



## Joint Statement on the Occasion of the Signing of the Tripartite Agreements for the Voluntary Repatriation of Sudanese refugees from Chad and that of Chadian refugees from the Sudan

The Parties wish to inform the public and all interested stakeholders of the following:

1. The Agreements signed today represent internationally accepted legal standards that govern the voluntary repatriation of refugees and which all the Parties are fully committed to.
2. The formal act of signing the Agreements is important because it lays out the legal framework which ensures that refugee returns are strictly voluntary in nature.
3. However, the signature of the Agreements alone does not mean that the assisted return movements will begin tomorrow. There is still work to be done by the Tripartite Commissions, which will oversee the implementation of the Agreements, in order to ensure that returns occur in conditions of safety and dignity as well as ensuring that such returns are lasting.
4. The Parties note that, to-date, there have been sizeable spontaneous returns of Sudanese refugees from the camps in Chad as well as firm expressions of the intention to return home on the part of Chadian refugees living in the Sudan.
5. It is in this context the Parties decided to formalize the framework for repatriation which in turn has been informed by the freely expressed wishes of those who have returned, or who have expressed the wish to be assisted to return.
6. In relation to the security situation in the Darfur region, the Parties note that this has generally improved for the better in most potential areas of return.
7. The Parties will ensure that those refugees who decide to return do so based on up to date and accurate information on the prevailing conditions in intended areas of return.
8. The Parties will work closely to mobilize necessary resources to ensure that the returns are both dignified and lasting.
9. The two Governments and peoples look forward to welcoming back their citizens and fellow compatriots.

Done at Khartoum, on this Thirty-first Day of May, 2017