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THE CONFEDERATION OF
SUDANESE
CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANIZATIONS

Press Statement

CALL FOR GENUINE AND PRODUCTIVE DIALOGUE IN SUDAN TO WARD OFF DISASTER

Despite efforts to achieve a comprehensive and just peace in Sudan, armed conflict, corruption and human rights violations continued as the year 2016 came to be. This, whilst the will of political actors including the armed movements continues to falter in reaching agreement on a road map that would deliver peace, good governance, and sustainable development.

Numerous efforts for dialogue and negotiation have been made over the previous period, nonetheless these have fallen short of the necessary conditions of being democratic, transparent and inclusive. Consequently, the likelihood of reaching much needed agreement over ending the armed conflict and establishing a lasting and robust democracy continues to be illusive. Nonetheless, there are some positive propositions and directions that may be drawn from these ongoing efforts and that may constitute a basis for a contextual analysis and understanding the positions of the different actors. This may in turn assist in determining the features and processes for a much sought after comprehensive dialogue in Sudan.

The Confederation of Sudanese Civil Society Organizations (The Confederation) since its establishment has strived to bring together civil society organizations under a unified umbrella, and to establish a network in support of civil society that works nationally towards peace, democracy, good governance and respect for human rights in Sudan. This in spite of the difficulties and the limited space in which its members are operating and the limitations/restrictions that are being placed on them. The concern of the Confederation of Sudanese Civil Society Organizations around the dialogue, its outcomes and its role in driving things forward stems from its commitment to address the needs of the Sudanese citizen and more importantly to the need for peace and stability.

Given the essential role that civil society organizations play in leading a sustained dialogue with local communities on issues of peace, democracy, human rights and good governance, the Confederation had early on established a committee to meet and coordinate with other civil society initiatives and work towards a unified vision for a national dialogue. On 10 July 2014 representatives from the Confederation accepted an invitation from the National Assembly to participate in a consultative meeting around dialogue. The Confederations position and the necessary conditions for a democratic dialogue, as well as the basic principles on which any democratic dialogue should be based were presented to at that meeting. Additionally, two meetings around the same matter were held with the African Unions High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) headed by the former president Thabo Mbekki.

Continuing along this effort, the Confederation convened a series of consultation workshops with a wide range of civil society organizations across the six former regions of the Sudan (which cover the current 18 states of Sudan) during the period May to October 2015. The outcomes of these consultations were presented in a report that captures the vision of civil society for dialogue and identifies the priority issues at the national and regional levels.

Another major outcome of the consultations was agreement over the following four key areas which define the role of Sudanese civil society in any national dialogue –

1. Participating in shaping the dialogue and pre-dialogue preparatory meetings;
2. Leading dialogue at the local/grassroots levels
3. Participating in a national level dialogue
4. Monitoring and raising public awareness on the outcomes of a dialogue and its implementation

The report also captures details on national priorities to be addressed by dialogue, and these are grouped under –

- Governance
- Peacebuilding
- Legal and Human Rights
- Economy and Development

This in addition to setting priority issues from a regional perspective and for each of the six regions separately. The six regions being Northern region, Eastern region, Darfur region, Khartoum region, Kordofan region, and the Central region.

For the parties to achieve an inclusive, democratic and transparent dialogue, the Confederation urges all parties to take stock of the numerous outputs (from the various meetings, consultations, and conferences) produced over the previous period, and using these to find common ground and overcome the current state of polarization which only amounts to increased fragmentation and differences.

Accordingly, to compliment this direction and in order to widen the consultative process, the Confederation of Sudanese Civil Society Organizations will reach out to the different parties to share the results of its work and contribute to overcoming the challenges/problems facing the nation. The Confederation will also be taking a number of other activities in this regard that will be announced in due time.

Khartoum on 19 January 2016

The Confederation of Sudanese Civil Society Organizations

The Confederation of Sudanese Civil Society Organizations is a coalition of independent civil society organizations working to safeguard its members and strengthen their capacities in realizing a democratic community with good governance in Sudan through innovative approaches to capacity building, advocacy, networking and building knowledge.

For any enquiries about this release or for information on how to join the Confederation, please email cscso.confederation@gmail.com