

Press release: UK-Sudan Strategic Dialogue – April 2018 : Communique

The fifth meeting of the biannual Sudan-UK Strategic Dialogue was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Sudan in Khartoum on 24th April 2018, co-chaired by Ambassador Abdelghani Elnaim Awadelkarim, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Sudan, and Neil Wigan, Director for Africa at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, accompanied by delegations from both countries.

The meetings covered bilateral issues, the peace process, human rights, development, trade and investment, migration, defence engagement, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, regional issues and culture. Both sides welcomed the continued progress in many aspects of the bilateral relationship since the last Strategic Dialogue meeting in London in October, and agreed to continue joint work in areas of mutual interest over the coming months.

Both sides welcomed the continued meetings between high level government officials from Sudan and the United Kingdom, including at Foreign Minister level last December. They discussed future work on macroeconomic development and reform, including technical assistance and support on improving business indicators. Both sides agreed to continue the regular dialogue on human rights between the two governments at all levels, in particular political and media freedoms in the run up to the 2020 elections, and the UK support for Sudan's accession to the Convention Against Torture (CAT) and other relevant Conventions. Both sides continued to emphasise the importance of joint work to combat trafficking in people.

On the peace process, both sides discussed the continuing reconfiguration of the UN-AU Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and agreed to continue to exchange views on the renewal of its mandate. Both parties welcomed the continued unilateral cessations of hostilities, and moves to open a UNAMID teamsite at Golo in Jebel Marra. They agreed to continue engaging constructively towards a negotiated political agreement to end the conflicts in Darfur and the Two Areas, including through the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP).

Both sides expressed strong concern about the ongoing conflict in South Sudan. The UK welcomed the Government of Sudan's support to the IGAD-led peace process and its continuing commitment to supporting South Sudanese refugees. Both sides agreed the importance of a politically inclusive peace process and agreed to engage constructively in support of the current IGAD led peace process.

The two parties also agreed to continue working together on countering terrorism and violent extremism. They welcomed continued exchanges of visits and agreed to consider further joint work in this field. Both sides were pleased with progress to deliver the current celebrations of the 70th

Anniversary of the British Council in Sudan and agreed to continue exchanges on cultural and educational issues, including primary and higher education, digitisation of archives and co-operation on youth strategies.

The UK and Sudan reaffirmed the importance of continued progress towards our joint goals, and a continued broadening of the bilateral relationship, and agreed to hold another Strategic Dialogue in London in October 2018.