



## **Prioritizing Darfur: State of Qatar, Darfur Regional Authority and the UN Announce the Kick Start of Foundational and Short Term (FaST) activities in Darfur**

**Khartoum, February 16<sup>th</sup> 2016** - The Darfur Regional Authority (DRA) on behalf of the Government of Sudan, and the United Nations signed today project documents totaling \$88,500,000 million (eighty eight million 500 thousand dollars) announcing the initiation of the Foundational and Short Term (FaST) activities covering 5 States of Darfur supported through the United Nations Fund for Recovery, Reconstruction and Development in Darfur Fund (UNDF) by the Qatar Development Fund (QDF), State Of Qatar over a period of 18 months. The total funding requirement for the FaST activities is US\$ 177.4 million of which the State of Qatar contributed US\$ 88.5 million (approximately equivalent to 50%).

The Foundational and Short Term (FaST) activities are the initial and immediate actions that will kick start the longer term objectives of the Darfur Development Strategy (DDS) providing durable development solutions and evident peace dividends in the five Darfur states. The activities will immediately demonstrate the benefits of peaceful cooperation and bring people together to sustain the aspirations of a better future for all.

These FaST activities will complement and coordinate with ongoing projects being implemented by UN agencies, Government of Sudan and other development partners, cognizant of the need to continue humanitarian assistance for the most vulnerable.

FaST activities are planned to bring early tangible results, such as providing out-of-school children with a new chance at education, generating employment and sustainable livelihoods, providing water and health facilities, rehabilitating markets, promoting microfinance to support local entrepreneurship and trade, building environmentally sustainable shelters and providing improved power supplies to facilitate the safe return and reintegration for IDPs, refugees and ex-combatants.

The core objectives of the FaST activities are:

- Build confidence and trust in a future based on peace and stability;
- Reduce dependency on humanitarian aid and speed the transition from relief to recovery;
- Create real alternatives for young men and women through education and livelihoods to build resilience and prevent the reoccurrence and relapse into violent conflict.

The agreement was signed in the presence of the Chairperson of the DRA, Dr. El Tigani Seisi, Minister of the Ministry of International Cooperation, State Minister of the Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Chairperson for Darfur Peace Follow-up Office, Ambassador of the State of Qatar and the UN Resident Coordinator, Marta Ruedas.

Emphasizing that the DDS Pillars addresses priorities set by the Darfurian's themselves, through a consultative process, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator Marta Ruedas stated: "The signing of the FaST projects today signals a big step forward thanks to the Government of Qatar. We are now able to take a step forward in transitioning from humanitarian assistance to developmental assistance in Darfur as the United Nations and the international community."

The Ambassador of Qatar, Ambassador Rashid Abdel Rahman Al-Naimi stated "The State of Qatar believes in the essential role of development and building peace and stability. Qatar has already completed the first phase of building five model villages to encourage voluntary return of the Darfurians as well as announcing the building of an additional 10 villages at the cost of 70 million dollars in different parts of Darfur. I wish here to commend the role of the peace partners spearheaded by UNDP and the for their role in laying the foundation of peace and stability. I further call on donors to reactivate their pledges to help the Darfurians."

Addressing the signing ceremony, Chairperson of the DRA El Tigani Seisi reiterated his appreciation to the State of Qatar and the UN by stating "We would like to express our deep appreciation to the State of Qatar and the UN for its continued commitment to achieve durable peace, recovery and development of the people of Darfur. In this regard, we confirm the Government of Sudan's full commitment to supporting development, stability and economic recovery in Darfur." The Government of Sudan will ensure that all development actors have access to targeted areas and communities in need of recovery and development assistance.

Economic recovery and the provision of sustainable livelihoods and employment opportunities is the strongest incentive for individuals and communities to break out from conflict cycle and join peace efforts in Darfur. The UN therefore strongly supports the DDS which offers a coordinated and holistic plan for equitable,

sustainable and participatory development that is vital to move Darfur out of a cycle of conflict and poverty, towards a stable and prosperous future.” The UN calls for the other International and Regional donors to provide funding for the DDS and the FaST activities.

The UN Joint Programmes will work in partnership with the DRA, the 5 Darfur States and the technical counterparts of the Government of Sudan in implementing these projects. Thirteen (13) UN agencies– UN Women, UNICEF, UNEP, UNHCR, ILO, UNOPS, UNDP, UNFPA, WHO, UNIDO, FAO, UN Habitat, IOM are collaborating in the implementation of the FaST projects in a coordinated fashion with all partners and stakeholders.

#### **Key priorities of the FaST activities in Darfur:**

- Pillar 1 - **Governance, Justice and Reconciliation**, will be to reduce conflicts related to land, natural resources, arms proliferation and governance. Additionally activities will assist in building confidence and social cohesion amongst return and host communities, as well as between different tribes, including nomadic and sedentary communities.
- Pillar 2 - **Reconstruction**, will support the recovery and stabilization of war affected populations, whose economic and social structure has been severely disrupted. Key results will include the construction and restoration of physical infrastructure and delivery of basic services, including transitional shelter, schools, health facilities and hospitals, provision of water, community policing, as well as linking communities and markets, promoting resource-efficient housing and restoring productive systems.
- Pillar 3 – **Economic Recovery**, will work towards food security and poverty alleviation in an equitable and environmentally sustainable manner. Primarily this will be done through directly supporting agriculture and livestock based value chains and improving access to financial services for young entrepreneurs and small-scale producers to diversify their livelihoods and establish small-scale businesses.

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