



The Sudan Consortium
*African and International Civil Society
Action for Sudan*



تجمع القوى المدنية
CIVIL FORCES ASSEMBLY

African and Sudanese civil society calls for strong AU PSC response to coup in Sudan

12 April 2019

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Excellencies, Representatives of the AU Peace and Security Council Member States,
H.E. Chairperson Mr. Moussa Faki, African Union Commission,

Your Excellencies,

We, the undersigned Sudanese and African civil society organizations write with deep concern about the military takeover in Sudan on 11 April 2019.

The Sudanese people's quest for peace and democratic change has propelled country wide protests since December 2018, which developed on 6 April 2019 into massive protests including a sit-in at the military headquarters in Khartoum which continues to the present moment. Although the people of Sudan have been calling for an end to the regime of President Omar Al Bashir, this is not how they wanted it to happen. Over his 30 year tenure, President Bashir has overseen the waging of several wars that have primarily targeted civilians, severe repression of political opposition and civil society, shrinking of civil society space and the secession of South Sudan. The recent announcement of a military transitional council headed by Awad ibn Auf, the former vice president and minister of defense under Bashir's regime, however, represents an attempt by the regime to ensure its survival by sacrificing Bashir. Their imposition of a two year transitional period headed by the military, dissolution of the national assembly, suspension of the 2005 Constitution and imposition of a state of emergency and lack of a plan for transition to civilian rule, however, indicate that they do not share the protester's goal of a peaceful and democratic Sudan. As a result, protestors, including both civic and political forces, have remained in the streets calling for change and a civilian transitional government. The situation at the moment is highly fluid and the stakes are high. Protesters are already defying the military's curfew. Pan-African solidarity with the people of Sudan to entrench their rights to freedom of expression and assembly is critical to avoid a violent response from the military regime.

As the masses of protestors stay out in the streets demanding real change, we commend the statement of the AU Chairperson, Moussa Faki, that "military take-over is not the appropriate response to the challenges facing Sudan and the aspirations of its people." We call upon your Excellencies to support this declaration and the aspirations of the Sudanese people by urgently:

- 1- Rejecting the coup, and military rule as an unconstitutional change in government under the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Good Governance, resulting in Sudan's suspension from AU and calling on member states to impose bi-lateral sanctions including visa denials for the perpetrators, restrictions of government-to government contacts, and trade restrictions, as provided for in the 2000 Lomé Declaration on unconstitutional changes in government.
- 2- Laying out clear demands for a swift and peaceful handover to an inclusive transitional civilian government which can oversee a broader transition to peace and democracy.
- 3- Reiterating their support for the exercise by the protesters of their internationally guaranteed human rights of freedom of expression and association and to peace and security, advising the *de facto* authorities to engage meaningfully with the protesters' concerns and warning further sanctions should the authorities use violence against the protesters.
- 4- Proposing a comprehensive package of political and material support for transition should the military government accept the aforementioned transition plan.

The African Union must intervene as anticipated by the Constitutive Act and the Peace and Security Protocol during this critical moment in Sudan's history. It cannot afford to allow the gains made by the courage of Sudan's people to be laid waste in the scramble for power by a few individuals. The AU has been heavily invested in peace and security in Sudan, and must now stand up for the rights of the men, women and children of Sudan.

The undersigned:

- African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies
- The African Women's Development and Communications Network (FEMNET)
- Atrocities Watch Africa
- Civic Forces Assembly (CFA) (a platform of 78 civil society, women's, youth, ethnic organizations, trade unions, demand groups and notable figures)
- Darfur Bar Association
- DefendDefenders
- International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI)
- National Human Rights Monitors Network (NHRMO)
- The Pan African Citizens Network (PACIN)
- The Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network
- The Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU)
- The Sudan Consortium, a coalition of 51 African and International civil society organizations calling for a just and sustainable peace in Sudan
- Sudan Democracy First Group
- Tax Justice Network Africa