

Regional Issues

i) Sudan/Darfur

Both Canada and the EU are deeply concerned about and engaged in addressing the current crises in Sudan. Our cooperation in supporting UN, Red Crescent/Red Cross Movement and NGO efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance to the people of Sudan and in supporting the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and peace efforts is unprecedented. We have worked in coordination for many years with all parties to the conflicts in Sudan and with the international community to bring about sustainable peace and reconciliation.

We reaffirmed our commitment to supporting the comprehensive peace agreement ending the southern civil war, as well as the post-Naivasha agenda with a view to promoting a democratic and inclusive solution. On Darfur, we reiterated our support for the African Union (AU) led peace talks in Abuja. We underlined our strong commitment to assist the AU's ongoing efforts to expand AMIS over the coming months through significant new contributions in addition to our ongoing efforts

We remain committed to working together to end the violence in Darfur, to supporting sustainable peace efforts in the South, and to bringing about the just and lasting peace we believe is essential to resolving the political conflicts that have caused so much suffering throughout Sudan.

We continue to urge all parties to the Darfur conflict to negotiate a peaceful settlement and to refrain from the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that continue to endanger civilians, including the persistent acts of sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated against women and girls. We are deeply concerned by the ongoing harassment of humanitarian organizations. We further urge all the Sudanese parties to cooperate with the International Criminal Court in accordance with UNSCR 1593.

ii) Afghanistan

While recent progress has been encouraging, Canada and the EU recognize that the challenges confronting Afghanistan remain considerable and that reconstruction demands the international community's sustained and full engagement. In our discussions today, we agreed on the need to support upcoming parliamentary and provincial elections, and welcomed the EU decision to deploy an Election Observation Mission. We welcomed the recent announcement that a Canadian-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) will be deployed to the southern city of Kandahar in August 2005. This will complement the PRTs led by EU Member States in the North and West of Afghanistan.

We agreed that we need to work together to support Afghan efforts to establish post-election benchmarks which move beyond initial stabilization and electoral issues to incorporate longer-term development areas such as private sector development, institution building, development of infrastructures and social policies with a strong emphasis on the accelerated integration of refugees and internally-displaced persons. We pledged to cooperate in our efforts to extend the