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## Enabling the Sustainable and Safe Return and Reintegration of the Displaced in Darfur

### Cambridge, 31 July – 4 August 2005

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## Conclusions

### Preamble

1. We, an inclusive group of individual Sudanese citizens – mostly from Darfur – and friends of the Sudan, have been meeting in Cambridge, UK, to seek constructive possibilities for bringing the internally displaced people and refugees of Darfur back to their homes with confidence for the long term. This consultation has been facilitated by the British charity, Concordis International. We are grateful to Concordis International for acting as a non-partisan facilitator and providing an inclusive forum for discussion of these issues. We have met in our personal capacities, not speaking for any government or other agency.

2. We very much regret the untimely death of First Vice President HE Dr John Garang de Mabior during our consultation. The loss of this key statesman has increased our resolve to work towards a peaceful future for the whole of the Sudan. Lasting resolution of the Darfur conflict is an essential component of national peace.

3. The issue of security remains the top priority for Darfur. A lasting cease-fire, backed up by third-party peacekeeping, and a comprehensive agreement on the basis of the Declaration of Principles agreed at Abuja on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2005 and the preceding international agreements and resolutions on Darfur<sup>1</sup> are essential elements of a peaceful future for Darfur. However, there are many long-term issues that together have caused the Darfur conflict. The consensus achieved at the two previous Concordis International consultations on the most important of these issues<sup>2</sup> has provided a foundation for our discussion and the conclusions of those consultations remain valid.

4. Concordis has distilled the detailed contents of our current discussions and will make them available to interested parties. In addition, the following brief outline summarises our discussions.

### Application of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to Darfur

5. The principles developed during the Naivasha negotiations and culminating in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 9<sup>th</sup> January 2005 contribute to a lasting resolution of the problems of Darfur, which have political, economic and social roots. However, Darfur is unique and therefore needs its own agreement, which can draw on elements of the CPA. Recognising the need for inclusiveness, **we recommend** that more effort be made to ensure that a Darfur peace agreement – which we hope will soon be agreed – includes the aspirations of all of the people of

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<sup>1</sup> These agreements include United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1547 of 11 June 2004, 1556 of 30 July 2004, 1564 of 18 September 2004, 1574 of 19 November 2004, 1585 of 10 March 2005, 1588 of 17 March 2005, 1590 of 24 March 2005 and 1593 of 31 March 2005, the N'Djaména Ceasefire Agreement of 8 April 2004, the Addis Ababa Agreement of 28 May 2004 on establishing an observer mission to monitor the ceasefire and the Abuja Humanitarian and Security Protocols of 9 November 2004.

<sup>2</sup> In September 2004 on Land Use and Tenure in Darfur and in December 2004 on the Economic, Political and Cultural Marginalisation of Darfur.

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Darfur, not just those who have taken up arms, so that it will enjoy broad endorsement in Darfur and across all of Sudan. The principles of decentralisation and the recognition of diversity established by the Machakos Protocol are the key to the federalism which will help the Sudan, including Darfur and the East, develop peace, democracy, justice and equality. These concepts are included in the Declaration of Principles. However, inclusiveness must also be emphasised and **we recommend** that the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army and the Justice and Equality Movement continue to develop common principles for negotiation, based on the genuine needs of all people of Darfur.

### **Establishing Sustainable Peace on the Ground**

6. The establishment of a ceasefire with international monitors was a necessary first step, and international efforts to improve the effectiveness of the African Union force in Darfur should continue. However, for a ceasefire to last there must be more than monitoring and reporting of violations. Although the lack of trust is the main barrier to sustaining a ceasefire and trust can not be created overnight, trust can be developed gradually if there is political will to seek long-term peace and if the needs and rights of all stakeholders are taken into account. To overcome existing suspicion and move in stages to a position of increased trust, **we recommend** that confidence- and security-building measures appropriate to the very complex Darfur situation be included in the agreement, including mechanisms to address concerns and outbreaks of violence. These measures should be designed to encourage greater mutual transparency and increased predictability, to minimise the chance of accidental escalation and to reduce the perception of threat.

7. Possible measures, which need to be adapted to the Darfur situation, include inspections, air observation, communication links between commanders, demilitarised zones and putting arms out of use in a way that does not increase vulnerability. Unlike the application of such measures in the case of potential international conflict, confidence- and security-building measures in the Darfur environment require verification assistance and guarantees by third parties such as the African Union and the United Nations. For this reason, **we recommend** that the effectiveness of the African Union force be improved.

8. Cultural and political confidence-building measures are especially important in the context of Darfur. These include: full national political participation; a code of conduct for the security sector that is properly applied and disseminated; fair and transparent application of justice and compensation for material and human loss; participation in local government by an empowered native administration; and involvement of members of the community. **We recommend** that all communities are involved in this process, not just those who bear arms.

### **Restoring Confidence in a Return to Home Areas**

9. Enforced return of the displaced to their home areas is wrong. The primary barrier to voluntary return is the perception of insecurity, caused primarily by lack of trust in police and security forces. **We therefore recommend** (a) that the African Union fulfil its role to protect civilians in the short term, (b) that the African Union be given a clear mandate to assist the process of return, and (c) that the police and other security forces be reformed to include members of the local communities. In addition, resources available (including compensation) and access to services in the home areas – water, fuel, building materials, livestock – need to be at least as good as those in the camps if the people are to have an incentive to return. In each village or home area, the obstacles to return of the displaced must be dealt with co-operatively, transparently and in detail. For example, questions of land ownership or use need to be dealt with fairly and firmly.

