

**Sudan's Bashir pledges to invite rebels into government during transition**

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**Sudan's Bashir pledges to invite rebels into government during transition**

Sudanese President Umar Hasan al-Bashir has said he will invite the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) into the government during the transitional phase following a peace accord. Speaking before the annual conference of the ruling National Congress party in Khartoum, Al-Bashir also thanked the leader of the SPLM, John Garang, for his personal involvement in the recent peace talks in Kenya. Al-Bashir also hailed Washington's role in the Sudanese peace process and called on it to adopt "a just position" towards other conflicts in the Arab and Muslim world. The following is an excerpt from Al-Bashir's speech broadcast live by Sudanese TV on 8 October; subheadings inserted editorially

(Passage omitted: religious preamble) I salute this noble people and I salute the National Congress as it convenes these political congresses and moves from the base to the summit. This comprehensive national representation, bringing together all the people of Sudan adds to the Sudanese political experience a nationalistic pluralism, which brings together the people of the north and the south, the people of the west and those of the east. It brings together the people of Sudan in all their cultures and all their religious creeds. It opens up the Sudanese people in all their diverse backgrounds - their scientific, professional, trade union and social affiliations.

**National Congress "exemplary party"**

The National Congress is an exemplary party, which will lead the next stage in all its challenges and aspirations, having created a solid base, scored great achievements and having gained knowledge and experience and having gained the confidence (of the people).

The people of Sudan today have a party that has been tested by time, which has faced battles and defied fragmentation and defeat. (Passage omitted)

The people of Sudan today have a strong party that has built an extensive network of relations; that has reached accords and built alliances with Arab, African, regional and international parties and organizations, in order to bring about a common stance and exchange views and ideas. It has engaged in serious dialogue and has made contacts with all, irrespective of their ideological positions. It has done this in a clear way, thereby affirming the originality of our party and its pride in its principles and stands.

Our dialogue has encompassed the whole world - east and west, north and south.

We have conducted an African dialogue with South African parties, Kenya, Ethiopia, (DR)Congo, Uganda, Chad, Nigeria and Niger.

We have engaged in continuous dialogue to bring about an Arab accord with Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Jordan, Libya, Tunisia and with all the opinion-shaping and ideological tendencies within Islamic and religious organizations.

We have also engaged in a probing dialogue with democratic, Christian and socialist parties in Europe, Asia, Canada, and lately the Chinese Communist Party.

We conducted a comprehensive civilized dialogue in which we expressed our views, values, principles in the field of ideas, culture, politics, security, peace, democracy, human rights, terrorism, excess and extremism. In this dialogue, we expressed an excellent and brilliant view, not based on exclusivity and chauvinism.

War and peace

Dear brothers, honourable guests, dear brother members of the National Congress general conference, honourable people of Sudan: The holding of this conference coincides with the glad tidings of peace and end to war and fighting.

Ever since its inception, the (National) Salvation (Revolution) has pursued peace in every place and through all mediations, received mediators and searched for peace both within and outside the country. The Salvation developed from all of this a programme for negotiations and dialogue, reaching out to the sons of the nation in the south who are bearing arms. It engaged with them in a genuine, sincere and brave dialogue, thereby giving the peace process a strong push to the heights of success.

My congratulations to all who participated in the negotiations from the beginning and to all who gave their efforts with patience and determination!

We congratulate the People's Movement (Sudan People's Liberation Movement, SPLM) which embraced peace. We bravely congratulate it, as it understood that the

interest of the nation requires dialogue, not war. Thus it came under its leader, Dr John Garang, to the negotiating table, which was an indication of its seriousness and true commitment.

Our appreciation to all martyrs who watered the tree of peace, the unity, and the honour. It is through them that the road to peace was paved.

The plan to achieve peace and the effort to secure it for the sake of national unity is based on consent and cannot be achieved by mere wish or slogans. He who does not know war, does not know peace. He who does not have the power to wage war and show fortitude while engaged in it, does not have the determination to achieve peace and safeguard it.

Only when you have fought with ferocity and steadfastness - only when you have offered martyrs and made sacrifices - only then will you realize the value of peace and security and the required effort, patience and hardship (to realize it).

