

Sudan and Darfur breakaway group sign ceasefire agreement

Monday 11 February 2013

February 10, 2013 (KHARTOUM) - The Sudanese government and a splinter group of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) on Sunday signed a cease-fire agreement in Doha, Qatar, as a prelude to engaging in political talks.

The JEM-Military Council rebel faction led by Mohamed Bashar signed on 24 January a framework agenda to negotiate a peace deal based on the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD).

Speaking from Doha, Nahar Osman a political adviser of the rebel group told *Sudan Tribune* that the deal provides that the 90-day ceasefire shall enter into force on Sunday at 11.55pm local time.

"The agreement is renewable until the signing of a peace agreement," he added.

The deal was signed by state minister and Sudanese government chief negotiator Amin Hassan Omer, and deputy chairman and rebel chief negotiator Arko Suleiman Dahia.

The signing ceremony was attended by Qatari state minister for cabinet affairs Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud, deputy joint chief mediator, Aichatou Mindaoudou Souleymane and UNAMID Force Commander, Patrick Nyamvumba who chairs the Cease Fire Commission (CFC).

Asked about the reasons that led to the delay the signing of ceasefire agreement, Nahar, who is a member of the rebel delegation, said they were keen to meticulously study all the provisions of the agreement before endorsing it.

The truce had been previously expected to be signed on 7 February.

He said they are now ready to start talks on power and wealth sharing, compensation and return of internally displaced persons and refugees, justice and reconciliation, and final security arrangements.

Asked whether a peace agreement will be concluded before a donors conference scheduled for 7 and 8 April, the rebel official said they understand that such a move will encourage donors to support the peace process but stressed that the issue "is not a headache" for them.

"We may sign tomorrow if the government take our demands seriously", he further said.

Qatar will host the April donors conference at which the where Darfur Regional Authority hopes to collect some 7 billion dollars for recovery and development projects.

The Darfur Regional Authority was established as part of the DDPD signed by the government and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) in 2011.

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