



## **The Government of Sudan and the United Nations sign a Framework of Cooperation to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence**

*Press Release: For Immediate Release*

**New York, 11 March 2020:** The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Pramila Patten, has signed a Framework of Cooperation with the Government of Sudan to address sexual violence which has long been a feature of the conflict in the Darfur region. The landmark agreement follows a visit of the Special Representative to Sudan in 2018 where she witnessed first-hand the acute vulnerability of women and girls to sexual violence, particularly when they move outside the camps for the internally displaced while pursuing livelihood activities such as farming or collecting water and firewood.

The Framework of Cooperation was signed in accordance with Security Council resolution 2467 (2019) and prioritizes actions in a number of critical areas such as supporting legislation to strengthen protection from sexual violence in conflict; ensuring comprehensive services to survivors; and engaging with Sudanese justice and security actors including to enhance capacity for the investigation and prosecution of crimes of sexual violence.

“I commend the Government of Sudan for its strong expression of the political will that is essential for this problem to be addressed in a decisive and comprehensive manner,” said Special Representative Patten. “Now we have to ensure that this agreement translates into concrete actions that will actually change the real-life circumstances of thousands of vulnerable women and girls in the conflict zones.”

The Government of Sudan has welcomed the Special Representative’s intention to visit the country and the deployment of a United Nations technical team to support the development of an implementation plan. The process will be led by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and will engage other relevant national authorities and institutions, including the Sudan Armed Forces and Police.

“The Government can be assured of the full support of my Office and the United Nations system in their efforts to address conflict-related sexual violence, and I also urge donors to support the national authorities to implement the commitments that have been made,” said the Special Representative. “I believe that this commitment made by the Government is both an indicator and a ‘litmus test’ of the historic moment of transition that is underway in the country.”

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