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DELEGATION TO THE REPUBLIC OF SUDAN

EU Parliament Delegation Peace and Inclusive National Dialogue are Key to Sudan's Stability and Development



Two members of the European Parliament's Development Committee ended a three days visit to Sudan on 27 March. The visiting delegation was composed of Ms Fiona Hall, who chaired the delegation, and Mr Agustín Díaz De Mera García Consuegra. They met with their counterparts at the National Assembly, Sudanese officials, human rights activists, representatives of local NGOs and international humanitarian, development and financial agencies in Sudan.

The Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) delegation appreciated the constructive role of Sudan in the South Sudan crisis. They recognised the challenges faced by Sudan, as well as the announcements regarding change and reform. The MEPs agreed that peace, national dialogue and reconciliation are key to Sudan's stability. They called on all the relevant parties and forces to step up efforts for an inclusive national dialogue in an enabling environment to achieve a peaceful and democratic transition in Sudan. In particular the voices of the civil society can add to a meaningful dialogue about the country's future.

The MEPs warned of the consequences of a deteriorating humanitarian and security situation in Darfur if it is not contained through peaceful ways. They welcomed



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initiatives to bring peace and security to Sudan and called on all Sudanese to fully cooperate to achieve peace.

The visiting delegation noted with concern the obstacles faced by the international organizations and civil society in Sudan regarding humanitarian access, including suspension of activities, and expressed the desire that these can be overcome in the near future.

The MEPs called on all the relevant authorities to honour the promise of political freedoms and strengthen the respect for human rights and media freedoms.

During discussions, the members of the European Parliament recognised common interest in development and in particular in the eradication of poverty and malnutrition, as well as opportunities and challenges in the areas of migration and pastoralism. Gender issues were recognised as a cross-cutting issue in the many areas of co-operation. They underlined the significance of EU development cooperation with 93 million EUR allocated to Sudan between 2011-2013.

At the end of their visit, the Chair of the delegation visited a vocational training centre co-funded by the European Union and implemented by UNIDO in cooperation with the Sudanese Ministry of Human Development and Labour. Ms. Hall acknowledged the centre's role in training thousands of displaced youth to break the cycle of poverty and unemployment. She recognised the importance of similar initiatives in strengthening the EU - Sudanese cooperation.