

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

ROBUST SHOW OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT TO SUDAN

(London, 17 January 2020): International donors today affirmed the importance of scaling up their humanitarian assistance to Sudan in 2020 and of frontloading resources early in the year.

At a High-Level Roundtable in London co-hosted by the UK, Sweden, the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and with participation of the Sudanese Government, 19 international donors also reviewed plans for life-saving and life-sustaining relief to people in need and emphasized the importance of providing funding effectively including through multiyear and flexible support. Sudan also received assurances from the United Nations and NGOs to step up response to address the country's urgent humanitarian needs.

Some 9.3 million people – one in four of the total population of 40 million – will need humanitarian assistance in 2020, up from 8.5 million in 2019. Nearly two million people remain displaced in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile while Sudan is also hosting nearly one million refugees from South Sudan. Droughts, floods, epidemics, continued sporadic conflict and a deepening economic crisis are driving the need for food and nutritional assistance, health, water and sanitation, protection and other relief.

The recently released UN-coordinated Humanitarian Response Plan 2020 for Sudan appeals for \$1.4 billion to assist 6.1 million people, complementing the transitional Government's own response. Funding made available for the first half of the year is critical to sustain the response in conflict-affected areas and help families hit by economic crisis, but also to reach people before the lean season in May and the rainy season in June.

"I visited Sudan in September and I was impressed by the engagement of young people, not least young women, as they strive for a better life," said Sweden State Secretary to the Minister for International Development Cooperation, Per Olsson Fridh. "Change is already happening, but the humanitarian situation is very serious, and we need to step up our support to the Transitional Government of Sudan. Addressing the humanitarian needs in Sudan is also important for the success of Sudan's transition. Fast, coordinated and well-calibrated international support will be key."

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock thanked donors for their generous support and said: "I am confident on the basis of today's discussions that the humanitarian community is gearing up to increase support to meet growing needs, and that donors are ready to finance a scale-up in the first part of 2020. This is important because change can only succeed in Sudan if warm words are turned into concrete help."

Despite a challenging operating environment, humanitarian organizations delivered assistance to more than 4 million people in 2019. Participants at the event in London today welcomed the steps taken by the transitional Government to facilitate the delivery of aid, including to areas not previously accessible to the UN.

The High-Level Roundtable stressed that while humanitarian aid is critical in Sudan, major investments in development assistance, social protection and economic support are also needed, considering the scale of the economic challenges facing the country. Participants welcomed an international conference planned for April 2020 which aims to secure a broader range of assistance to support the transition in Sudan.