



Security Council briefing on the International Criminal Court, Sudan, 13 July 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Mr Darren Camilleri
Political Coordinator of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President.

I also thank you Prosecutor Karim Khan, for presenting the report on the situation in Darfur, and for your commitment and efforts, and those of your team, in the pursuit of justice. We also welcome the Permanent Representative of Sudan to today's meeting.

Accountability remains essential to end the cycle of violence that has engulfed Sudan and left multiple lives destroyed and displaced, particularly the most vulnerable. Regrettably, our discussion today illustrates what disregard for international obligations, and the connected absence of meaningful justice and accountability for serious crimes, can lead to.

Ensuring justice for the people of Sudan is crucial. This is the case for all atrocity crimes committed, including those which are a result of the escalation of violence during the current hostilities. In this regard, we express our support for the Prosecutor's efforts, including the commencement of investigations in relation to incidents in Darfur in the context of the present hostilities. It is imperative that we ensure that the victims and the people of Sudan truly feel the tangible effects of the law this time round.



Malta deplores all sexual and gender-based crimes, including campaigns of mass rapes, and violence against children. All allegations must be investigated, and the victims of these atrocities must be given the justice they deserve.

President

We commend the efforts of the Prosecutor to remain focused on core elements of the renewed strategy for the situation in Darfur outlined in previous briefings. Making sure that investigations and prosecutions continue unabated is essential. In this connection, we welcome the completion of the Prosecution's case in the trial of Ali Kushayb, and all efforts to make sure that the trial does not suffer unreasonable delay due to the current situation. We applaud the profound courage and determination of the witnesses, without whom this would have not been possible.

We also welcome progress achieved in other key areas, such as access to information and leads relevant to the investigations. The launch of a dedicated online appeal for information and the support of third States and other organisations in this regard are commendable. Moreover, the continued efforts towards empowering victims, witnesses, and affected communities are critical. Such efforts include the convening of a roundtable for civil society organisations on Gender Persecution and inviting CSOs from the Darfur region.



While commending States that have cooperated with the Court, we regret that the Sudanese authorities fail to abide by their obligations under Resolution 1593. We stress that cooperation is central for the investigative work on all the cases and to deliver on the legitimate expectations of survivors.

Moreover, we are concerned about the release of suspects Al Bashir, Hussein and Harun from Kober prison in Khartoum. Maintaining investigative activities to strengthen the evidence-base is essential.

President

Let me reiterate Malta's concerns that the outbreak of ethnic violence in Darfur bears terrifying similarity with the suffering of civilians 20 years ago. The situation in El Geneina, mentioned in the Prosecutor's report, is of utmost concern. We deplore ethnically motivated targeted killings, sexual violence, widespread burning of homes, and mass displacement. We urge all parties to cease violations against civilians, and to comply with international humanitarian law. Malta supports mediation efforts, including regional initiatives, solidified by strong messages of the Security Council.

We echo our call on parties to cease hostilities without pre-conditions and lead Sudan back to its political transition. Our collective aim here is to ensure a durable and sustainable peace in the Sudan, which has unfortunately alluded us with the resurgence of violence. Sustainable peace can only be achieved by addressing the grievances and providing justice to the victims and survivors of atrocity crimes.



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The Office of the Prosecutor and the Court can count on Malta's unwavering support in all its efforts towards accountability.

I thank you.