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EU-SUDAN: One more statement of concern is not good enough

(Brussels, 23 April) It is time for EU Foreign Ministers to seriously consider implementing targeted sanctions against Sudanese officials responsible for thousands of deaths who have yet to show genuine commitment to any alternative that has been presented to them, says Amnesty International.

Recent allegations of violations of the current arms embargo, by disguising aeroplanes as UN aircraft to transport weapons secretly, cause renewed concern about the Sudanese government defying the international community's effort to end the crisis.

And although positive in appearance, Khartoum's authorization for the deployment of 3,000 UN peacekeepers in fact offers little prospect of real improvement, given the scale of the crisis.

The EU has repeatedly expressed concern but has yet to take measures which could effectively help end the dire humanitarian crisis that persists in Darfur, that has claimed over 200,000 deaths since the conflict began in 2003 and which is now spreading to neighbouring countries.

"In this context, if the Council once again limits itself to issuing yet another declaration of concern, it will be condemning itself to a position of irrelevance," said Dick Oosting, Director of Amnesty International's EU Office.

"How many more victims do we need for the EU to finally get its act together on this?" he added.

In a letter to the current Presidency of the EU, Amnesty International reminded the German government of an appeal it launched in January together with other NGOs to secure concrete progress in the situation in Sudan.

In the absence of improvements Amnesty International has asked this GAERC to take steps to agree on a plan of specific, targeted sanctions against the government of Sudan to be implemented fully and immediately.

For further comment/background and interviews:

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