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Technical assistance and capacity-building

Written statement* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[02 June 2019]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Sudan's position on opening a country office

On the occasion of the first report on the opening of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Sudan under item 10 of the agenda, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights takes the opportunity at the 41st Session of the Human Rights Council to present this report to assess Sudan's position on international mechanisms in general and its position on the opening of a country office, especially in light of the current transitional situation experienced by the country.

Cooperation with the International Human Rights Mechanisms

In spite of the cooperation of Sudan with some United Nations bodies such as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Sudan, Sudan has continued to deny the visit of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, providing justifications for urgent appeals sent to the United Nations that there are no concerns about such communications.

With regard to cooperation with the treaty committees, Sudan regularly reports to some committees such as the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In contrast, Sudan has not yet acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. In addition, it has not ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aimed at the abolition of the death penalty and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.¹

Sudan's position on opening a country office

Human Rights Council Resolution 39/22 adopted in September 39, 2018, on technical assistance and capacity-building to improve the human rights situation in Sudan. The resolution included the establishment of a country office by September 2019. The resolution was one of the challenges faced by Sudan on the human rights situation, and to encourage the Government of Sudan to protect and provide humanitarian assistance to needy populations and to encourage Sudan's efforts to combat human trafficking and other violations of human rights. The resolution also included the renewal of the mandate of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Sudan, which will have been ended by September 2019 coinciding with the opening of the UNHCR country office. The resolution was adopted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/141 in December 1993² to promote all human rights and protection.³

In order to evaluate the performance since the resolution was adopted in September 2018, a committee formed, under the decree of Sudan's Minister of Justice No. (69) for the year 2018, to formulate a plan for the implementation of the resolution. The committee held its first meeting in November 2018 under the chairmanship of the Minister of Justice Mahmoud Abaker Dugdug and legal experts. This meeting was the first step, in which defining the bases and conditions for the opening of the country office was discussed, as well as identifying and indicating technical assistance and capacity-building required for Sudan. The Minister of Justice stressed the importance of communication between the Government of Sudan and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in order to reach the issues related to the establishment of the country office in Khartoum. In this

¹ المآلة على الأاراء المقامة انظر المفوضية السامية لأقوق الإنسان – المعاهدات التعااهدية <https://bit.ly/2vjjtC5>

² المآلة على قرار الجمعية العامة رقم 141/48 لسنة 1993 انظر <https://bit.ly/2vashKb>

³ المآلة على قرار إنشاء المكتب القطري في السودان انظر <https://bit.ly/2Gkx693>

meeting, it was stressed that the experiences of the countries that established a UNHCR country office should be taken into account, considering the nature of these countries and the security of the members of the committee on a roadmap, and benefiting from the funding provided to open the country office in raising capacities, training and technical assistance, as well as the agreement on the general confrontations that govern the work of the office.⁴

On November 29, 2018, the Secretary General of the National Human Rights Commission of Sudan, Dr. Taha Bamkar, announced his country's readiness to open the country office for human rights in Sudan and to open branches of the Commission in the cities of the Red Sea and Ad-Damazin and in a number of states in the coming period to receive citizens' complaints. The training official in the Commission, Dr. Abdel Nasser Salm, has announced the organization of workshops on the ways and skills of national human rights institutions with international mechanisms, and he also announced the organization of training courses for journalists specialized in human rights in 2019, in order to prepare for the opening of the office.⁵

The second meeting held on December 3, 2018, which was held with the technical delegation of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice in Sudan, State Minister of Justice, Mahmoud Abaker Dugdug, the head of the delegation of the Commission Julie de Rivero, Chief of OHCHR's Africa Section for East and Southern Africa, the members of the Advisory Council for Human Rights, and others. The meeting discussed the views of the participants and the opinions of the Sudanese side. The meeting did not come to an end with an adoption of any resolutions, but was limited to discussion.⁶

As a result of the current situation in Sudan, no further steps have been taken. Sudan has been witnessing wide protests from December 2018 to date, due to poor economic conditions. As a result of these protests, the Sudanese Military Council announced the arrest of former President Omar al-Bashir and the arrest of symbols of the former rule and other measures have been taken. In addition, all the State's economic, political and social institutions were suspended, resulting in a halt to any steps on the opening of the country office. Therefore, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights appeals to the Human Rights Council and its human rights concerns to intensify efforts to establish the country office in Sudan. Maat expresses its concern about the current situation in Sudan and calls upon the following:

- The establishment of a Human Rights Council delegation to visit Sudan to take a close look at the current situation and to develop a rapid plan for technical and financial support and the establishment of the country office to support the transitional phase.
- The Sudanese authorities to ratify the other international conventions that have not yet been ratified.

⁴ السودان يشرع في تنفيذ إنشاء مكتب قطري لحقوق الإنسان بالخرطوم – 10 نوفمبر 2018 – موقع تاق برس وهو موقع إلكتروني شامل، يهتم بالشأن السوداني والمنطقة ويعمل على نقل كل الأحداث بمهنية وتجرد وحيادية، نتطلع في تاق برس للتميز بالالتزام أدق المعايير المهنية والتحريرية، وأسمى المعايير الأخلاقية عند إنتاج المواد الصحفية المختلفة <https://bit.ly/2XoT6Xi>

⁵ المفوضية: مستعدون لاستقبال المكتب القطري لحقوق الإنسان - 29 نوفمبر 2018 - المركز السوداني للخدمات الصحفية وهو مركز متخصص في تقديم الخدمات الصحفية وترقية الرسالة الإعلامية والإسهام في الارتقاء بمستوى وفيات التحرير الصحفي. تأسس المركز في ديسمبر 2002 بمبادرة من مجموعة شريان للإعلام ومشاركة من المهتمين <https://bit.ly/2DmiqWf>

⁶ وفد لمفوضية حقوق الإنسان يناقش في الخرطوم فتح مكتب للمتابعة 2 ديسمبر 2018 – موقع سودان تريبيون وهو بوابة الكترونية للأخبار عن السودان وجنوب السودان والدول المجاورة ويقوم بعمل تغطية إخبارية وتحليلية وتقارير رسمية <https://bit.ly/2ZmwyIj> وبيانات صحفية انظر أيضا:

- وفد اممي يناقش فتح مكتب إقليمي لمتابعة حقوق الإنسان في السودان بتاريخ 3 ديسمبر 2018 موقع " تاق برس " <https://bit.ly/2VSIorF>