



PRESS RELEASE

THE SIXTH ROUND OF THE INTER-SUDANESE PEACE TALKS ON DARFUR OPENED TODAY IN ABUJA, NIGERIA,

The sixth Round of the Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks on the Darfur organized under the auspices of the African Union (AU) formally opened, today, Thursday 15 September 2005, in Abuja, Nigeria.

The opening ceremony, which was chaired by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission in the Sudan, Amb. Baba Gana Kingibe, was attended by Amb. Wadibia Anyanwu, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, representing the Current Chairman of the AU, President Olusegun Obasanjo, the Sudanese Minister of Agriculture Magzoub Al Khalifa, the Vice-President of the JEM, Mr. Bahar Idriss Abu Garda, and Mr. Garelnaby Abdel Karim Younis, who represented the SLM/A, as well as representatives of the Chadian mediation, Facilitators and the AU partners.

In his opening statement, Amb. Baba Gana Kingibe welcomed the different participants to the Talks and reaffirmed the determination of the AU to assist the Parties achieve a lasting solution to the conflict in Darfur. He urged them to do their utmost to ensure that the current Round, which will focus on the substantive issues of Power Sharing, Wealth Sharing and Security Arrangements, would culminate in a Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

In her statement, Amb. Wadibia Anyanwu underscored the continuing commitment of President Olusegun Obasanjo, Current Chairman of the AU and the African Union, to help the Parties end the conflict in Darfur, in order to end the long suffering of the people of the Region. She announced the decision of the Government, to relocate the Talks to a more conducive environment in Otta, outside Lagos and appealed to all the stakeholders to cooperate with those efforts.

For their part, the Parties reiterated their commitment to respect the Agreements they entered into and their determination to negotiate in good faith and to cooperate with the AU.

It may be recalled that at the end of the Fifth Round of the Talks held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 10 June to 5 July 2005, the Parties signed the Declaration of Principles on the Political issues, which paved the way for the substantive discussion of the three thematic issues.

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