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7 March 2009

To H.E. Omar Al-Bashir, President, Republic of the Sudan  
To Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, United Nations  
To H.E. Jean Ping, President, African Union Commission

At a meeting of the Council of Women World Leaders and special guests convened during the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security in Liberia on 7 March, deep concern was expressed at the imminent consequences of the decision of the Government of Sudan to revoke the licenses to operate in Sudan of 13 humanitarian agencies. These agencies represent approximately 70% of the UN capacity to deliver humanitarian assistance to two and a half million women, men and children displaced by war in Darfur. They also provide similar assistance to hundreds of thousands across the North of Sudan. We know these agencies well from their work in Darfur and in other countries around the world, and can vouch for their impartiality and integrity as humanitarian actors, concerned only with the welfare of people affected by conflict and natural disasters.

These agencies provide life-saving support on a daily basis to those suffering on any side in the conflict, including clean water and sanitation, food, shelter and basic medical services. There will surely be terrible human consequences from their absence in Darfur and the North of Sudan, even for a short period.

We appeal to President Omar al-Bashir, to the UN Secretary General and to the President of the African Union Commission to work together to reverse this decision. We ask that the Government of Sudan find other avenues to express rejection of the ICC ruling that will not hurt the poorest and most vulnerable women and their families in Darfur.

Respectfully,

H. E. Mary Robinson, Outgoing Chair, Council of Women World Leaders  
H. E. Tarja Halonen, Incoming Chair, Council of Women World Leaders

and

The Undersigned Members and Guests of the Council of Women World Leaders:



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Co-Founder, Secretary General

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Monrovia, Liberia