

Sudanese Women's Statement on Darfur

Thank you Mr. President,

We, Sudanese Women members of the "Steering Committee on Darfur", representing the Forum created during the 1st African Women's Consultation on Darfur, facilitated by Femmes Africa Solidarité and other partners, ahead of the AU Summit in Addis Ababa, in January 2008, are grateful to be addressing this 7th United Nations Human Rights Council today, and to express our resolve to stand together and pursue a Common Platform and Agenda on the Darfur peace process.

Mr. President .**Ladies and Gentlemen members of the Council,**

WE:

ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED about the recent escalation of violence in Darfur which resulted in mass killings, property destruction, massive secondary displacement of people, and further suffering of women and children;

STRONGLY CONDEMN all acts of violence against civilians, particularly sexual violence against women and girls;

ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED about the negative impact of this violence on vulnerable groups, and the attendant lack of economic and social rights, especially for the women and youth;

ARE FURTHER CONCERNED by the lack of a strong women VOICE in the peace negotiation efforts for Darfur;

We therefore **CALL ON** this Council to:

URGE the warring groups to stop the conflict immediately and adhere to the peace process

ENCOURAGE the Sudan National Unity Government to review and reform laws that infringe on women rights, particularly rape and other forms of sexual violence, And to undertake measures that address impunity and ensure that all violators of human rights are brought to justice

URGE Member States to speed and support the full deployment of UNAMID and to contribute the necessary equipment that will enable them to protect the civilians, particularly women in Darfur, and to include women in their contingents for deployment; **and ENCOURAGE** the Sudan National Unity Government to facilitate all obstacles facing the deployment effectively

REINFORCE the various international instruments that seek to promote, protect and encourage the participation of women at all levels, particularly the UNSC Res. 1325 on Women Peace and Security, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality, and the Protocol to the Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

REQUEST the UN to nominate a Gender Adviser to the UN and AU Darfur peace mediation teams

REQUEST the council to establish effective mechanisms for follow up of the implementation of the recommendations of the Group of Experts on Darfur as well as the recent recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan.

SUPPORT capacity building initiatives for the women as a basis for ensuring their full and effective participation in peace process in Darfur; as well as **ENCOURAGING** the Sudan National Unity Government to take into consideration women issues when adopting laws.

Interim Steering Committee of the Sudanese Women Forum on Darfur
Geneva
March 2008