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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

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MEDIA NOTE

Joint Statement on Peace Negotiations in Sudan

The members of the Troika (the United States, the United Kingdom, and Norway) welcome the convening of negotiations between the Government of Sudan and both the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North and the Darfur elements of the Sudan Revolutionary Front. These talks are a critical step towards both the resolution of ongoing conflicts and a comprehensive process of national dialogue that can address the range of issues that have fueled Sudan's conflicts and political unrest. We welcome the African Union High-level Implementation Panel's continued efforts and facilitation of these talks. We strongly urge the parties to the conflicts to show their commitment to peace by coming to Addis Ababa this month prepared to engage substantively on the issues identified by African Union Peace and Security Council in September, including:

- A synchronized cessation of hostilities for Darfur and the Two Areas of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile,
- Preparations for a meeting of all Sudanese parties to discuss relevant process issues and agree the terms and objectives of the National Dialogue;
- Necessary confidence-building measures to establish a conducive environment for broad Sudanese participation in the National Dialogue;
- Humanitarian assistance for all populations in war affected areas;

While we are encouraged by the announcement of coordinated negotiating tracks, we remain concerned by ongoing violence and the dire humanitarian conditions in both Darfur and the Two Areas. Recent reports indicate an increase in aerial bombardments in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, and we are alarmed by the recent statements from government officials on plans for major military offensives in both regions. History has shown that these conflicts cannot be won militarily. Further offensives only serve to increase the human suffering of the civilians in these areas.

In order to build confidence and create an environment conducive to dialogue and compromise, we urge all parties to cease such harmful actions and inflammatory rhetoric. We urge the parties to seize this opportunity and build a truly comprehensive process for national dialogue and a sustainable peace.

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