



PRESS RELEASE NO 12

THE DISCUSSIONS ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES COMMENCE TODAY WITH A PLENARY SESSION FOLLOWED BY THE MEETING OF THE FIRST COMMISSION ON POWER SHARING

The AU Special Envoy for the Darfur Talks and Chief Mediator, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, formally opened today, Monday, 3 October 2005, a Plenary meeting, which marked the commencement of the discussions on the substantive issues. The Plenary Session, which was attended by all the Sudanese Parties, the Chadian Co-Mediation, the Facilitators and the International Partners, was followed at 16:00 hours by the first meeting of the Commission on Power Sharing, which will have Amb. Berhanu Dinka, former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region and Burundi, as Coordinator.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Salim outlined the way the Substantive Talks will be conducted. He said that, as agreed by the Parties, three Commissions on the substantive issues to be discussed will be set up and that each Party should designate a maximum of nine representatives on each Commission. He declared that the Commission on Power Sharing will be followed on 10 October 2005, by the beginning of the second Commission on Wealth Sharing. According to the time frame drawn by Dr. Salim, an exchange of views on the way forward in respect of Security Arrangements should start around 15 October 2005.

Dr. Salim also announced the establishment of a Steering Committee or Management Team to be chaired by him and which will comprise the representatives of the AU Mediation Team, two representatives from each Party, as well as two representatives of the Chadian Co-Mediation. This Committee will, according to the AU Special Envoy, assist the Mediation in ensuring that all the Parties fulfill their obligations during this process.

Similarly, he announced the setting up of a Media Committee to be chaired by the Spokesperson of the Mediation. This Committee designed to deal with the Media will comprise one representative from each Party.

Following the remarks of the AU Special Envoy and Chief Mediator, the representatives of the Government of the Sudan (GoS), the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) took the floor. They were followed by the representatives of the Chadian Co-Mediation, Nigeria and Libya, as well as the representatives of the UK, Chair of the EU, the USA, Norway, Canada, France, the UN, the EU and the League of Arab States. While the Parties reiterated their commitment to the Talks, the Partners, Facilitators and Co-Mediation welcomed the initiative of the AU Special Envoy to convene the Plenary Session and to move forward with the Talks, without any further delay after a week long of consultations.

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