

Caritas Internationalis and ACT Alliance

Statement Prepared for UNGA High Level Side Event "The Cost of Inaction: Urgent and Collective Support to Scale Up the Humanitarian Response in Sudan and the Region, Wednesday, 25 September 2024 at 10 A.M.

On behalf of Caritas Internationalis and ACT Alliance, both working in humanitarian responses around the world, including Sudan, I would like to thank the organisers for this session and highlight three points.

First, Caritas Internationalis and ACT Alliance are committed to a partnership-based approach to support local first responders, who are currently the backbone of the response in Sudan. Both our networks are collaborating through a Joint Appeal to ensure that funds reach smaller, informal and community-based organisations in remote areas of the country which international agencies cannot reach or access. It is essential that donors channel funding through mechanisms such as ours which can reach local faith actors, community networks and mutual aid groups on the basis of a sustained partnership, including investment in their capacity-strengthening and through flexible accompaniment to support those local groups on managing and mitigating the risks that they face. The local groups we are working with both in hard-to-reach areas, such as North Darfur, Khartoum, Omdurman, Sharg Nile and Umbada, and in conflict frontline states, such as North & Sout Kordofan, are not receiving the adequate support they need.

Second, we endorse the statements made by others in today's session calling on all parties to the conflict to allow unimpeded humanitarian access to civilians in need through all possible cross-line and cross-border routes, and the removal of bureaucratic impediments that hinder the delivery of essential aid.

Third, I want to share some powerful remarks made by local faith leaders and partners we work with. One faith leader told us last week, "The cries of our children will echo for generations if the world does not act now." Another expressed concern that: "If nothing changes, entire generations will be lost, and hope for peace may never return." One mutual aid group member in a hard-to-reach area told us: "People are desperate. They see how conflict in other places (like Syria and Libya) went on for years, how hope was lost and war took over everything. They see how over time it becomes impossible for people to pursue their livelihood and they have no option by to participate in the fighting. This is a catastrophe." That same person also emphasized how in the face of horrific on-going violence, communities are finding ways to support each other, and called on the international community to find ways to support them.

We call on Governments at UNGA to take every diplomatic action possible to end this catastrophe, and to unlock support to the local first responders. Together we can make a difference in the lives of those affected by the crisis in Sudan.