

# Press release: UK-Sudan Strategic Dialogue

The third meeting of the biannual UK-Sudan Strategic Dialogue was hosted by the Government of Sudan in Khartoum on 29th March 2017, co-chaired by Undersecretary Abdulghani Al Naim, from the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Sudan, and Neil Wigan, Director for Africa at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, accompanied by delegations from both countries.

The meetings covered bilateral issues, culture, the peace process, human rights, development, trade and investment, migration, defence engagement, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, and regional issues.

Both sides welcomed the steps taken since the last Strategic Dialogue meeting in London and agreed to continue their joint work over the coming months. They welcomed the visit to Sudan of the Permanent Undersecretaries of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development, and a recent visit by a trade delegation from Sudan to the UK, as well as recent agreements on increasing cultural co-operation.

Both parties discussed recent political developments and the peace process in Darfur and the Two Areas. The United Kingdom welcomed the recent HAC directives to improve humanitarian access to Darfur and the Two Areas, in particular the decision to open a humanitarian corridor into South Sudan. Both sides agreed to continue the regular dialogue on human rights between the two governments at all levels, including on the subject of trafficking in people.

The UK provided briefing on recent political developments in the UK, including its decision to leave the European Union and the way forward after triggering Article 50 of Lisbon Treaty.

Both sides also affirmed their strong commitment to continuing to cooperate on education and the importance of cultural exchanges. These continue to be an important opportunity to build on our shared history and values, and engage the next generation. Both sides exchanged views on recent political developments in the region, including Libya and South Sudan, and agreed to continue an open dialogue on these issues. Both sides expressed strong concern about the current situation in South Sudan, and agreed on the importance of providing humanitarian assistance to those in need in the South, as well as supporting Sudan's efforts in receiving South Sudanese refugees.

The two parties also agreed to continue working together on countering terrorism and violent extremism. They welcomed the recent exchanges of visits to share expertise and agreed to continue and broaden these exchanges in future.

The UK and Sudan reaffirmed the importance of continued progress towards our

joint goals, and a continued broadening of the bilateral relationship, and agreed to hold another Strategic Dialogue in London in six months' time.