



OFFICIAL STATEMENT THE ONGOING POLITICAL PROCESS IN SUDAN

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- Your Excellency **Dr. Naledi Pandor**, Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa and the Chair of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union for the month of February;
- Your Excellencies, **Members of the AU Peace and Security Council**;
- Honorable **Ambassadors**;
- **Ladies and gentlemen**, all protocols duly observed;

I would like to start my statement on behalf of IGAD by **sincerely thanking you for the opportunity to brief you on the ongoing political process in Sudan.**

This meeting on Sudan is timely **as the signatories to the 5th of December 2022 Political Framework Agreement**, with the facilitation of the Trilateral Mechanism of the AU, IGAD and the UN **have embarked on the final phase of the political process.**

The **Framework Agreement provides for a 24-month transitional period to be led by a civilian Prime Minister and Cabinet.**



As you are aware, the signing of this Political Framework Agreement between the military and civilian factions **marks the first milestone towards restoring civilian rule since the political developments of 25th October 2021.**

The Agreement has the full backing and support of many Sudanese, the military as well as that of the international community. And we do also **strongly believe that the ongoing process is the only credible avenue** that has the potential to lead to an inclusive and sustainable transition.

The Agreement has also **identified 5 priority issues that need further discussion and detail to be able to reach a final agreement.** These 5 issues are: Dismantling of the 30th of June regime; The Juba Peace Agreement; The issue of the East; Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Transitional Justice.

Accordingly, following the signing, the Signatories and the Trilateral Mechanism undertook weeks of intensive discussion and planning and **launched the last phase of the political process on 8th January 2023.**

During the launch which was attended by Sudanese stakeholders and members of the international community, **the military reiterated its willingness and readiness to hand over power to civilians once a final agreement is reached.**

It was reassuring and also a testament to the fact that Sudan is on the right path to restoring constitutional order and civilian rule.



From 9th to 12th January 2023, the **first Workshop** on the dismantling of the 30th June regime took place. **The second Workshop** on the Juba Peace Agreement took place from 31st January to 3rd February 2023. **A third Workshop** on the issues in the East is in the planning stages.

Excellencies,

The broad participation of non-signatories is expected to increase for the upcoming Workshops for the East and Transitional Justice which are **structured to ensure wider public participation, including from women as well as inclusivity** which are key in securing credibility and sustainability of the process and the undivided ownership of the final agreement.

Excellencies,

Despite this encouraging progress, the process still faces serious challenges from both within and outside Sudan. One of the main challenges to the ongoing political process is the **reluctance of key political actors to be part of the process**. The two main non-signatories are the **Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM)** and **Justice and Equality Movement**.

There have been **several attempts** by the signatories, the Trilateral Mechanism as well as some members of the international community **to persuade these two groups to sign the Framework Agreement**. **However, these efforts are yet to be successful.**

Excellencies,

IGAD urges this august body and more generally, AU Member States to engage with these groups to persuade them to join the ongoing process that seeks to return Sudan to civilian rule. In this regard, countries neighbouring Sudan in particular, are in a position to play a very constructive role.

Another major challenge is the parallel process that has been initiated with groups that are not engaging with the Trilateral Mechanism. While these efforts to create a platform for all Sudanese is commendable, it threatens to reverse the gains made so far by the ongoing process.

Furthermore, to **creating opportunities for different groups to go “forum shopping” for a favorite mediator,** it is also being used as a platform to undermine the legitimacy and discredit the process facilitated by the Trilateral Mechanism by dissatisfied groups and spoilers.

There is therefore an urgent need for **all parties actively participating in facilitating a return to civilian rule in the Republic of Sudan to join hands and efforts with the Trilateral Mechanism** and the international community to achieve this common goal.

In closing, Excellencies, I wish to **reiterate the call made by the 48th Ordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers for the initiation of a process to re-admit of the Republic of Sudan into the African Union,** alongside the lifting of any sanctions that may be hindering the transition process.



I expect that such an initiative, combined with **clarity by way of a roadmap for Sudan's re-admission into the AU family**, where it firmly belongs, would provide some much-needed motivation to the transitional authorities and the people of Sudan to redouble their efforts towards an early return to civilian rule.

Excellencies,

We can all **draw lessons and inspiration from the collaboration and good work we achieved together in the Ethiopian peace process.** Let's stand united in lending the much-needed support to the Trilateral Mechanism and Sudanese stakeholders in the last lap of the political process.

I thank you!