

Outcomes of the Nairobi Workshop for Civil Forces Representatives 6 September 2023

The CMI-Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation invited a constellation of civil society representatives and national figures to a meeting facilitated in Nairobi on 5-6 September 2023. After thorough discussions, the participants have agreed on the following points:

Foreword:

The war that broke out on April 15 between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has created a new reality that must change the way the civil forces think about and approach the implications of the course of events. The new reality must involve practical prerogatives; hence, the catastrophic war should be placed within its historical context so that the Sudanese men and women can turn a new page in their national history while assessing and conducting an in-depth analysis of the root causes of war.

Since its independence, the Sudanese state has failed to realize its national potential to the fullest, triggering wars and introducing a vicious cycle of incomplete legitimacy over decades. The outcome has been manifested in a weaker Sudanese state and lack of ability to drive its social and cultural components (segments) to reach consensus over a patriotic (national) scheme and a joint vision that would provide its citizens with dignity, freedom, and decent sources of living.

Against this backdrop, the December Revolution adopted the (Freedom-Peace-Justice) mantra to express, alongside the promising generation's input, the aspirations of Sudanese men and women to reach a different vision for the state and its future – aspirations they remain adamant about even amid this war the country has plunged into.

On ending the war and the legitimacy dialectic:

The current context would give rise to many questions and inquiries. The participants find that there is a crisis about how legitimate the representation of the people and the revolutionary forces at large is; all actors in the political and institutional frameworks have come across and recognized this crisis on the path of self-determination for the Sudanese people. These actors realize likewise that taking decisions on behalf of the people without legitimately representing them would only further entrench the deep crisis the country is undergoing, given the absence of institutions and mechanisms to endow such decisions with the form of legitimacy they need. Historically, such a conundrum has always been solved by elections, consensus, or mandate – and the war the country has plunged into is yet another facet of this deeply-entrenched and rampant crisis. The legitimacy of the state should not be pending its monopoly of the violence machinery only; it should rather be based as well on the state's ability to deliver on its social contract commitments and provide society with security, stability, basic services, regulation of societal matters, and enforcement of contractual arrangements. Despite the above considerations and attempts by certain actors to increase and irresponsibly incite the propagation and expansion of

the hostilities, the participants find that ending the war and launching political arrangements to bring about stability and civic democratic rule should be based on the following principles:

- I. This raging war should indeed be denounced since it could not be decided using military means – given that the nature of the war would make it difficult to determine the side that emerges victorious. It is incumbent therefore to pre-emptively endorse the principles of stopping all hostilities and declaring a durable ceasefire before engaging in security arrangements, including the formation of professional armed forces that uphold a consolidated single military doctrine under a single and unified command and control structure. Hence, there is no political value for any victory or progress on the ground that would not bring more wounds, pains, and suffering for the fabric of our people.
- II. Violence has uprooted and displaced about 2.5 million people into other areas inside Sudan or the neighboring countries. Most IDPs have been subjected to systematic impoverishment after being forced out of their looted homes in Darfur and Khartoum. Increasing atrocities continue to be on the rise, including rape crimes and mass rapes of young and adult women in Khartoum, Kordofan, and Darfur as sexual violence is being used as a war tactic and an egregious echo of practices that have long been left out of accountability's reach – like what had happened during the war in Darfur in the last few decades.
- III. The war has caused devastating losses and casualties among civilians, destroying the country's resources and rendering defunct state agencies while creating catastrophic humanitarian conditions compounded by obstructing access to relief medical care by those who need it most. The continuation of the war would mean its spread to all parts of the country and transformation to a war by all, and against all. The situation would then become counter intuitive and unacceptable according to any reasoning or logic; the voices of Sudanese men and women calling for an end to war should become louder, the voice of reason should prevail among all combatants, and the international community should do its best to stop the war.
- IV. Any perceived political solutions must result in accepting that Sudan is, and can only be, a civic, democratic, independent, and sovereign state.
- V. Efforts to end the war and launch reconstruction efforts and processes to establish a stable democratic state must be based on an all-inclusive dialogues that excludes no actor as long as it rejects the war and believes in the values of democracy, human rights, equitable citizenship, and justice.
- VI. The political solutions must be based on grounds of holding the perpetrators accountable and achieving comprehensive transitional justice.
- VII. Ensuring that Sudan remains united lies in the establishment of a citizenship-based state pursuant to a participatory, developmental, and democratic vision that would enable the men and women of Sudan to contribute to the development of a national structure that engages all components and segments within society who share the relevant vision.

