Position Paper

Sudan’s voluntary pledges in the field of human rights in the context of its candidacy for the membership of the Human Rights Council for the period 2023-2025
**Introduction:**

1- The Sudanese revolution in December 2018 represented a milestone in the country's history and its progress. It was an expression of the aspirations of the Sudanese people, especially the youth and women, in achieving democracy, strengthening freedoms, and achieving developmental progress. The slogans raised by the revolution will continue to guide any commitment made by the Government of Sudan in the context of its steady steps towards democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

2- In confirmation of its commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and its keenness to achieve further progress in the field of human rights, Sudan is submitting its candidacy for the membership of the Human Rights Council for the period 2023-2025. This comes in accordance with its conviction of the vital role played by the Human Rights Council as one of the most effective mechanisms to promote and strengthen human rights through facilitating dialogue and exchanging experiences.

3- By submitting this candidacy, Sudan reaffirms the central position and the highest priority it attaches to the human rights issue in its national policies. It also reflects its unequivocal commitment to support international human rights mechanisms and cooperating from within the Council to achieve these goals.

4- Sudan is a party to most human rights instruments, and in this regard, it is committed to fulfilling its obligations in accordance with the international and regional conventions it has ratified, and seeking to join the conventions to which it has not yet acceded.

5- Sudan supports a comprehensive approach to human rights that takes into consideration social, economic and cultural rights in addition to political and civil rights. It presents its national experience in approaching the challenges it faces, which are challenges faced a wide range of countries in the world, namely issues of achieving sustainable development, preserving the environment, climate change, conflict resolution, achieving peace and security.

6- Sudan presents its pledges contained in this document, in compliance with the provisions of United Nations General Assembly’s Resolution No. 60/251 of 2006 establishing the Human Rights Council, which refers to the need to express a voluntary pledge to human rights as one of the important steps for states to submit their candidacy for membership in the Human Rights Council. In this context, Sudan renews its full commitment to all the pledges it made previously in October 2019. Sudan has made considerable progress in implementing its previous pledges and commitments that made in the context of its candidacy for
membership in the Human Rights Council for the 2019-2022. Those pledges included a number of areas, including legislative reform in which Sudan accomplished a lot in terms of abolishing and amending a number of laws, ratifying a number of basic human rights conventions, and harmonizing laws to ensure consistency with the international treaties it has ratified, international standards for human rights and international humanitarian law. The pledges also included strengthening its cooperation with human rights mechanisms.

**Sudan's contributions to the Human Rights Council:**

1- Sudan has been an active member of the Human Rights Council since January 2020. During that period, it has contributed immensely to the discussions taking place in the Council, and has been cooperating in implementing the Council’s decisions.

2- Sudan assumed the position of Vice-President of the Council during the first half of 2021 on behalf of the African Group.

3- Sudan has contributed to supporting a number of draft resolutions related to various human rights issues. It also contributed to the adoption of a number of important resolutions, including the initiative to establish a mandate for human rights and climate change issues. Through its re-election, Sudan is looking forward to playing a greater role in adopting and supporting the relevant resolutions.

**Status of implementation of the pervious pledges:**

1- Sudan has joined a number of agreements such as the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the United Nations Convention against Torture, while efforts are continuing for the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), (CEDAW) and the Convention on Rights of migrant workers and members of their families.

2- Sudan is making appreciable efforts to harmonizing national laws with international and regional agreements to which the country is a party, in compliance with the Bill of Rights and Freedoms listed in the Constitutional Document for the transitional period, and in order to enhance the human rights situation in the country.

3- Within the framework of legislative reforms aimed at promoting human rights, a number of laws restricting freedoms were abolished. The Miscellaneous
Amendments Act of 2020, made a number of amendments to laws, including the Criminal Code, to abolish the crime of apostasy, abolish all corporal punishments, the criminalization of female genital mutilation, the aggravation of the punishment of torture committed by public authority, the abolition of immunities in the National Security Law, and the limitation of its members’ powers to collecting and analyzing information, and other amendments to a number of laws.

4- Sudan is working to update its National Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in Sudan 2013-2023.

5- In accordance of Sudan's commitment to the rights of women and children, a unit to combat violence against women was established in the Ministry of Social Development, along with family and child protection units in the center and the states, and the national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security was approved.

6- On 25/9/2019, Sudan signed a cooperation agreement with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which stipulates consent to opening a fully mandated country office in Sudan to operate in Khartoum with field offices in the states. The Human Rights Office in Sudan enjoys the support and cooperation of the state. The state has facilitated the establishment and close operation of five field offices affiliated to the Human Rights Office. All of those offices operates in cooperation and coordination with the relevant ministries and national institutions.

7- Sudan signed a memorandum of understanding with the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the framework of strengthening the rule of law and the commitment to fight and eliminate impunity.

8- Sudan participated in the Universal Periodic Review in its third cycle, and received (283) recommendations from countries, and the (244) of these recommendations were accepted by Sudan, reaching more than 80% of the recommendations, and took note of (39) recommendations.

9- Within the framework of cooperation with the Human Rights Council, Sudan received Mr. Adama Deng, the designated expert on the human rights situation in Sudan twice during the current year 2022, and it interacted positively with his report, and many of the recommendations made by him have been fulfilled, most notably lifting the state of emergency in all parts of the country.

10- In accordance with its commitment to achieving peace and stability in the Darfur region and those areas affected by the conflict, the Government of Sudan signed on October 3, 2020, the Juba Peace Agreement, the provisions of which are being implemented. It’s worth mentioning that the presence of
Sudan as a member of the Human Rights Council is considered a strong impetus for the implementation of this agreement, especially the additional protocols related to displaced persons, refugees, and transitional justice.

