

Brussels, 30 AVR. 2019  
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To all MEPs signatory to the 12 March 2019 letter on the current political situation in Sudan

Dear colleagues,

Thank you for your letter of 12 March on the current political situation in Sudan.

The European Union is closely following the situation in Sudan, including that of human rights.

The EU has in several occasions through public and discreet diplomacy, including in the EU28 Declaration<sup>1</sup> issued on 28 February, expressed its concerns about the situation in Sudan, especially the excessive use of force against civilian protesters by the Sudanese security forces. The EU has also repeatedly urged the Sudanese authorities to release all journalists, members of the opposition, human rights defenders, and other protesters arbitrarily detained, and to ensure that an independent investigation into deaths and abuses is undertaken with those responsible held to account. These aspects were also emphasised in the EU statement<sup>2</sup> delivered on 12 March at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva.

In addition, the EU has recurrently urged the Government of Sudan to allow the Sudanese people to exercise their fundamental right to express their views without fear of reprisal and to implement much-needed political and economic reforms to address the grievances expressed by the population and the challenges the country is facing.

Given the latest developments, the EU will continue to call on the Sudanese transitional authorities to respect freedom of assembly, association, and expression, in accordance with international laws, and to raise specific cases of concern. As emphasised in the EU28 Declaration issued on 17 April, a swift and orderly handover to a civilian transitional body with full decision-making authority is the only way to enable a peaceful, credible and inclusive political process that can meet the aspirations of Sudanese society and lead to much-needed political and economic reforms.

While the EU welcomes the steps taken by the transitional military council in the last weeks to release a large number of political detainees, including Sakharov prize laureate Mr Salih Mahmoud

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<sup>1</sup> *Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the situation in Sudan*, issued on 28 February 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/28/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-situation-in-sudan/>

<sup>2</sup> *EU statement at the UN Human Rights Council 40<sup>th</sup> session*, [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59642/hrc-40-eu-statement-human-rights-situation-require-councils-attention\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59642/hrc-40-eu-statement-human-rights-situation-require-councils-attention_en)

Osman, we continued to advocate for all remaining political detainees to be liberated. In addition, an immediate reform of the security forces is necessary to ensure accountability and avoid the reoccurrence of abuses. The latter aspects were also stressed in the EU28 Declaration<sup>3</sup>. The EU will also continue supporting civil society work and human rights defenders by the various means at our disposal.

The EU does not consider that recourse to Article 16 of the Rome Statute can offer a solution to the current crisis in Sudan. The EU stands against acts that could risk compromising the independence and legitimacy of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and hinder the effective execution of its judicial functions. The EU also encourages States Parties and non-States Parties to cooperate with the Court to end impunity for the most heinous crimes and to foster a culture of accountability. In addition, we also made clear in the latest EU28 Declaration<sup>4</sup> that perpetrators of violence and abuse, now and in the past, must be held to account and that we expect Sudan to cooperate with the ICC.

Please rest assured that the EU will continue to follow closely the situation in Sudan. The protection and promotion of human rights are and will remain at the core of the EU's engagement with Sudan.

Yours sincerely,



Federica Mogherini

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<sup>3</sup> *Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the situation in Sudan*, issued on 17 April 2019, [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61231/declaration-high-representative-federica-mogherini-behalf-european-union-sudan\\_es](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61231/declaration-high-representative-federica-mogherini-behalf-european-union-sudan_es)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.