



centre for humanitarian
dialogue

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**NOTICE TO THE PRESS
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Geneva / Darfur
Humanitarian Dialogue**

On 10 /11 July, the Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre) held a meeting for the opposition movements on key humanitarian issues in Darfur. Dennis McNamara, Humanitarian Adviser at HD Centre, said that the two-day session was very successful, with an energetic discussion amongst participants and sincere efforts on all sides to take active steps to improve the humanitarian situation. The meeting begins a process of dialogues on humanitarian issues that will continue to engage the Sudanese Government, opposition movements, and other actors in the near future. As a result of these two intensive discussion days, opposition movements committed on a variety of ways to contribute to improving the humanitarian situation. The statement by the opposition movements is attached to this note.

This first meeting brought together the opposition movements and representatives from UNMIS, ICRC, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNHABITAT, UNDP, UNICEF, OHCHR, JMST, IOM and UNDP. OCHA gave its full support to the meeting and co-hosted it with HD Centre. The series of dialogues is independent from, but supported by, the AU-UN Darfur mediation.

Statement by the opposition movements

As representatives of the opposition movements (JEM and SLM-Unity), we affirm our full support for the efforts of the humanitarian organizations to assist the people of Darfur. We are deeply concerned at the escalating insecurity confronting the Darfur population and humanitarian actors.

We strongly denounce all attacks on humanitarian workers, car-jacking, and condemn the recent attack on UNAMID.

In an effort to continue supporting humanitarian actors in assisting the people of Darfur, we commit to revitalizing a system of focal points for collaboration with NGOs, UN agencies and other actors, including on protection of civilians and, access and security for humanitarian workers and humanitarian relief. In this respect we will strengthen our efforts to trace and intercept carjacked vehicles and stolen aid materials that might move through our areas of control.

We will do our utmost to guarantee the protection of civilian populations in accordance with the principles of human rights and international humanitarian law. In collaboration with UNICEF, we will adopt measures ensuring protection of children in Darfur. We also affirm the principles of freedom of movement

We reaffirm our commitment to refrain from targeting or forcibly displacing civilian populations, destroying civilian infrastructure, recruiting children for military operations, and to hold to account perpetrators of acts of rape and other forms of gender based violence. We recognize that placing military assets and personnel in close proximity to civilian areas increases the risk that civilians will be caught up in hostilities or even targeted. We will therefore continue our policy of maintaining a proper physical separation between our armed forces and the civilian population. We also continue to commit to curtailing the militarization of IDP/refugee camps.

We reaffirm our commitment to clearly instructing our personnel on the ground regarding their obligations under human rights and international humanitarian law.

Finally, we appeal to UNAMID, UN agencies, and NGOs working in Darfur to redouble their efforts to work in cooperation with the opposition movements to address these humanitarian issues. Furthermore, we call upon all parties to the conflict to commit themselves to their humanitarian responsibilities and to a political settlement that addresses the root causes of the conflict.

ENDS

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