

## **Recommendations of the Preparatory Committee**

The recommendations below were approved:

1. Approval of the foundations and principles for ending the war and establishing the Sudanese state.
2. Transferring the negotiating position guidelines paper to the Content Committee for development before its approval by the Commission of the Leadership of the Coordination of Democratic Civil Forces.
3. Organizing specialized workshops to discuss the following issues:
  - a. Developing the negotiating position of civil forces;
  - b. Security and military reform;
  - c. Transitional justice;
  - d. Rebuilding of national institutional bodies (civil service and judicial bodies);
  - e. Peace, strengthening the social fabric, and combating hate speech;
  - f. Drafting a permanent constitution;
  - g. Reconstruction; and
  - h. State and local governance issues.

# **Foundations and Principles for ending the war and Re-establishing the Sudanese State**

**October 25, 2023**

## **Introduction:**

We must recognize that the war on April 15, marked by extensive destruction, wasn't an isolated event. It was a testament to the prolonged political failures that have plagued the evolution of the Sudanese state and its constant struggle to defend its legitimacy. This persisted even before its official declaration of independence in 1956. Throughout these decades, neither the political nor the civil forces succeeded in developing a national vision rooted in equal citizenship, the rule of law, and balanced growth. This failure has eroded the legitimacy of the Sudanese state for many of its factions. Instead of progress, there has been a growing skepticism about the state's legitimacy and its capacity to genuinely represent its vast populace, especially across social and cultural dimensions.

The rescue system epitomizes the failure of the Sudanese vision. The state waged wars against those advocating for a national vision where the state would restore its ability to represent its diverse constituents. Sometimes, the state framed this as a "jihad," and at other times it leveraged ethnic divisions to undermine ambitious projects aimed at building a state that consists of social, cultural, and diverse components. The April 15 War is a clear outcome of structural flaws introduced by the previous regime, which established parallel civil and military entities, thereby diminishing the functional capacities of the state. The existence of multiple armies and decision-making centers, coupled with a struggle for power and resource control, was a recipe for inevitable armed conflicts. In this backdrop, the coup on October 25, 2021, should not be viewed as an isolated incident. It was an attempt to halt the transformation that would challenge the old way of controlling interests.

The rescue regime has built structures to hijack and privatize national resources, benefiting influential individuals within the regime and the supporting Islamic movement that stands behind that regime. To guard these seized assets, they empowered security and military agencies, granting them immunities. This regime even enlisted ethnic militias, leading to the formation of multiple armies. A significant portion of the national budget was allocated to the security apparatus. Such strategies transformed the "rescue system" into a prime example of state banditry. The aftermath of this structural and institutional corruption was an escalation of violence against civilians, with a notable absence of accountability for heinous acts by the regime's forces.

The totalitarian rescue regime took over state apparatuses, particularly the security and military sectors. These members disrupted the transitional period, instigating the coup on October 25, 2023. The Sudanese people bravely resisted, leading to the coup's failure. However, conflict was reignited in April 2023, blocking the path of the December Revolution's progress and the democratic transition. This abuse of power by the multiple armies was clear. Prolonging the war and escalating the conflict into a full-blown civil war is the direct goal of the National Conference, allowing it and its affiliates to seize complete control against the Sudanese people's will, as voiced in April 2019. This path risks the total devastation of the nation and its citizens and poses a severe threat to regional stability.

We, as a civil force in our meeting held in Addis Ababa from October 23 to 25, have agreed upon the following principles to achieve the interests of the Sudanese men and women, ensuring **the establishment of a state that promotes regional and international peace and rejects extremism, religious, and political violence:**

**First:** Political solutions must preserve Sudan's unity and sovereignty over its entire territory, leading to the establishment of an independent, sovereign, and democratic civil society.

**Second:** The foundation for Sudan's unity lies in the establishment of a citizenship-based state that recognizes its diverse historical and cultural dimensions. This state must be founded on a democratic, developmental, participatory, and just vision that involves every Sudanese individual. The state should treat all religions and cultures equally, outlawing all forms of discrimination.

**Third:** Stopping the war, rebuilding, and establishing a stable civil democratic state should be rooted in a negotiated political process that is inclusive of all factions, excluding the National Conference, the Islamic Movement, and those who support the April 15 war.

**Fourth:** Civilian protection from all forms of violence arising from the war is paramount. This includes killing, displacement, and all forms of violations as well as sexual violence that's resulting from this destructive war and taking all measures to prevent such violations through collaborative efforts with regional and international communities. This is crucial to ensuring safety and delivering humanitarian aid to those in need.

**Fifth:** The governance structure should ensure the active participation of all Sudanese individuals, men and women, reflecting the nation's diversity and pluralism. The Constitutional Conference will decide whether this should be a decentralized system based on symmetric or asymmetric federal foundations.

**Sixth:** Reforming the security and military sectors as per international standards is essential and a condition of transition. The outcome should be a single national professional army, subject to civil authority and in line with the Constitution, eliminating the phenomenon of multiple armed factions.

