Council conclusions on Sudan

3101st FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Luxembourg, 20 June 2011

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"1. As the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) draws to an end, the Council views with deep concern recent developments in Sudan, especially in Southern Kordofan and Abyei. It urges the two Sudanese parties to reach agreement on outstanding CPA issues and post-CPA arrangements without further delay. That key issues such as citizenship, management of the oil sector and border arrangements are yet to be agreed remains particularly worrying. The Council is convinced that it is possible to find solutions that will meet the vital needs of both parties and lay the basis for two viable states living in peace with each other as good neighbours. It is important at this critical juncture that dialogue on all the outstanding issues takes place at the highest level. The Council welcomes and expresses its full support to ongoing efforts by the African Union (AU), under the auspices of the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) and in close cooperation with Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles, to facilitate a cessation of hostilities in Southern Kordofan and political agreements on Southern Kordofan and Abyei. It urges the parties to continue making full use of the good offices of the African Union (AU) High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), under the leadership of President Mbeki, and stands ready to provide further assistance if required.

2. The Council is alarmed by recent violence and subsequent displacement of civilians in Southern Kordofan. It calls on all parties to stop hostilities immediately and for the resumption of negotiations on political and security arrangements for Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile after 9 July 2011 including Popular Consultations. Failure to do so will have a practical impact on the engagement of the international community in Sudan."
3. The Council also remains concerned about the situation in Abyei and deplores the military action taken by the Sudan Armed Forces. This action and the dissolution of the Joint Administration constitute serious violations of the CPA. The Council denounces all attacks against UNMIS, including that of 19 May by southern forces, which was a criminal act against a UN mission. The Council calls for the immediate withdrawal of the Sudan Armed Forces and all other military elements from Abyei and for security arrangements to be agreed that would allow the voluntary and safe return of those displaced from their homes. The Council supports the UN Security Council statement of 3 June and underlines that the future status of Abyei shall only be resolved by negotiations between parties in a manner consistent with the CPA and not by the unilateral actions of either party.

4. The Council condemns the fact that north-south roads have been blocked, causing food and fuel shortages in the South, and calls for immediate access to be restored through all routes.

5. The Council deplores the increasing violence in Darfur, especially the continued targeting of civilians, which has resulted in more than 70,000 displaced persons in 2011. The Council urges the Government of Sudan and the armed movements parties to cease hostilities. The Council hopes that the outcome of the recent All Darfur Stakeholders' Conference in Doha will provide the basis for reaching a comprehensive and inclusive peace settlement and a permanent ceasefire. The Council recalls the obligation of the Government of Sudan to cooperate with the International Criminal Court pursuant to UNSC Resolution 1593.

6. The Council urges all parties in Southern Kordofan, Abyei, Darfur and South Sudan to protect civilians and to ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access to vulnerable populations. The EU commits to the continued provision of needs-based humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations throughout Sudan.

7. The Council recalls the obligation of all parties to respect international humanitarian and human rights law and underlines that those responsible for violations must be held accountable.

8. The Council agrees to follow a comprehensive EU approach to Sudan and, from 9 July 2011, to South Sudan. To this end, the EU will:
   • underpin the development and peaceful co-existence of two viable, stable and prosperous states;
   • continue to support efforts to reach a comprehensive and inclusive peace settlement for Darfur;
   • continue to support poverty reduction efforts by both governments;
   • assist the development of accountable, transparent and efficient government in both states based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law;
   • contribute to the effective co-ordination of international support, including through a state building strategy for South Sudan, at the strategic and operational level under the overall leadership of the UN.

9. The EU is committed to engage both Sudan and South Sudan in the promotion of democratic governance, respect for human rights and a peaceful and prosperous future for all Sudanese people. In this context, the EU will step up its political dialogue with Sudan and establish a regular and comprehensive political dialogue with the Government of South Sudan.
10. Ensuring stability in the north-south border areas will be of paramount importance for Sudan and South Sudan. The EU is ready to support stability in these areas using the Instrument for Stability.

11. The Council recognises the many challenges facing Sudan. EU Member States are actively examining possible support for an international debt relief effort for Sudan through the IMF, the World Bank and the Paris Club, consistent with tangible political progress in Sudan. The Council remains convinced that a constructive attitude by the Government of Sudan, as illustrated in the referendum process of January 2011, and the development of good neighbourly relations between Sudan and South Sudan would bring real benefits to the peoples of north and south. In this context, the Council reiterates its willingness to increase its engagement in Sudan.

12. The Council also recognises the complex challenges facing South Sudan and supports the Government of South Sudan in their efforts to achieve a peaceful and stable transition to independence. In coordination with the UN, and using all instruments at its disposal, the Council will urgently take forward consideration of ways to provide support to South Sudan's civilian capacity-building requirements in the field of security.

13. The EU has substantially increased its development assistance to meet South Sudan's needs. In consultation with the Government of South Sudan and in coordination with other international partners including the UN, the EU and its Member States will take forward the joint programming of development assistance in the following areas: justice/rule of law; education; health; water management; urban development and the rural economy. Furthermore, the EU commits to continued cooperation with South Sudan on trade matters, and to ensure duty-free and quota-free access to EU markets under "Everything But Arms", as soon as the conditions are met.

14. The Council looks forward to the strengthening and further development of the EU’s relations with the Government and people of South Sudan, including the establishment of diplomatic relations. As an important first step in this regard, the Council agrees with High Representative Ashton’s proposal to open an EU Delegation in Juba, as soon as the necessary conditions are fulfilled."