Based on these common grounds:

The participants find that the grounds for joint action among the civil society forces must be based on inclusion, transparency, and open-ended participation that broadens the engagement of stakeholders on an ongoing basis as long work during that phase remains focused on key tracks that are based on the above principles manifested as follows:

1. In the field of humanitarian action, the civil society should advocate for international and domestic support to address the suffering of Sudanese men and women living in the war zones, IDP camps, or shelters.
2. The political track should emphasize the role of the civil society during, and in ending, the war; its role in post-conflict arrangements should be further emphasized, including the development of the transitional constitution that would define the structures of the transitional period and determine whether there is a need for a pre-transitional phase to address the calamities of war.
3. Reconstruction processes and reparations.
4. Accountability and transitional justice should not be based on trading peace for escaping accountability and impunity.
5. The permanent constitution should be approached as a leeway to establish the foundations of the national scheme and social contract of the envisaged Sudanese state.

Mechanisms:

- Develop a media discourse to counter and de-legitimize the war narratives by combatting the systematic disinformation campaigns that try to dilute the facts about the injustice done to the Sudanese people under the rule of the National Salvation (RCCNS) and by its affiliates with regards to sabotaging the transitional period and neutralizing the December Revolution, including the October 25 coup, starting the war, and dubbing war opponents as traitors under the pretext of national dignity and pride.
- Issue an urgent appeal to the international community to expedite relief operations for the Sudanese IDPs and refugees and open safe corridors for civilians in the areas of fighting.
- Maintain contact with the regional and international communities to end the competing and contradictory initiatives to stop the war, while working to consolidate these initiatives and rally regional and international support behind them.
- Launch a diplomatic campaign to stop foreign backing of parties to the conflict and address the Sudanese aspirations to peace and a civic democratic state.
- Prepare well, in a collaborative and participatory manner, to hold a preparatory broad meeting for all social actors in the civil society while ensuring an equal participation for women.
- Consider the possible mechanisms to ensure the greatest possible representation of the active civil forces across their modern and

conventional structures to consider the common issues above and develop an expansive and detailed vision thereof.

- Hold an inclusive and broad national conference to achieve larger consensus and ensure the participation of all social and political powers, including the signatory and non-signatory armed groups to the peace accord while observing a fair representation of women and youth. Preferably to be held inside Sudan and in tandem with the ending of the war and launching of the transitional or pre-transitional phase, the conference should consider the outcomes of the civil society dialogues and decide upon them.

Signatories:

1. Coalition of the Civil Forces to End the War and Restore Democracy (The Declaration of Principles Group)
2. Baladna “Our Country” Movement
3. Freedom and Change Women’s Forum (NAHT)
4. Women Against War
5. Women of Sudan Civic and Political Groups (MANSAM)
6. Kordofan Alliance for Development
7. Sudan’s Platform for Peace and Development (The Platform)
8. El-Haj Warraq
9. Dr. Shafie Khidher
10. Medani Abbas Madani
11. Al-Tayyab Dhaw Al-Bait
12. Mohammad Al-Fattha
13. Walid Ali
14. Tasneem Al-Fatih
15. Nazar Khairi
16. Sharafaldin Yousuf
17. Dr. Salah Awad Omar
18. Khalid Mohammad Nour
19. Dr. Azza Mustafa
20. Abdallah Mohammed