

## Introductory Statement

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Mr President

On behalf of the African Group, I have the honor to introduce draft resolution A/HRC/6/L.50, entitled "The Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in the Sudan".

This draft resolution extends this mandate for one year in accordance with the terms of reference stipulated in resolution 2005/82. It urges the Government of Sudan to continue cooperating fully with the Special Rapporteur and to respond favourably to her requests to visit Sudan, while requesting the latter to assess the needs of Sudan in the context of her mandate and to mobilize the necessary international technical and financial support for Sudan in the field of Human Rights.

The resolution invites relevant UN bodies and agencies and OHCHR to continue to provide support and technical assistance to Sudan, and calls on donors to continue doing so. Furthermore, in recognition of the work accomplished by the Group of Experts on Darfur thanks to the good cooperation of the Government of Sudan, the resolution requests the Special Rapporteur to ensure the effective follow-up and to foster the implementation of the remaining recommendations of the Group of Experts, and to report thereon to the Council at its 9<sup>th</sup> session.

The African Group maintains a principled position in opposition to country specific mandates since it doubts whether they represent the most appropriate vehicle to address the challenges on the ground in the area of promotion and protection of human rights. More often than not, it was our assessment that country specific mandates have suffered from their intrusive nature and from having limited impact on the efforts to address human rights challenges in many countries,

in addition to being associated with the confrontational approach, politicization, and selectivity which have characterized the international human rights architecture in the past.

Notwithstanding this principled position, the African Group recognizes the sovereign right of concerned countries to decide on the manner in which they want the international community to assist them in implementing their national human rights strategies. It is in this spirit that the African Group has decided not to oppose the decision of the Government of Sudan on the extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights in the Sudan.

The African Group is confident that the Government of Sudan will continue to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur and all other mechanisms, building on the positive interaction with the Group of Experts on Darfur, and on the consensus which has prevailed in the Council in support of Sudan. The African Group also recognizes that the human rights situation on the ground in various parts of Sudan has witnessed positive developments and we encourage the Government of Sudan to further intensify its efforts in this regard.

The African Group believes that consensus on this draft resolution could not have been achieved were it not for the openness and cooperative attitude which prevailed among all interested delegations. I would like to take this opportunity to express my personal gratitude and appreciation to H.E. Ambassador Fransisco Xavier Esteves the distinguished Permanent Representative of Portugal and to his collaborators for the pivotal role they played in achieving this successful outcome.

I thank you