

The Coordination of Civil Democratic Forces (Taqadum)  
The Founding Convention  
26-30 May 2024, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.  
Final Communiqué

From the dawn of independence until the war of April 15, 2023, our people have not experienced wellness. They have continued to suffer from the failure of governments to lift them out of poverty and illiteracy, and from the outbreaks of civil and regional wars that have wasted their material and human resources.

The successive authoritarian regimes have also committed the most heinous crimes against the people, culminating in the current devastating war, in which the battleground has become the people in their poverty and misery, their homes, their properties, and their infrastructure, thus, causing the largest humanitarian disaster in the world today.

Considering this bitter reality, this conference is marked by pain yet carries hope. By overcoming the hardships and heavy human costs in search of peace and the restoration of the democratic path, we aim to ensure that this abhorrent war is the last of its kind and to set our country on a path that establishes a new social contract.

The Founding Convention of the Coordination of Civil Democratic Forces (Taqadum) was held in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, from May 27-30, 2024. Over 600 members from Sudan's 18 states and 24 countries in the diaspora participated, forming the largest civil front to end the war, achieve peace, preserve the unity and sovereignty of Sudan, complete the glorious December Revolution, and build Sudan on new foundations.

Since its preparatory meeting in late October 2023, and in the run up to the Founding Convention, Taqadum has engaged in extensive communication and consultations with democratic civil forces and anti-war figures. This process was preceded by four workshops focusing on local governance, constitutional arrangements, transitional justice, and security and military reform. Taqadum designed a comprehensive process for selecting the participants in the Convention, adhering to strict criteria to ensure inclusiveness and genuine representation. Eighteen preparatory mechanisms were established across Sudan's states, incorporating political, civil, and social components. These mechanisms selected 250 members from political forces, civil society, resistance committees, professionals and trade unions, with each state allocated seats proportional to its population weight, reflecting Sudan's diversity and plurality. Additionally, preparatory mechanisms were established for the Sudanese in 24 countries abroad, who selected 135 members.

Representation was not limited to these mechanisms but included 10 qualitative categories: creative people and intellectuals, farmers, pastoralists, civil administrations, religious

entities, refugees and displaced persons, persons with disabilities, feminist groups, private sector, and arbitrarily dismissed military personnel. These groups chose their representatives through extensive consultations among their constituents and organizations, nominating 150 members who provided a qualitative addition to this Convention. This was in addition to 30 national figures known for their pro-peace and pro-democracy positions, and 40 entities who joined Taqadum recently, 20 of whom attended and participated in this Convention.

The Preparatory Committee also worked to establish strict criteria to ensure equitable representation of women and youth, and to comprehensively express the diversity and plurality of Sudan.

Some participants faced great difficulties in reaching the conference, particularly those coming from Sudan. Some faced the arbitrary measures of the security forces including arrests, some walked for days, , and some spent nights in airports. These sacrifices embodied a sincere sense of patriotic responsibility and the urgent need to find a way out of the scourge of war.

The dialogue at the conference was characterized by serious interaction and dialogue, openness, and boldness in a genuinely democratic climate, leading to a strong consensus on the visions and decisions that emerged.

The Convention was distinguished by holding specialized meetings for various groups, including youth, women, farmers, pastoralists, intellectuals, creatives, media professionals, civil administrators, religious figures, and business owners. These groups discussed the expected roles of these groups in stopping the war and achieving peace. During these meetings, the creative participants committed to launching a comprehensive campaign against the war and promoting healing through their works.

The conference emphasized that the highest and most urgent priority is the immediate and unconditional cessation of this war, which has brought the country to the brink of collapse, killed tens of thousands of civilians and military personnel, and caused the largest displacement in the world. More than 8 million people have been displaced, over 2 million have become refugees, and famine threatens more than 25 million. Additionally, 19 million children have been removed from the educational system. People have lost their sources of income, property, and homes, along with numerous other tragedies that continue to increase daily.

The Convention agenda addressed several critical issues, including humanitarian aid, the plight of displaced Sudanese and refugees, the impact of the war on people's lives, and strategies to combat hate speech and avoid a full-scale civil war. It culminated in a political

vision aimed at ending the war, establishing the Sudanese state, and completing the goals of the December Revolution. The conference also delved into local governance and constitutional arrangements, security and military reform, transitional justice, and the organizational structure of Taqadum.

