



## PRESS RELEASE

The Fourth Round of the Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks on Darfur between the Government of Sudan (GoS), the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A), organized under the auspices of the African Union (AU) with the support of the international community, formally opened, today, in Abuja, Nigeria.

In his opening statement Amb. Sam Ibok, who is representing the Chairperson of the AU Commission, welcomed the different parties to the talks and referred to the deteriorating situation on the ground, as well as the violations of the Agreements signed in Ndjamen, Chad and in Abuja, Nigeria. He called on the parties to fully honor the commitments they enter into before outlining the following Agenda for the talks:

- review of the developments on the ground;
- conclusion of the discussions on the Declaration of Principles (DoP), which outlines the broad principles that should guide the future deliberations of the Parties and constitute the basis for a just, comprehensive and durable settlement of the conflict in Darfur.

Amb. Owolabi, who was representing President Obasanjo, the current Chairman of the African Union, as well as Amb. Allam- Mi, the representative of the Chadian co- mediation, also expressed concerns on the repeated violations of the Ceasefire Agreements.

This Round of the AU mediated talks , which aims to achieve a political solution to the conflict in Darfur, follows the earlier ones held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Abuja, Nigeria, and during which the parties made commendable progress in their efforts to address the crisis. It should be recalled that during the last Round of talks held in Abuja, Nigeria from 21 October to 10 November 2004, the Parties signed two Protocols, one on the Enhancement of the Security Situation in Darfur and another one on the Improvement of the Humanitarian situation.

They also initiated discussions on the item agenda on political issues on the basis of the draft Declaration of Principles (DoP).

Today's ceremony was attended by representatives of the international community and AU partners.

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