

Emphasising the importance of justice for victims in South Sudan

Thank you, Mr President.

Mr President, let me also thank the Prosecutor for her 30th report on the situation in Darfur pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1593 (2005) and for her briefing to the Council today.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Prosecutor and her team for their dedication and pursuing these investigations and continuing to seek justice for victims in Darfur. The International Criminal Court has an important role to play in seeking justice and holding perpetrators of the most heinous crimes to account. And the United Kingdom strongly supports its efforts.

Since the prosecutor's last briefing, we have seen positive developments in Sudan with the agreement of a transitional period that sets out a pathway to lead Sudan into a democratic future. The appointment of a civilian prime minister and of cabinet of technocrat ministers are welcome steps, as are the pledges to protect human rights and the rule of law.

There are, however, still significant challenges for the transitional government to address. We welcome the commitment to build a credible Sudanese judicial system and the pledge to seek accountability for past crimes, including by the establishment of an independent commission of inquiry into the brutal attacks on protesters earlier this year. The United Kingdom will support the Prime Minister of Sudan and the transitional government in these efforts and in building a new Sudan, as called for by the Sudanese people.

Mr President, the Sudanese people have suffered as a result of Sudan's long history of internal conflicts. Past crimes cannot be forgotten and we must ensure accountability is delivered. This includes the crimes committed during the conflict in Darfur, which the United Nations estimates left over 300,000 people dead and 2.5 million displaced. These victims deserve to see justice served, as well as the achievement of a long-term solution to the root causes of this conflict. Almost 2 million people remain internally displaced in Darfur and the United Kingdom is concerned by reports of further violence and displacements in North Jebel Marra and returning IDPs being met with violence.

The transitional government has stated that securing a long lasting peace in Sudan is a priority and have demonstrated positive steps by engaging with armed groups and entering into peace talks.

The United Kingdom welcomes the signing of declarations in Juba and the resumption of talks on 10th of December. We continue to urge all groups to engage productively in these discussions and without any preconditions. Sustainable peace, underpinned by justice and accountability, must be found

for the victims of this conflict and for the people of Sudan.

Mr President, the security situation and safety of the civilians of Darfur must be a priority, as we consider a transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in the region.

Mr President, we appreciate that during the momentous changes in Sudan, there have been limited opportunities for the Prosecutor and her team to make the progress that he would like on this case. We welcomed the Prosecutor's briefing and note that she has been able to strengthen her case. The United Kingdom again renews its call to all state parties to cooperate with the ICC and encourages the transitional government in Sudan to engage constructively with the Office of the Prosecutor with the intention of making progress with regard to this case. We stand ready to support the civilian administration as they seek to build rule of law across the whole of Sudan, ensuring that those responsible for horrific crimes committed in Sudan are held to account and that these horrors are not experienced again.

Finally, Mr President, we again thank the Prosecutor and her team for their continued commitment to making progress in their investigations, despite longstanding access restrictions and lack of cooperation. We urge them to continue with this important work in striving to achieve justice for the victims of the Darfur conflict.

I thank you, Mr President.