

13April 2020

From: Sudanese Doctors in the Diaspora

**To: His Excellency Mr. Robert Fairweather
UK special representative to Sudan**

Subject: Appeal to Canada and the Troika Group: “Our fight against COVID-19 is a global fight”

Dear Sir/ Madam,

We are a large group of physicians who are original Sudanese citizens and proud dual nationals of the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand the United States of America and Qatar. We live and work in our second homes and constitute active workforces within the national health care systems of our countries. Some of us are global citizens, who are working for international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and delivering health care services around the world. We represent several professionals’ bodies bringing together Sudanese Doctors in the Diaspora.

As part of the global response to the tsunami of COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to carry out our professional duties with dedication in our current home countries. We also endeavor to support the health care system in Sudan to prepare for and respond to the worst-case scenario under this pandemic, which has evidently shocked health care systems of some prominent members of the G20 countries.

The current Transitional Government of Sudan has inherited an extremely vulnerable and disrupted health care system, which can hardly cope with epidemics, let alone a global pandemic like COVID-19. Despite such fragility, the Federal Ministry of Health, under the leadership of the current Minister of Health, Dr Akram Ali Eltom, has managed to roll out two highly successful public health campaigns against Dengue and Chikungunya fevers in the Eastern Province and implemented a well-organized response to a cholera epidemic that had ravaged many parts of the country for at least 2 years. At long last, Sudan was declared by the World Health Organization as a cholera free zone. We, the Sudanese Doctors in the Diaspora, salute the tremendous amount of work that has been done, despite the limited resources, by the Transitional Government of Sudan, spearheaded by the Federal Ministry of Health, to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 in Sudan. We are determined to support the Federal Ministry of Health in Sudan, in line with the Ministry’s policy by adopting the following multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral actions, using a whole of society approach:

1. Provision of technical expertise in planning and rolling out COVID-19 response.
2. Transfer of knowledge and skills through innovative means, to Sudanese doctors and health care workers on the frontline, by (a) delivering a steady stream of online training webinars, video-teleconferences and workshops, (b) mentoring and telemedicine for guidance and patient consultations.
3. Mobilization of resources for the procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other supplies required by frontline health care workers to safely care for COVID-19 patients.
4. Scaling up of COVID-19 testing capacity of the Federal Ministry of Health.

5. Education of the public by using cultural and linguistically appropriate tools to achieve public ownership of the fight against COVID-19; with a special focus on women, refugees, Internally Displaced Persons, daily-wage laborers and other marginalized sectors of the society, ensuring geographic coverage of the entire country with its diverse peoples.

The failure to remove Sudan from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism and the current economic sanctions on Sudan constitutes a major barrier and a massive hindrance to our efforts and others to support our people in Sudan and renders the health of millions of Sudanese people more vulnerable to the pandemic.

Hence, we appeal to you to support our efforts to avert an impending major crisis in Sudan that may lead to extensive loss of lives. We kindly ask you:

1. To continue to lend your valued support to the health care system in Sudan and the Transitional Government under the leadership of his Excellency the Prime Minister of Sudan, Dr Abdullah Hamduk.
2. To use your diplomatic ties to implement the immediate lifting of the economic sanctions, in particular payment into official government bank accounts in Sudan e.g. Ministry of Finance/ Ministry of Health.
3. To invest in Sudan, by helping the Sudanese people to overcome poverty and realize a better and healthier future as well as move faster towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Many thanks for considering our appeal.

We would appreciate arranging a conference call to discuss this appeal further.

Best regards,

Signed:

Sudanese Doctors Union (SDU) UK

Sudanese Doctors Union (SDU) IRELAND

Sudanese Doctors Union (SDU) Canada

Sudanese Australian Medical Professionals Association (SAMPA)

Sudanese American Physicians Association (SAPA)

Sudanese Doctors Association in Qatar (SUDAQ)

CC British Embassy Khartoum
Sudan Embassy London
Federal Ministry of Health, Sudan