**Seventh:** The security system, including the army, Security Service, Rapid Support Forces, and police, should retract from political and economic activities. They must align with the principles outlined in the sixth point and commit to supporting the civil-democratic transition. They also must work on the sustainability and the stability of the democratic system, and provide the guarantees required for the establishment of a government to complete the tasks of transition in constitutional and political establishment; and the administrative, economic, and financial reform. And eliminating the war leftovers and reconstruing what was destroyed during the war, as well as returning the country to have free and truthful elections.

**Eighth:** A comprehensive transitional justice program is needed to reveal the truth and address crimes committed from the coup of June 30, 1989, to the war of April 15, 2023. This should include the handover of wanted individuals to the International Criminal Court, ensuring peace, reconciliation, compensation, and paving the way for a brighter future.

**Ninth:** Foreign policy should prioritize mutual interests and foster regional and international cooperation in various sectors, focusing on issues that jeopardize regional and international peace.

**Tenth:** Sudan should embrace the principle of good neighborliness, which emphasizes cooperative protection of borders and regional benefits.

# **General Guidelines for the Negotiating Process to Stop the War and Re-establish the Sudanese State**

## **Introduction**

The conflict that erupted between the Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces on April 15 has reshaped reality. This shift demands a re-evaluation by civilian forces in their approach to addressing the aftermath of these events. It is crucial to see the war not just as an isolated incident but in its broader historical context. This perspective will enable the Sudanese men and women to begin a new chapter in their history, by understanding and delving deep into the root causes of the conflict.

Ever since gaining its independence, the Sudanese state has struggled to genuinely represent all its national components. This shortcoming has often led to the outbreak of wars and put the state in a cycle of defending its fragmented legitimacy over several decades. Consequently, the Sudanese state has weakened over time, failing to unify its diverse social and cultural components around a shared national vision. This vision would have aimed to ensure dignity, freedom, and a decent quality of life for its citizens.

In light of this backdrop, the December Revolution emerged, championing its core principles of Freedom, Peace, and Justice, and representing the hope of a rising generation. These ideals symbolized the aspirations of the Sudanese men and women for a renewed vision of their state and its future. Even amidst the turmoil of war, they remained steadfast in their commitment to these values.

It's essential to note that the true legitimacy of a state isn't just about its ability to wield power or use violence. It lies in its capacity to uphold the social contract with its people by ensuring security, stability, providing essential services, organizing societal structures, and enforcing contracts. Despite the mounting tensions of war and some parties recklessly advocating its continuation and expansion, we firmly believe that the path to peace and the establishment of a democratic civil rule can only be paved through a transparent and fair negotiation process, grounded in principled methodology.

## **Negotiation Methodology:**

Understanding the profound complexity of the political dilemma confronting our nation, along with the humanitarian and security challenges birthed by war conditions, is paramount. It's vital to consider the tenets we mutually accepted in the Declaration of Principles and Objectives. Our ambition is to construct the broadest civil coalition, and in doing so, lay out a blueprint for

synchronizing concerted actions among civil groups and political factions. These principles will act as our moral compass in our journey to:

- Navigate the negotiation process to end the war,
- Coordinate relief and aid for the afflicted,
- Lay down the political groundwork for a transitional, constituent authority. This authority will spearhead the rebuilding endeavors, oversee the resettlement of the displaced, and supervise the creation of a lasting constitution for the birth of the Second Sudanese Republic.

This envisioned Republic will break free from legacy failures, confront deep-rooted injustices, uphold truth, accomplish justice, and usher Sudan into a brighter future, allowing it to be a constructive player in the global community. Our foundational beliefs include:

1. **Solidarity and Coordination:** The initial step is to bolster solidarity within the ranks, emphasizing coordination among proactive entities that hold the revered December Revolution in high regard. Our aim is to distance ourselves from anti-revolutionary elements and accentuate unifying and synchronizing endeavors to halt the war and reinstate civil democracy.
2. **Partnership with External Entities:** It is vital to harmonize our efforts with those of the African Union, IGAD, and other regional and international stakeholders who share our goal to end the conflict. We acknowledge the African Union and IGAD's jurisdiction, coupled with their dedication to regional and continental peace, as per regional and international treaties and Sudan's affiliation with both entities.
3. **Engagement and Communication:** A sustained and constructive dialogue with the African Union and IGAD about their ongoing initiatives to guide Sudan out of its current predicament is crucial. We believe the success of these entities, along with regional efforts, hinges on:
  - Achieving consensus on role distribution between them and the representatives endorsed by Sudanese civil society. This includes defining conditions, boundaries, tools, sketching the negotiation's broader outlines, stages, and ensuring alignment between civil force assembly and the strategies of the African Union and IGAD, especially in light of the Jeddah and Jeeran platforms for Sudan.
  - Reaching an accord on foundational principles that govern this collaboration. It is essential to elucidate universally accepted notions, such as:
    - **Inclusivity:** A mutual understanding and application of this principle, given the prevailing conditions and in tandem with the goals of the negotiation process and the imperatives of halting the war and reinstating peace.
    - **Sudanese Leadership Role:** Reconciling the concept of a Sudan-led process with the jurisdictions, duties, and responsibilities of the African Union and IGAD.

