

## **Darfur Humanitarian Access Communiqué**

Joint Communiqué from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs on the Facilitation of Humanitarian Access to Darfur

Khartoum, 20 May 2004

In fulfillment of its responsibilities and obligations toward its citizens and to ensure their well-being, and in adherence with the protocol on humanitarian access and the ceasefire agreement, both signed in N'Djamena, Chad in April 2004, the Government of Sudan recognizes the crucial need for immediate humanitarian assistance in the region and is determined to alleviate the suffering that has resulted as a byproduct of the war. This is one of the steps the Government is taking to enable the citizens of Darfur to return to their homes in time to prepare and plant their crops before the commencement of the rainy season. In efforts to facilitate the expected influx of assistance from various groups and partners, the Government of Sudan has decided the following:

1 To grant aid workers from various organizations, including the U.N., Red Cross, and NGOs, direct entry visas from Sudan missions abroad within forty-eight hours of application. The visas will be valid for three months.

2 To suspend the current system of travel permits required for travel to Darfur for three months. In its place the Government will require only that the aid workers have entry visas and provide the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs with their names and itineraries.

3 To keep working on facilitating other procedures that will guarantee the delivery of the equipment and supplies needed for humanitarian work in Darfur.

4 These procedures will be effective Monday, May 24, 2004.

5 For more details references can be made to the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs.

Based on the Government's open-ended vision to guarantee and facilitate humanitarian efforts, the Government calls on the African Union to prompt the deployment of the Cease-Fire Monitoring Team to Darfur. The presence of the Cease-Fire Monitoring Team will guarantee the flow of humanitarian aid and contribute to reinstating stability to the region. The Government also calls on the displaced persons and citizens of Darfur to return to their regions; the Government is committed to the Ministry of the Interior's security plan that guarantees their protection and security.