



ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES
CONFERENCE DES EGLISES DE TOUTE L'AFRIQUE

African Council of Religious Leaders
Religions for Peace

AN INTER-FAITH MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF SUDAN

To the peoples and governments of Sudan. Peace be with you, a' Salam alaikum!

We, leaders from within the Christian and Muslim communities, greet you in the name of the One God. We come in a spirit of prayer and solidarity during this unique period in Sudan's history.

Your tireless work towards the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), for which we congratulate you, signifies your conviction that peace through dialogue is more effective and less costly than violence. Since 2005 when it was signed, the CPA has held your country together and provided a framework for peace. In the run up to the Referendum, even as the CPA enters its final stages, a new moment has dawned in Sudan.

We are acutely aware that the momentous events which are taking place in Sudan cause mixed feelings. We find both expectation and anxiety about the result of the referendum; a good outcome for one person or community might seem like a bad outcome for another. We find hope for new beginnings, whether a united Sudan or two new and separate countries, but also anxiety that the result might lead to instability and even violence. There is a sense of uncertainty in all communities.

We are particularly concerned about intemperate statements by government officials and the media. A climate of fear is building amongst southerners in northern Sudan, and there is potential for ordinary northerners to be misinformed and provoked. We utterly condemn hate speech and incitement by any party, and call on the governments not only to guarantee the rights and protection of minorities but also to work actively to create a climate of peace amongst communities.

We appeal to ordinary citizens, both northerners and southerners, to remain calm and keep the social peace. If there are problems and disputes about the referendum process and its result, we urge citizens and parties to exercise patience and restraint and allow politicians, civil society organisations, faith-based communities and the international community to resolve them peacefully.

We appeal particularly to the youth, who are the future of Sudan, not to allow

themselves to be provoked and manipulated into violence, which serves no useful purpose in attaining their dream of peace and prosperity. Indeed experience shows that the youth will be amongst the first to suffer if Sudan descends into conflict again.

We call on the international community and peace-loving people to accompany the Sudanese during this period and respect and support whatever decision they will make through the referendum.

We further call for continued support and respect for the implementation of the CPA during the post-referendum arrangements and negotiations on all outstanding issues.

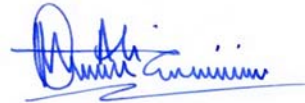
Our two great world religions teach that it is the will of God for human beings to live in peace and harmony, and we urge the peoples and governments of Sudan to respect this divine imperative.

May God's peace and compassion abide with you during these days, and always.

Nairobi, December 17, 2010



Rev. Dr. André Karamaga
General Secretary,
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Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali
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