



Joint Press Release

A Significant Step Toward Empowering The Justice System In Sudan: The Ministry of Finance, World Bank and UNDP launch The Capacity Development of Sudan's Judiciary Project

Khartoum, August 23 2006 – The Ministry of Finance, the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) today launched a large programme designed to improve the capacity of an independent Judiciary in Sudan. The programme is being funded by the Government of National Unity (GoNU) with an allocation of US\$ 5 million and by the international community with US\$13 million through the World Bank administered Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MTDFs). The initiative will be jointly implemented by the Judiciary and UNDP over a three-year period.



Deputy Chief Justice Wahibi Mohamed Mukhtar said: “With the ongoing implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), and the adoption of the Interim National Constitution (INC), Sudan has entered an important phase in which legal and judicial reform will play a critical role in promoting sustainable peace, and the Judiciary will be instrumental in translating the principles and promises of the CPA and the INC into tangible and beneficial realities. We’re convinced that this programme will contribute to the implementation of the CPA, and effectuate the mandate of the INC—including the establishment of the National Judicial Service Commission (NJSC). In partnership with the UNDP, we will carry out a set of concrete actions that will help develop the Judiciary’s legal, technical, and operational capacities.”

Emphasizing the vital link between peace and justice, **UNDP Country Director Jerzy Skuratowicz** said: "A sound and independent judiciary is central to any society striving to achieve sustainable human development. Recovery and reconstruction cannot progress without basic human security and strong national institutions that uphold the rule of law and bring justice to all citizens. UNDP appreciate the task entrusted upon us by the GNU and is fully committed to working hand-in-hand with our Sudanese partners in strengthening the national judiciary to effectively implement the CPA and build a just society."

The Capacity Development of Sudan's Judiciary programme stems from a long-standing collaboration between the Judiciary and UNDP. It was first conceived during the Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) in 2004, and has since crystallized through extensive consultations, in-depth analysis and consensus building leading to this comprehensive initiative.

World Bank Country Manager for Sudan and Manager of MDTF-National Asif Faiz said: "The Capacity Building Project for the National Judiciary is particularly appropriate for MDTF's funding as it is articulated in the CPA and the INC. A strong and independent Judiciary is a prerequisite for sustaining peace. This project will help in further strengthening the rule of law in Sudan. In addition, the training of judges and providing knowledge of modern legal systems will help the Judiciary at federal and state levels to apply the law and deliver justice in a fair and efficient manner".

With an initial pledged amount of \$508 million, two MDTFs were established following the Oslo Donor Conference in April 2005 to support priority activities identified by the JAM for pro-peace and pro-poor investments. Both Funds are administered by the World Bank throughout the six years of the interim period. The MDTF National supports the Government of National Unity, primarily in the reconstruction and development of war-affected and marginalized areas in the Northern states while the MDTF South supports the decentralization, recovery and development initiatives undertaken by the Government of Southern Sudan.

The \$18 million programme aims to provide carefully designed training, along with technical and operational support to the National Judicial Service Commission and the National Judiciary. Given the importance of a high-quality judicial training, the initiative will also develop judicial training curricula and materials, and train 800 judges at the state-level and 400 others at the central level. The training programme will cover modern legal analysis and application, constitutional law, international human rights, and comparative international experiences along with Sudanese cultural values and traditions.

In addition, the Programme will establish, construct and fully equip a pilot National Legal Training Resource Center in Wad Madani, and rehabilitate the existing judiciary training facility in Khartoum. Court facilities in Khartoum, Abyei, Blue Nile,

Southern Kordofan and Eastern Sudan will also be rehabilitated to improve the delivery of judicial services in different States.

The grant agreement was signed today in Khartoum by Sheik El Mak, Under-Secretary, Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Jerzy Skuratowicz, UNDP Sudan Country Director, Asif Faiz, the World Bank Country Manager for the Sudan. Officials from the Judiciary, the Ministry of the International Cooperation, UN agencies and partners attended the signing ceremony.

**Background information on the Sudan Judiciary
(UNDP-The Program on Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR) :
<http://www.pogar.org>)**

The administrative authority of the judiciary is vested in the High Council of the Judiciary.

■The judiciary is composed of separate hierarchies for civil matters and shari'a matters. The lowest level courts are Town Benches and District Courts. Their decisions may be appealed to the Province Courts, which have jurisdiction over cases concerning companies, trademarks, business names, bankruptcy, and personal status of non-Muslims. There are Courts of Appeal in each provincial capital, and the Supreme Court or Court of Cassation serves as the final court of appeal.

■The Constitutional Court, established by the legislative act in 1998, is empowered to determine the constitutionality of laws, hear cases of individual citizens' rights guaranteed by the constitution, and adjudicate between different courts on matters of jurisdiction.

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