The Convention condemned the failure of the parties to the conflict to negotiate a ceasefire and their obstruction of relief efforts for those affected across the country. It also condemned the use of food as a weapon of war.

The Convention called on the international community to intervene and exert serious pressure on the parties to the conflict to return to the negotiating table. It also urged the establishment of mechanisms to protect civilians and ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The Convention condemned in the strongest terms the egregious violations committed by the armed forces, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), and the allied militias and armed movements. It demanded an international investigation into these violations and crimes, and accountability for those involved.

The Convention addressed the issue of hate speech and racism, which the war has intensified, tearing apart the social fabric and distorting the national conscience. It condemned both parties in the conflict for escalating hate speech and its catastrophic consequences. The Convention decided to launch a comprehensive campaign to confront hate speech, calling for legal, educational, cultural, and societal reforms.

The Convention approved a political vision for "stopping and ending the war, establishing the state, and completing the revolution," based on the following foundations: halting the war, restoring security and stability, returning the displaced, and ensuring the unity of the people and land of Sudan. This vision includes establishing a democratic civil state that remains the same distance from all religions, identities and cultures, recognizes diversity, and represents all its components without discrimination. It acknowledges equal citizenship as the basis of rights and duties, recognizes both historical and contemporary diversity, and aims to build a professional military and security system based on national combat doctrine.

Furthermore, it advocates for a genuine federal system of government that recognizes the inherent right of all regions to manage their affairs and resources through their legislative councils and regional authorities.

To achieve these principles, the conference decided to immediately begin preparations for a Roundtable Conference that includes all Sudanese forces of revolution and change, as well

as those rejecting the war and committed to the democratic transformation, apart from the dissolved Popular Congress and its affiliates. This exclusion is to ensure that the political process does not become a means to revive the defunct regime and undermine the glorious December Revolution, and to avoid any attempts to dilute the political objectives.

In this context, the Convention welcomed the US-Saudi led initiative through the Jeddah Forum and the initiatives of the African Union and IGAD. It also appreciated the efforts made by the brotherly Republic of Egypt and neighboring countries to stop the war and achieve peace.

The Convention approved the principles and foundations for establishing and building a single professional national army that does not interfere in politics or the economy. The Convention viewed these principles as the first step towards achieving stability by stopping wars and preventing military coups.

The Convention outlined a vision for transitional justice aimed at preventing impunity and holding accountable those involved in all crimes, including war crimes and ethnic cleansing in the Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile, and Darfur; the General Command Sit-in Dispersal Massacre; the April 2023 war and its heinous crimes; and crimes of sexual violence against women. This vision strives towards creating a society free from hatred and racism.

The Convention discussed constitutional arrangements and issues of local governance and regional administration. It decided to form a committee of experts to refine the drafting and develop it on a professional basis.

The Convention approved the statute and the new organizational structure of the Coordination of Civil Democratic Forces (Taqadum) and established the necessary guidelines for representation and decision-making. The statute allocated 40% of representation for women and 40% for young people. It also selected the new leadership body, which subsequently convened and appointed Dr. Abdullah Hamdok as its president.

This Convention is a historic event, unprecedented in the country's history. It stands out due to the number and diversity of participants, the inclusiveness of their representation, the breadth of issues addressed, and the democratic climate that prevailed. This atmosphere led to overcoming differences and building a strong consensus. Taqadum showcased the broadest democratic civil alliance, with representatives from grassroots and central levels, combining partisan and non-partisan forces, as well as modern and traditional social components.

The presence of delegations from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, led by Abdulaziz Al-Hilu, and the Popular Congress Party and Democratic Unionist Party as



observers further underscored its inclusivity. These delegations were warmly welcomed, reflecting a sincere desire to collaborate.

The Convention expressed its gratitude to the state and people of Ethiopia for facilitating the event in its capital, Addis Ababa, and extended thanks to the regional and international supporters who made the conference possible.

Addis Ababa – May 30, 2024