



THE PRESIDENT

December 23, 2006

Excellency,

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 18th December 2006, and would like to express our gratitude and appreciation for your continued assistance in support of our efforts to restore peace and stability in Darfur. We reiterate our confidence in your leadership and advice.

Your letter, as well as our telephone conversation, confirm that we have been of the same mind that the conclusions of the 16th November High-Level Meeting in Addis Ababa and the 30th November AU Peace and Security Council Communiqué in Abuja, constitute a viable framework for peaceful settlement to the conflict in Darfur. Our common understanding has been confirmed by the Security Council Presidential Statement (Rev.5) on 18th December 2006 which endorsed the Addis Ababa Conclusions and the Abuja Communiqué.

Within the context of the above, I would like to reaffirm the readiness of the Government of Sudan to start immediately, through the Tripartite Committee, the implementation of the Addis Ababa Conclusions and the Abuja Communiqué.

However, I would like to stress the following points:-

Cessation of Hostilities

With the exception of minor hostilities, the ceasefire agreements, as stipulated in the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) are holding between the Government forces and the main Sudan Liberation Army faction (Mini Arko), signatory to the DPA. The Abdulwaheed Faction, non-signatory to the DPA, is also abiding by the ceasefire agreements. Recent escalation of violence in North Darfur has been ignited by the National Redemption Front (NRF), formed immediately after the signing of the DPA. With Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in its core and with massive Chadian



THE PRESIDENT

military support , NRF declared objectives are to undermine the DPA and overthrow the Government. Ever since, NRF has launched military operations not only against government positions and Mini Arko faction areas of control in Darfur but also against government posts and civilian population in neighbouring North Kordofan State. It is also worth mentioning that 90% of crimes and looting in Darfur is committed by loose banditry groups. As a legitimate authority with responsibility to protect the civilian population and maintain law and order in the country, it is only natural that the Government undertakes the appropriate measures to contain the situation . We are ready to engage in urgent and serious discussions with all factions under the auspices of the UN and AU to bring about immediate arrangements for cessation of hostilities which in turn will create conducive atmosphere for the start of the political process.

Reactivated Political Process

The Addis Ababa framework emphasized the primacy of the political settlement in Darfur and set a time frame for the convening of a UN/AU – sponsored peace talks. This process should be expedited at the earliest possible. Those who have influence on the non-signatories to DPA should use it for the sake of peace and stability in Darfur.

Rapid Completion of UN Light and Heavy Package Support to AMIS

We agree that implementation of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of UN Package Support should start , as scheduled , through the Tripartite Committee mechanism which has up to date held two meetings. The Government will render all required assistance to facilitate the successful completion of these phases.

Finalization of Plans for the hybrid operation.

With regard to the hybrid operation, we are of the opinion that the size of the force in the third phase should be determined in accordance with what has been stipulated in PSC Summit communiqué in Abuja which clearly states as follows:



THE PRESIDENT

The size of the force shall be determined by the African Union and the United Nations, taking into account all relevant factors and the situation on the ground as well as the requirements for it to effectively discharge its mandate.

Regarding the legal issues associated with United Nations support to peacekeeping in Darfur, the agreement on the status of UN Mission in Sudan would be applicable .

As all stakeholders are now in full agreement on the phased-approach support package by the UN to AMIS, we expect that the next step should be the adoption of a UNSC Resolution endorsing the Addis Ababa conclusions and Abuja AU PSC Summit Communiqué and authorizing immediate financial support for peacekeeping in Darfur within the measures agreed to in Addis Ababa and Abuja.

Now that your term of office is coming to an end, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to express on behalf of the Government and people of Sudan and on my own behalf, my sincere wishes of a happy and healthy life for you and your family.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Omer Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir'.

**Omer Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir,
President of the Republic of Sudan**

Address to:

**H.E. Kofi A. Annan
UN Secretary General**