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PRESS RELEASE

Visit to Sudan by FCO's Permanent Undersecretary Sir Simon McDonald

A session of bilateral talks convened Tuesday 10th October at the Ministry of Foreign affairs in Khartoum between the Undersecretary of the Ministry, Ambassador Abd Elghani Elnaim, and the Permanent Undersecretary of the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Sir Simon McDonald. In a statement to the press, Ambassador Elnaim stated that the UK's delegation visit comes within the context of the Strategic Dialogue between the two countries whose second session was recently held in London in last October while the third one is anticipated to take place in Khartoum in March, 2017. Elnaim further stated that the visit reflects the progress the bilateral relationship has recently witnessed and that the deliberations covered bilateral, regional and international affairs. Among the key issues discussed was achievement of peace in Sudan and how the UK can contribute in these efforts and in achieving sustainable development in the country. Both parties expressed their interest in promoting economic and trade relations between them, and agreed to have visits by British companies to Sudan in the near future to explore investment opportunities, explained Ambassador Elnaim. The leading role UK can play in relieving Sudan's sovereign debts was another issue discussed during the visit according to Ambassador Elnaim.

Regional issues discussed included the situation in South Sudan and the efforts to achieve sustainable peace there. Illegal migration featured key in the international issues that were present in the discussion, explained Ambassador Elnaim.

During the visit, Sudan's Foreign Minister Professor Ibrahim Ghandour, met with Sir McDonald where they discussed several issues and agreed on upgrading the level of officials' visits exchanged in order to advance the bilateral relations as it used to be in the past, and with regard to the historical and cultural ties that link the two countries together.

Referring to his visit as the first he has made to Sudan, FCO's Permanent Undersecretary, Sir McDonald, pointed out that the talks he had with his Sudanese counterpart were fruitful as they are held within the context of the Strategic Dialogue of which the second round was held recently in London, while the third round will be held in Khartoum in March, 2017. Sir McDonald highlighted the historic ties between Sudan and the UK indicating that they build on these ties

which expand to encompass not only politics but also economics, culture, education and development.

Commenting on the current situation in Darfur following his visit to the region, Sir McDonald pointed out to the big progress achieved on the ground in the region.

**Sudan Embassy
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