#### Seventeen-point action plan

At this juncture, let me propose to you some of the requirements for peace on which we can build our programme in the coming stage:

1. Making a pact with God in faith and surrendering to him. Being true to your motives, sincere in your work and free from desires and selfish interests and putting the interest of others before ours;
2. Being loyal to the nation and its higher interests and defending its unity and national security, whatever the cost;
3. Continuously endeavour to create a new Sudan to which we all aspire, based on freedom, justice, total citizenship (as heard) and respect for religions and beliefs, and to cement their values and noble ethics. To promote customs, cultural practices and the social heritage of all sections of the society;
4. Invite the SPLM to an active political participation in the administration of the government's affairs during the transitional period, thereby strengthening the fundamentals of peace and safeguarding voluntary unity and providing an opportunity for others to participate. In this context, we renew the call for the setting up of a higher council for peace, which will become a national platform to ensure the participation of all, and which will follow up the peace issue and supervise it;

5. Call for the formation of a broad and strong national front to safeguard the voluntary unity and support political stability and lay the foundation for a sound consultative democratic process. All political parties are called upon to review their relations and their past alliances based on confrontation and divergence;
6. Emphasize the rule of law, protect human rights, and the dignity of individuals, institutions and organizations;
7. Strengthen public freedoms, especially the freedom of expression and association. In this regard, I propose to your congress to direct the organs of the state to lift the state of emergency immediately a final peace accord is signed and to lift the ban on some political and media institutions which agree to reject violence, call for the good and accept the rule of law;
8. Call for the overcoming of old conflicts and vendettas. All must transcend personal motives, racial affiliations, bias and interests for the sake of the nation and its progress;
9. Call on all the parties, political and social forces to perfect their political and institutional structures and to strengthen their programmes in a world whose motto is efficiency and the power of institutions;
10. A serious planning for comprehensive development that would improve the economy, boost production and productivity, increase and diversify general revenue, so as to improve living conditions, increase job opportunities for graduates and returnees, prepare projects that place greater priority on basic services, in particular, education, health and water;
11. To prepare an ambitious investment project that is directed to all and includes neighbouring and friendly states which, together with us, helped to creating the climate of peace in Sudan; (Passage omitted)
12. To draw up a special plan to develop and rehabilitate the war-affected areas in the south, the north and the less-developed regions, so as to achieve a balanced and just development of services;
13. Affirm the role of the armed forces and the regular forces in the defence of the nation, and strengthen their role and participation in the implementation of development programmes;

14. Affirm that public service institutions are national and promote the principles of competence, trust and professionalism, without political and racial discrimination, and to regard these as the only criteria for serving in them;

15. Promote the role of the civil service, raise its administrative and professional competence, improve the conditions of the workers, strengthen the monitoring and accountability mechanisms, in order to prevent the phenomenon of corruption, ineptitude and disregard for the interests of the citizens;

16. Use the mechanisms within civil society - associations, councils, voluntary organizations, sufi (Islamic mystical sects) orders, Islamic and Christian religious institutions - to promote religious coexistence. (Passage omitted: repetitive)

17. To adopt a foreign policy based on the maintenance of the country's rights, development of its interests and which seeks to establish an international system based on justice and mutual interests and respect for international charters and conventions. (Passage omitted: repetitive)

USA, Sudanese peace process

From here we salute the USA for its position in the Sudanese peace process and its commitment to it. It confirmed that peace cannot be achieved by force and will not come through pressure, but rather through self-contentment and justice. As we applaud the position of the USA in the peace process and await true bilateral relations, we also call upon the USA with strength, since it is the most effective country in the world, to revisit its position regarding international peace, to realize a just position towards our Arab, African and Muslim issues, and the rights of sovereignty of their lands, the rights of investments and their rights to independent decision making.

We assert that our Arab and Muslim world does not carry animosity or hatred for anyone, but instead is keen on its religious values to safeguard its cultural privacy without any fanaticism, radicalism, violence or terrorism. Our Arab and Muslim world believes in balanced and civilized dialogue, tolerant international cooperation, equality and mutual respect. (Passage omitted)

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