



The Darfur Consortium

*African and International
Civil Society Action for Darfur*

Mr Sindiso Ngwenya
Secretary General, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

Ambassador Juma Mwapachu
Secretary General, East African Community

Dr Tomas Salomao
Executive Secretary, Southern African Development Community

21 October 2008

Your Excellencies:

We, the members of the Darfur Consortium, a coalition of over 50 mostly African and Arab civil society organisations, salute you on the historic occasion of the first tripartite summit of the regional economic communities (RECs) of the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Kampala, Uganda.

As you are aware the situation in Darfur is grave, with reports this week of the displacement of over twenty thousand people and the political process still in stalemate. With a request for the indictment of the President of Sudan under consideration by the International Criminal Court, the situation in Darfur is a complex humanitarian, human rights and political crisis with critical regional dimensions.

We understand that tomorrow's summit is expected to address matters related to enhancing cooperation among COMESA, EAC and SADC member States, including deepening trade, investment and infrastructure, as well as enabling free movement of people between the three RECs. This unique gathering also brings together members of the International Conference of the Great Lakes (ICGLR), an arrangement dedicated to enhancing peace, stability and development in the region, with overlapping membership with the three RECs.

Your Excellencies,

The three foundational treaties of the communities and the Great Lakes Pact of the ICGLR all enshrine principles of human rights as governing norms for the operation of the RECs. It is in this context that we are calling on COMESA, EAC and SADC and their member States to consider how they might implement these foundational principles to ensure the protection of civilians in danger in Darfur

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Africa Security Dialogue & Research
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African Women's Development and
Communications Network (FEMNET)
Ahueni Foundation
Alliances for Africa
Anti-Slavery International
Arab Program for Human Rights
Activists (APHRA)
Cairo Institute for Human Rights
Studies (CIHRS)
Centre for Research Education and
Development of Freedom of Expression
and Associated Rights
Darfur Relief and Documentation
Centre
Egyptian Organization for Human
Rights (EOHR)
Femmes Africa Solidarité
Human Rights Centre, University of
Pretoria
Human Rights Institute of South Africa
(HURISA)
Institute for Human Rights and
Development in Africa,
Inter-African Union for Human Rights
(UIDH)
Interights
International Commission of Jurists
International Refugee Rights Initiative
Justice Africa
Justice Initiative
Justice and Peace Commission
Lawyers for Human Rights
Legal Resources Consortium-Nigeria
Ligue Tunisienne pour la Défense des
Droits de l'Homme
Makumira University College, Tumaini
University
Media Foundation for West Africa
Minority Rights Group
Mining Mirror
Never Again International
Open Society Justice Initiative
Pan-African Movement
Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des
Droits de l'Homme (RADDHO)
Sudan Organization Against Torture
Sudanese Refugee Association in South
Africa
WARIPNET
Women Initiative Nigeria
World Organization Against Torture*

In this regard, I have the pleasure to submit to you a short paper, *Some Reflections on the Legal and Political Mechanisms Bolstering the Responsibility to Protect: The African Union and the Great Lakes, Eastern, Southern and Horn of Africa Sub-Regional Arrangements*, for your consideration.

We remain at your disposal for any further information you may require at +256-75-331-0404.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dismas Nkunda', is written over a light blue grid background.

Dismas Nkunda
Co-Chair, Darfur Consortium