



Committee on International Justice and Peace

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August 2, 2023

Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20520
-via email-

Dear Secretary Blinken:

As Chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops I write to express my concern regarding the situation in Sudan. I share Pope Francis' sentiments concerning Sudan, "*...the situation continues to be serious. While encouraging the partial agreements reached so far, I renew my heartfelt appeal for the laying down of weapons, and I ask the international community to spare no effort to make dialogue prevail and to alleviate the suffering of the people.*"ⁱ I also attach for your reference the statement published by the South Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference (which includes both Sudan and South Sudan) which addresses the ongoing conflict and the resulting crisis caused by the instability in Sudan.

The current situation in Sudan started positively with sustained peaceful protests by civil society. Although the fall of former President Omar Al Bashir was welcomed by many, ultimately Bashir's fall resulted in little more than a change of leadership from one military leader to the two military leaders who are now locked in a civil war that is tearing the country apart.

I express my gratitude for your sustained leadership and collaboration with a wide range of regional and neighboring countries to end the violence in Sudan. Your leadership in this international collaboration remains crucial to curb outside interests and the support they lend to the parties fueling the conflict. I urge you to convince these same regional and sub-regional countries to promote peace and prosperity in Sudan and avoid another failed state in the Horn of Africa.

I applaud the State Department promoting the role of civil society leaders in the negotiations to end the conflict and rebuild a government that is responsive to and representative of the people of Sudan. There is little hope for sustainable peace in Sudan without a duly elected civilian-led government fully empowered to exercise a constitutional mandate over the armed forces. Recognizing the difficulties ahead, I nevertheless urge you to tirelessly support this goal such that the final outcome can establish peace and build the common good the Holy Father has advocated for.

Throughout its history, Sudan has never known peace under a stable and legitimate government. The civilian-led peaceful protests of 2018-19 and the fall of the Al Bashir government gave people in and outside of Sudan hope that it could write a new narrative. I pray we will see a new chapter of peace and prosperity take root. The U.S. bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace is ready to work with you towards that goal.

Sincerely yours,

+ *David J. Malloy*

Most Reverend David J. Malloy
Bishop of Rockford
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace

Attachment: June 30, 2023, South Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference Statement

ⁱ <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2023/documents/20230521-regina-caeli.html>