10. Better planning and co-ordination of international support to meet this need would make return more attractive for the displaced. However, international NGOs would need to be convinced that the necessary security guarantees, trusted by the displaced themselves, were in place. For this to be achieved, **we recommend** that both the Government and the armed movements exercise maximum restraint, admit mistakes where appropriate and be held accountable for their actions. Moreover, the *janjaweed* and other militias must be brought under control.

## Restoring Social Aspects of Security

11. The diversity of Darfur, like that of the Sudan as a whole, should be considered a strength and not a weakness. The interdependence between pastoralists and sedentary farmers, for example, has in the past been successfully managed by the communities themselves, with conflicts over water and land being settled by traditional means. These mechanisms have been disrupted by the politicization of the conflict, but family, tribal and religious relationships in Darfur remain strong. Social networks that have been destroyed in the villages have been partially re-formed in the camps. There is therefore significant social capital to draw on in Darfur.

12. **We recommend** that the Government and the international community support and develop small-scale community-based initiatives for rebuilding infrastructure. In addition, providing support for displaced people who have sought shelter with family and friends in villages, and not just for those in camps, will reduce dependence on camp facilities. In support of an Abuja agreement, **we recommend** a conference of all Darfuri communities to establish agreement on rebuilding the region and independent Sudanese research on the needs of Darfur. This would emphasise the importance of the Sudanese-led rehabilitation of Darfur.

## Restoring Environmental Security

13. We considered in much detail the link between the environment and conflict in Darfur and their effect on each other. We identified particular vulnerabilities with respect to water, grazing, agriculture, timber and the soil. We recognised that environmental vulnerability had contributed to the conflict. In turn, the conflict itself, the international relief effort, the return of the displaced intervention following it and even the subsequent peace have made (or may in future make) many environmental vulnerabilities worse. One of the simplest examples is the adverse effect on the environment of concentrating and supporting the displaced in camps. **We recommend** that an objective survey is undertaken to track these vulnerabilities and to determine which of the many possible interventions would reduce the adverse effect on the environment. Creative investment in interventions to maintain a sustainable environment will itself contribute to sustainable peace.

## The Reconstruction of Darfur

14. Some national and international NGOs are doing valuable work in Darfur in difficult circumstances to help the people apply appropriate local technology to solve reconstruction problems in areas such as transport, infrastructure, water provision, rainwater retention, terraced agriculture, efficient fuel use and housing. Others are helping with healthcare and by loaning donkeys, goats and other livestock. Much of this work is hampered by the lack of security in some areas, but it has great potential, especially where it takes account of the wisdom of the local people on the applicability of specific technologies to their locality. We recognised the major importance of women in reconstructing communities and of community education and training to multiply the effectiveness of small-scale integrated technology. The relief and development needs of rural communities must also be considered both to support those who have not been displaced and to provide an incentive for the return of the displaced. **We recommend** that barriers to the operations of national and international development NGOs – e.g. restrictions on import of animals – and financial and infrastructure barriers to trade be kept to the minimum necessary. It is also important to recognise that different communities have different needs, and the distinctive needs of nomads must be recognised. As the competition between nomads and settled farmers is one of the root causes of the conflict, creative alternatives for nomads' herds must be sought, e.g. marking of agreed migration routes (already in hand), allocation of different home areas or even compensated culling of herds.

15. The prerequisite for all of this work is security, and the police hold primary responsibility for providing it. **We recommend** that the process of improving the capability of the police and reforming their attitudes, composition and way of operating be continued, with increased emphasis on their development of trust in the community. This will require inclusive recruitment, training in human rights, a sharper focus on community relations and allocation of sufficient resources to all levels of the police force. Where the police have to operate in specific situations, e.g. in IDP camps, they should receive specific training on the sensitivities involved. In addition, citizens should be made more aware of their rights with respect to the police.

## **Inter-Agency Co-operation on the Displaced**

16. The re-establishment of long-term peace in Darfur will require co-ordinated action by the Government of Sudan, all communities of Darfur, traditional authorities, local government, national and international NGOs, other governments and international organisations. At present, this co-ordination is hampered by mistrust and ill-defined roles. **We recommend** a focus on a comprehensive approach to peace, justice, security and development. In particular, **we recommend** the empowerment of a native administration to reinforce the rule of law and government structures.

## **Conclusion**

17. The conclusions of this consultation, when combined with those of the two previous Concordis Darfur consultations, represent a consensus by a broad range of people of Darfur on the causes of the conflict and how to correct them. If the negotiators in the coming round of Abuja talks take account of these recommendations, alongside the Declaration of Principles already agreed, then a peace agreement to be agreed by them is likely to enjoy broad support in Darfur. We therefore ask Viscount Brentford, the Chairman of Concordis, to convey the recommendations of all three consultations to the negotiating parties at Abuja. In addition, we undertake, in our various individual positions of influence, to work towards the urgent implementation of the recommendations.