11- Sudan has remained committed to its obligations to protect refugees and provide them with forms of support, despite the challenges it faces in the light of its limited capabilities. Sudan has also been cooperating with international organizations working in the fields of refugee protection and support.

**Commitments at the national level:**

1- Sudan renews its commitment to implement the provisions of all the basic international human rights conventions and covenants to which it is a party, as well as its intention to join a number of international conventions to which it has not yet acceded, and to strengthen its efforts in harmonizing national legislations to ensure its consistency with ratified international treaties.

2- Sudan also renews its fulfillment of its international obligations by submitting the required periodic reports pursuant to its ratification of international human rights conventions and the implementation of the recommendations issued by them.

3- Sudan renews its commitment the provision of the Bill of Rights and Freedoms as stipulated in the Constitutional Document for the transitional period, the amendment of 2020 in order to improve the human rights situation in Sudan.

4- Sudan is committed to promoting and protecting human rights through a number of national mechanisms that work in harmony and consistency, including but not limited to: the National Human Rights Commission, the National Human Rights Mechanism, the Unit to Combat Violence against Women, Family and Child Protection Units, and a number of human rights protection departments in different ministries.

5- Sudan stresses the importance of the role of the National Human Rights Commission and its independence and functioning in accordance with the Paris Principles and the Constitutional Document.

6- Since achieving peace is one of the most important goals of the Sudanese revolution, the Government of Sudan renews its commitment to continue its efforts and communicating with all armed movements in the country in order to reach a just and sustainable peace based on equality of citizenship and rights. Sudan looks forward to the support of the international community in this regard.

7- Sudan is committed to working to ending societal unrest, renounce all forms of violence, encourage societal reconciliation and promote peaceful coexistence in
order to lay the foundations for peace and stability and secure the peaceful return of internally displaced persons and refugees from war-affected areas.

8- Sudan affirms its commitment to ending impunity, strengthening accountability mechanisms, investigating all violations and taking all necessary relevant measures, including measures related to the transitional justice.

9- Sudan pledges to continue its legal and institutional reform efforts in various fields, including restructuring the security services in accordance with the provisions of the Juba Peace Agreement and the Constitutional Document.

10- Sudan is committed to continuing its efforts to advance dialogue to reach consensus on the management of the remaining period of the transitional stage.

11- Sudan is committed to working hard and creating the necessary atmosphere to holding free, fair and transparent elections and to transfer power in a peaceful manner to an elected democratic government in accordance with the Constitutional Document of the Transitional Period.

12- Sudan is committed to tirelessly working on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda (SDGs), through improving education and health services and implementing the national poverty reduction strategy to address the basic root causes of social inequality, reduce the impact of natural disasters and create more opportunities for youth, women and persons with disabilities.

13- Sudan is committed to protecting women’s rights and continue the efforts to empower them politically, economically and socially. It should be noted that the constitutional document stipulates measures of affirmative action in favor of women, which include allocating of no less than 40% of the seats in the Legislative Council for women, while ensuring their representation in the Sovereignty Council and the Council of Ministers.

14- Sudan reiterates its commitment to protecting children, preventing all forms of abuse and exploitation, and continuing the joint work with international and regional agencies related to children, their protection, education and guidance.

15- Sudan renews its commitment to protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, the elderly and all vulnerable groups and to ensure their inclusion in the various aspects of life.

16- Sudan is committed to guaranteeing freedom of expression and media, protecting journalists, newspaper correspondents, news agencies and mass media, and providing an appropriate environment for their work.

17- Sudan is committed to guaranteeing freedom of peaceful assembly and association, including the formation of political parties, organizations, trade unions and professional federations. It acknowledges the role of civil society
organizations in developing and promoting human rights and is committed to facilitating their work and allowing them to carry out their activities.

18- Sudan is committed to protecting human rights defenders and political activists and appreciates their roles in protecting human rights and raising awareness on human rights.

19- Sudan affirms its commitment to the provisions of the Constitutional Document to guarantee the exercise of religious freedoms and beliefs.

Commitments at the International level:

1- Sudan emphasizes its full cooperation with the various regional and international human rights mechanisms, especially the Human Rights Council and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

2- Renewing its commitment to submit the required periodic reports in accordance with its ratification of international human rights conventions and implementing the related recommendations.

3- Supporting the work of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism as one of the most important mechanisms of the Human Rights Council to the protection and promotion of the human rights situation in the world.

4- Emphasizing the importance of the role of civil society organizations in enhancing the human rights situation through monitoring, preparing reports and monitoring cases of human rights violations.

5- Cooperating with the member states of the Human Rights Council, and encouraging all states to fulfill their human rights obligations under the ratified international conventions and covenants.

6- Exerting all possible efforts to ensure that all human rights contained in the Bill of Rights and Freedoms in the Constitutional Document for the transitional period in Sudan are dealt with equal importance within the Human Rights Council.

7- Sudan is committed to contribute to the work of the Council and other relevant bodies and to join the initiatives that would enhance the human rights situation around the world.

Conclusion: Sudan believes that its re-election to the membership of the Human Rights Council will enable it to achieve more progress in the field of protection and promotion of human rights, in addition to its role in supporting the achievement of the objectives of the Human Rights Council and its subsidiary mechanisms through positive engagement in all issues listed in the Council’s agenda in order to achieve the lofty goals.
and principles for which the Human Rights Council was established by General Assembly’s Resolution No. 60/251 of 2006.