

U.S. Statement on the Report of the Independent Experts on the Sudan
Human Rights Council, Geneva
To Be Delivered: Tuesday, December 11

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The United States shares the concerns of this distinguished group of experts regarding the state of human rights in Sudan. We welcome their comprehensive report, support their recommendations to the Human Rights Council, and urge the Council to continue to review the situation on the ground.

The United States Government remains deeply concerned about the people, violence and insecurity in Sudan, particularly in Darfur. The continuing conflict there, particularly ongoing attacks on civilians, is causing widespread displacement and death of non-combatants, impeding the delivery of humanitarian assistance and threatening the peace process.

We call on the Government of Sudan to implement fully and without delay the Independent Experts' recommendations, many of which have been made previously, and to begin cooperating with the Council in a constructive and transparent manner.

Mr. Chairman, an improvement of the human rights and humanitarian situation in Darfur is directly linked to a successful and inclusive political process and rapid deployment of a robust United Nations/African Union peacekeeping operation in Darfur. The Sudanese Government must meet the commitments it made in accepting the United Nations/African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur and provide the peacekeepers with the access to land and water, flight clearances and visas necessary to carry out their mission. All parties, including the Government of Sudan and rebel groups, must cease hostilities, facilitate rapid deployment of the United Nations/African Union Mission and refrain from any threats against peacekeepers. For the Mission to succeed, all parties need to cooperate in supporting a peaceful, sustainable solution to the Darfur crisis.

Peace in Darfur is central to achieving a democratic Sudan under the framework of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement which envisions national elections taking place in 2009. Given the precariousness and fluidity of the situation on the ground, we believe strongly that the Independent Experts group should continue its work of monitoring and reporting on human rights in Sudan. Continued documentation by these experts is critical to ending impunity and, ultimately, alleviating the suffering of the Sudanese people. We commend the Experts Group for its commitment and call on the international community and this Council to support the group's work.