and justice. South Africa provides a compelling example of balancing peace and justice, and we should learn from that. Sudan signed the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC) but did not ratify it. The Government of Sudan should find a way to cooperate with the prosecutor of the ICC. The Government of Sudan did not serve its own interests by offending its citizens and people around the world when, instead of seriously investigating the two people indicted by the ICC, it promoted one of them to serve as Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, a position responsible for the human rights of internally displaced persons. This is unacceptable to all those who care about justice.

Furthermore, true justice will require adequate compensation for all those harmed by the violence in Darfur. It will also require reconstruction assistance on a major scale. We need your help to join us in asking the international community to expand and fulfill its pledges.

Eighth, we need to give our fullest support to the thousands of humanitarian workers who work tirelessly to help the Sudanese people, particularly the internally displaced persons. While in Khartoum, we encouraged the Sudanese Undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs and the UN Deputy Special Representative for Humanitarian Affairs to meet weekly. We hope these meetings will provide added protection for the humanitarian workers. Those workers are our heroes and heroines.

For too long, the world has closed its eyes to the atrocities in Africa. The international community has taken many steps—pressed by the people of the world—in the last few years to support the forces of change in Sudan. We must not turn away from our responsibility to the people of Sudan. We must strengthen our resolve to end the violence and secure a future of peace and justice for all the people of Sudan.

Appendix

Itinerary, The Elders' Trip to Sudan

Sunday, September 30—Khartoum

- _ Arrival and Welcome with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Al-Samani Al-Wasila
- _ Roundtable Discussion with UNMIS/AMIS
- _ Ramadan Iftar with Sudanese Civil Society Organization Representatives
- _ Arrival Statement to Media Representatives
- _ Meeting with Abdul Mohammed, Chair of Preparatory Committee, Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) Group

Monday, October 1—Khartoum

- _ International NGO Representatives
- _ Sudanese Political Opposition Leaders
- _ The Diplomatic Community
- _ President Omar al-Bashir
- _ Sudanese Government of National Unity (GNU) Representatives
- _ Assistant to the President, Dr. Nafi Ali Nafi
- _ Minni Minawi, Senior Assistant to the President of Sudan and Leader of the Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M)
- _ Ramadan Iftar Dinner with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs al-Wasila

Tuesday, October 2—Juba and El-Fasher

- _ UNMIS flight to Juba, southern Sudan
- _ Visit Dr. Garang Memorial Site to pay respects and lay wreath
- _ Site visit to Pediatric Hospital
- _ President Salva Kiir Mayardit and Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS)
- _ Andrew Natsios, US Special Envoy for Sudan
- _ UNMIS flight from Juba to El-Fasher, Darfur
- _ Osman Yusef Kibir, wali, Governor of North Darfur, El-Fasher
- _ Sudanese Civil Society Organization Representatives, Tribal and Religious Leaders
- _ AMIS & UNMIS Representatives, United Nations Country Team

Wednesday, October 3—El-Fasher and Nyala

Thursday, October 4—Khartoum

The delegation divided into two teams. Team One flew to Kebkabiya and conducted meetings in El-Fasher. Team Two flew to the Otash IDP Camp and conducted meetings in Nyala.

Team One—El-Fasher

- _ Helicopter to Kebkabiya
- _ Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in Kebkabiya and Site Visit to Water Project
- _ Women's Group Representatives
- _ UN and International NGO Representatives

Team Two—Nyala

- _ UNMIS flight to Nyala
- _ Ali Mahmoud Mohamed, wali, Governor of South Darfur
- _ UN Country Teams and International NGO Representatives
- _ Women's Group Representatives
- _ Discussion with IDPs in Otash Camp

Khartoum

- _ Both teams converge for UNMIS flight from El-Fasher to Khartoum
- _ President Omar al-Bashir
- _ Departure Statement of The Elders