

Calling on the Sudanese to immediately enhance their cooperation with the International Criminal Court

Mr President, I thank the Prosecutor for the thirty-fifth report on the Situation in Darfur, pursuant to Resolution 1593.

I also thank the Prosecutor for his briefing to this Council, and welcome this being delivered during the Prosecutor's second visit to Sudan, as a sign of the Court's unwavering commitment to help deliver justice for the people of Darfur.

In this light, the UK welcomes the progress made in the trial of Mr Abd-Al-Rahman, in which 28 witnesses have provided evidence since April. It is testament to the victims' courage and patience for them to tell their stories after two decades, and represents a vital step towards seeking accountability for all survivors and affected communities in Darfur.

This historic moment demonstrates how enhanced cooperation can translate into meaningful action in the pursuit of justice. It is our sincere hope that this initial step begins to deliver justice for the people of Darfur, and helps to break the cycle of impunity that exists across Sudan.

However, Mr President, it is regrettable that sufficient cooperation has been lacking from the Sudanese authorities since last October's military coup. This puts at risk the progress that the previous Government of Sudan had been able to make with the Court.

The UK therefore urges the Sudanese authorities to immediately enhance their cooperation with the Court.

Firstly, we call for the Sudanese authorities to engage in helping to facilitate the establishment of a field office in Khartoum. A permanent presence is vital for the Office of the Prosecutor to continuously deepen its engagement with affected communities and to facilitate stronger cooperation with the Sudanese authorities.

Secondly, the UK urges the Sudanese authorities to respond swiftly to the Court's outstanding requests for assistance, noting the Court have only had a response to two of the seventeen requests they have made in the last six months. We also urge the Sudanese authorities to provide unimpeded access to the documentation and witnesses that the Court have identified.

Finally, Mr President, the UK would like to commend the ICC's tireless efforts in delivering justice for the people of Darfur, and reiterate our support to the Court in this endeavour. In this respect we call for action to deliver on the four ICC warrants which remain outstanding in the Darfur situation, and we continue to call for the surrender of Mr Banda, who remains

a fugitive from the Court.

Thank you.