Communique of the Sudan Council of Churches (SCC) and FECLCLAHA Workshop on Enhancing Women’s Participation in Conflict Resolution and Peace Building: UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

‘I Know the Plans I Have for You, Declares the Lord, Plans to Prosper You and Not to Harm You, Plans to Give You Hope and a Future’. Jeremiah 29: 11.

We the participants from the Sudan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, SCC and FECLCLAHA Executive Committees and staff and Fredskorps (FK) Exchange Programme participants have met from the 15th to 18th March 2010 in Juba, Southern Sudan to stand in solidarity with the church and people of the Sudan, review women’s participation in conflict resolution and peace building in the region and discern the requisite advocacy strategies towards the establishment of national action plans for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The workshop also coincided with pastoral and solidarity visits to the Sudan Council of Churches (SCC) and the church in the Sudan and to the Governor of Central Equatoria State, Government of Southern Sudan.

HOLDING this workshop and pastoral/solidarity visits in Juba, Southern Sudan at a critical time in the history of the Sudan as the country prepares for key transformational events as envisaged in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA): the national elections; the popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile; the referendum in Abyei; and the self-determination referendum of the people of the South;

APPRECIATING the unrelenting struggle of the church in the Sudan for justice, peace and democratic transformation and support on the right of the people of Southern Sudan to exercise their right to self-determination as agreed in the CPA;

COMMENDING the church in the Sudan for its rallying call to the people, ‘Let My People Choose’, with which the church continues to stand by the right of all Sudanese people to determine their own future.

HAVING deliberated on the priority advocacy strategies towards the establishment of national action plans for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and appraised ourselves of the level of women’s participation in conflict resolution and peace building we commit ourselves to:

- Create awareness and empower women in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa region to advocate for the formulation of gender policies and the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325;
- Popularize and contextualize the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in North and Southern Sudan with a specific target to women in the grassroots as stakeholders and not as a target group;
- Ensure quality participation of women in peace processes and in peace building and conflict resolution;
Implement the Tamar Campaign in the countries in the region and link it with the campaign for the institutionalization of national action plans for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325;

- Address the special plight of women ex-combatants in post-conflict societies and seek to offer them livelihood support;
- Capacitate religious leaders for close partnership in reaching out to and empowering women in the grassroots;
- Work closely with men in the empowerment of women towards gender equality; and
- Work closely with the civil society in the empowerment of women.

We commit ourselves to engage closely and accompany the church in the Sudan through prayers, regional and global advocacy for timely implementation of the CPA and in observation and monitoring of the electoral process, the referendum for Abyei and the self-determination referendum for the people of the South.

We join the church in the Sudan in respectfully urging the National Election Commission of Sudan to:

- Facilitate an inclusive electoral process for all Sudanese;
- Ensure that the elections meet internationally acceptable standards;
- Provide an environment for an open and honest competition for power; and
- Assure the freedom of movement of election observers. Local and international election observer missions should enjoy freedom of access to the electoral process and freedom of movement to all areas of the country.

We join the church in the Sudan in respectfully calling upon the Government of National Unity and the Government of Southern Sudan to:

**Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) Implementation**

- Protect the achievements so far realized by the CPA;
- Resolve all outstanding issues in CPA implementation towards successful and timely completion of the implementation;
- Seize the historic opportunity presented by the democratic transformation to bring the country new opportunities to redefine your common identity on the basis of shared values, including unity amid diversity;
- Ensure that the rights and fundamental freedoms of association, assembly and speech are fully protected and effectively exercised;
- Provide an open and free political environment that assures the constitutional right and freedom of individuals, civil society organizations and political parties to operate without fear or restriction; and
- Provide an environment for an open and honest competition for power.

**Completion of the Demarcation of the North-South and Abyei Border**
Communiqué of the SCC and FECLABA Workshop on Enhancing Women’s Participation in Conflict Resolution and Peace Building, 17th March 2010, Juba, Southern Sudan.

- Facilitate the full implementation of the ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration with the support of local communities;
- Resolve outstanding questions to allow full demarcation of the border on the ground before the referendum; and
- Expeditiously allow the Ad hoc North/South Technical Border Committee to complete its work.

Self-Determination Referendum for the People of the South

- Prepare well for this key benchmark in CPA implementation;
- Expeditiously establish the Southern Sudan and Abyei Referenda Commissions; and
- Treat as binding and respect the choice of voters.

Post-Self Determination Referendum Arrangements

- Agree on the requisite arrangements for the post-2011 referendum transition. This entails agreeing on post-referendum arrangements covering relevant issues on the two scenarios of unity or secession. These include: the interdependence of the North and South Sudan; the lives and livelihoods of people and communities in border areas; issues of sovereignty transfers, wealth transfers and sharing including the division and transfer of state assets; shared debts; citizenship; repatriation; property rights; the concerns of national institutions; and other transitional issues;
- Facilitate civic education to the people of Southern Sudan and the North to prepare them for the referendum and socialize them on the implications of their choice so as to psychologically prepare them for any eventuality; and
- Advocate for an internationally coordinated management of the transition period. This could entail the appointment of a United Nations Secretary General’s Special Envoy to oversee a three to five year transitional period (2011 to 2013/2015) in the Sudan. The envoy would oversee the referendum process, assist in resolving emerging disputes and engage the two governments in proper planning for the various possibilities and scenarios.

Popular Consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile

- Raise awareness to ensure voters in the two areas know how the election of members of the state assembly will relate to the subsequent process of popular consultation which will be conducted by the elected legislators; and
- Conduct in a credible manner this key element in the final stage of CPA implementation.

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1 The Sudanese church, for example, is concerned over the future of the church in the North if the South opts for secession. Christians in the North may suffer hardships should the North adopt Islamic Law.
Communiqué of the SCC and FECCLAHA Workshop on Enhancing Women’s Participation in Conflict Resolution and Peace Building, 17th March 2010, Juba, Southern Sudan.

Security

Serious security challenges continue to confront Southern Sudan. Communal violence has been reported in Jonglei, Upper Nile and Lakes states. Concerns have been raised about the timing of the sudden increase in insecurity in these parts of Southern Sudan and the violent clashes between communities that have resulted in deaths of many civilians. The people of Sudan have suffered for far too long and desire a life of dignity, sustainable peace and development.

While we appreciate the difficulties involved, we reiterate that it is the government’s first and foremost duty to provide security to its people. The Government of Southern Sudan is therefore obliged to check and reverse the rise in violence and ensure the respect of the rule of law.

We call upon the two parties to the CPA to:

- Ensure peace and security prevails in Sudan and particularly Southern Sudan during the electioneering period. This calls for an effective response to the causes of insecurity, communal violence and displacement in Southern Sudan;
- Unite and protect all citizens whenever they are in danger of attack irrespective of their ethnicity; and
- Facilitate a smooth transition whatever the outcome of the self-determination referendum for the people of the South.

Done in Juba, Southern Sudan, 17th March 2010,

Bishop Ezekiel Kondo,
SCC Chairperson.

Bishop Dieudonné Mbaya Tshiakany,
FECCLAHA Chairperson.

Fred Nyabera,
Executive Director.