

Summary Updates on the Khartoum Round of Talks

July 6, 2018

1. Delegates at the Khartoum Round of Talks spent most of yesterday, July 5, 2018 reviewing the latest revised **Draft Agreement on Outstanding Issues of Responsibility Sharing**. This 4-page document from the Sudanese Mediation Team attempts to reconcile different positions of stakeholders on the structure of the presidency, cabinet, national legislature and number of states.
2. Some new proposals in this Draft Agreement include:
 - a. Reduction in the number of ministries from the earlier proposal of 42 to 30,
 - b. Reduction in the number of deputy ministers from 15 to 9,
 - c. Council of states to be composed of 52 seats allocated to the parties instead of the current 50,
 - d. Adoption of the old 21 districts of South(ern) Sudan as the temporary states instead of the various proposals for country to operate on the basis of 3 regions, 10 states, 32 states, 79 counties or 79 states and,
 - e. Allocation of executive and legislative positions in actual numbers instead of percentages.
3. The civil society reviewed this 4-page Draft Agreement and made a written submission to the Mediation Team. The Mediation Team expected submissions from all parties yesterday, no later than 8:00pm, Sudan Local Time. These submissions would be compiled into the next draft text on responsibility sharing.
4. Most of the political parties spent almost the whole day discussing this 4-page Draft Agreement. Some of them expressed deep dissatisfaction with the number of positions allocated to them while others felt that their demands for resolution of this conflict from its root causes was not captured in this 4-page Draft Agreement and the entire peace process. At least a couple or so of the parties could be seen cautiously contented with this latest proposal on responsibility sharing – they expressed no open dissatisfaction.
5. In a discussion with a member of IGAD's Mediation Team involved in the HLRF process in Addis Ababa, the remaining disagreements in this peace process are largely political, not technical. As such, they require political decisions and concessions. A keen reflection on this observation may indicate that there is possibly no single technical formula that would satisfactorily distribute positions to all the parties. Also, demands for discussions on root causes of the conflict have always been raised by different stakeholders but not for once have they been tabled for discussions. One reason was that, some of the parties have strongly called for the peace process to focus only on the three main objectives of the HLRF as authorized by IGAD's Assembly of Heads of States and Government on June 12, 2017.
6. Discussions at personal level with delegates and Sudanese officials working on the transitional security arrangements reveal that significant progress has been made towards successful conclusion of discussions on all outstanding technical security issues. There was a whole day session among parties and delegates handling the transitional security arrangements yesterday. It was aimed at finalizing this component of the peace talks. Details of the outcome of this session may be formally communicated, hopefully later in the day.
7. There is no specific plan for today. However, the Mediation Team said they would communicate after receiving and compiling submissions from participating stakeholders on the 4-page Draft Agreement.

Rajab Mohandis, Civil Society Delegate at the Peace Talks