- **Selection of Participants:** Determining who partakes in the negotiation is pivotal. This involves the challenge of including or excluding potentially divisive figures, such as those who either partook in the October 25 coup, backed it, or are remnants and affiliates of the National Conference.

## **Contextual Challenges in the Negotiation Process:**

Understanding the complexities surrounding the negotiation process requires delving into various aspects:

### **1. Trust-Building and Code of Honor:**

- It's crucial to establish trust between the civil, political components, and the resistance committees.
- There should be a code of honor governing their collaboration.
- This collaboration should align with the agreed goals and visions stemming from the objectives of the December Revolution.
- The ultimate aim is to form a unified civil base that aligns in its vision and speaks with a singular voice to conclude the war and reconstruct the Sudanese state based on the mentioned principles.

### **2. Dealing with Coup Supporters:**

- Questions arise regarding the individuals who backed the coup but opposed the war. Identifying these individuals and determining their integration without unsettling the negotiation process is essential.
- A hasty response could lead to a violent public backlash.
- A phased approach might be more beneficial, allowing for the development of trust. This would help the Sudanese civil forces to heal past wounds and misunderstandings about political objectives.
- Initiating a transparent and direct dialogue amongst all these factions is paramount. The African Union could play a role in facilitating this, ensuring the dialogue remains Sudanese at its core.
- A shift in political mindset and imagination is necessary for the country.

### **3. Incorporating Warring Factions:**

- Integrating both conflicting sides into the negotiation process is pivotal, especially since concluding the war and establishing a ceasefire mandates the presence of armed entities at the discussion table.
- The challenge is that a central command for the warring forces seems to be absent, suggesting that even a centralized negotiation might be inadequate.
- The task lies in determining how to involve these groups in discussions, coordinate this with civilian participation, and understand how different negotiation platforms can converge.

- Coordinating the Jeddah track and the IGAD proposal backed by the African Union, along with the initiative of Sudan's neighboring countries spearheaded by Egypt, is imperative.
- Addressing Egypt's significant role in a constructive manner that aids in achieving and maintaining peace is crucial.

#### **4. Addressing Armed Movements:**

- Consideration must be given to the armed movements that endorsed the Juba Peace Agreement and supported the coup, and to those that didn't.
- Debates arise on whether it's more beneficial for these movements to partake now in shaping the political landscape, emphasizing issues like equal citizenship, balanced development, and fair power and wealth distribution.
- These topics should be negotiated within a constitutional process to govern post-war political arrangements and avoid revisiting transitional authority formations and peace negotiations.
- There's a need to assess the political advantages or disadvantages of postponing these issues and their potential integration into negotiations to end the war and reestablish the democratic trajectory.

### **The Foundations of the Civil Forces' Negotiating Position:**

- The countries of the region and the world have objective interests in the stability of Sudan. For Sudan to stabilize, there needs to be the leadership of a democratic civil system capable of managing diversity and achieving social justice based on equal citizenship.
- A democratic civil Sudan can curb the rein of political Islam, end religious violence that marked three decades of Sudanese history, and offer opportunities for economic cooperation and cultural exchange with its neighbors and the region.
- The civil forces' negotiating stance is grounded in non-negotiable principles:
  - Rejecting power-sharing between the two warring parties.
  - Rejecting any compromise on the principle of impunity. Perpetrators must be held accountable for their crimes.
  - The military, security system, and rapid support system must cease all independent economic activities and submit to civilian oversight agencies.
  - Agreement on timetables and international guarantees for security and military reform leading to a unified national army.
  - Dismantling economic empowerment systematically, transparently, and fairly.
  - Accountability for crimes against peaceful civilian demonstrators, including the June 2019 sit-in dispersal.
  - Amending prior agreements to align with the constants in this negotiating position.



### **Ideal Outcomes from the Civil Forces' Perspective:**

- Unconditional cessation of war and placing the armed forces and Rapid Support Forces under a civilian authority overseeing institutional, security, and military reform.
- Full and unconditional state ownership of the defense industry system, Rapid Support Forces companies, and security and police.
- Accountability for those responsible for the war, paired with a comprehensive transitional justice program addressing injustices and setting a path for a bright future.

### **Negotiable Points for the Civil Forces:**

- Negotiating the scheduling of the security and military reform process with international guarantees.
- Setting a clear program for transferring ownership of companies owned by security systems, including Rapid Support Forces entities, to the Ministry of Finance or a newly established national holding fund.
- Considering limited amnesty for some leaders if they commit to fulfilling all obligations regarding public rights crimes.
- Negotiating mechanisms for dismantling empowerment, ensuring transparency and fairness.

### **Alternative to the Negotiated Option Based on Ground Power Balance:**

- Mediators and political and civil forces should design outcomes ensuring a win-win scenario for the armed forces and Rapid Support Forces, in order to have them accept the establishment of a full civil authority. This could include limited exemptions and preserving some economic benefits in exchange for supporting the transition process with regional and international guarantees. The process should be phased to ensure all parties achieve their goals, and civil forces must prepare to ensure this approach is acceptable.
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