

UNITAMS in Sudan's shifting transition

March 18, 2021 – 3 PM CET

Zoom Online Seminar

Registration: https://kas-de.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Rq8mok4XQE2N0bOy_VVzoA

The United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission to Sudan (UNITAMS) is scaling up its operations following the appointment, on 7 January, of Volker Perthes as Special Representative for Sudan of the UN Secretary General and head of UNITAMS. He leads a mission tasked with providing support to the Sudanese government at a time of extraordinary challenge for the country. A political transition which began in 2019 is proceeding haltingly as Sudan faces a deep economic crisis, violence in the peripheral regions of Darfur and the East, and recurrent tensions between leading figures of the transition.

Perthes' appointment comes as the political equilibrium of Sudan's undergoing profound changes. The signing last year of the "Juba peace agreement" between the government and armed groups from Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile has brought into the transitional institutions leaders of armed groups from peripheral regions, chipping away at the power of central elites that have ruled the country since independence. The 3-year long transition has been extended by a year, allowing General Abdelfattah al-Burhan to remain as de-facto head of state until 2022.

The Sudanese government has undertaken extensive economic reforms, curbing fuel subsidies and unifying exchange rates. Donor funds have started to flow and the Sudanese government hopes that its efforts will soon lead to debt relief under the IMF's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC).

The challenges for Sudan's transition remain enormous. Inflation is running over 300% and has led to an explosion of the costs of living for ordinary Sudanese. Parts of Sudan face crisis levels of food insecurity. The authorities will also need to bring the country to a new constitutional order and free elections; to make peace with holdover armed groups which have refused to sign the Juba agreement; and address flare-ups in intercommunal conflicts in Darfur and Eastern Sudan.

In this panel, we will discuss the place of UNITAMS in Sudan's transition. The mission's role in peace-making and peace-building operations will offer an opportunity to discuss recent insecurity in Darfur, prospects for inclusion of holdover armed groups in the Juba process, and the implementation of the Juba agreement. Addressing UNITAMS' role in coordinating international assistance to the transition will allow us to broach progress on debt relief, recent and expected commitments from donors, and their likely impact on Sudan's economy and society. Finally, we will discuss how UNITAMS can assist Sudan's transition given the institutional setup born out of the Juba agreement.

Program

Regional Program Political Dialogue South Mediterranean

Program Outline

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15:00 – 15:05	Welcome and introduction remarks Mr. Thomas Volk Director, Regional Program Political Dialogue South Mediterranean, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
15:05 – 15:10	Presentation of the panel Mr. Jean-Baptiste Gallopin Sociologist and researcher
	Expert Discussion
15:10 – 15:25	Mr. Steven Siqueira Chief of Staff, United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission to Sudan
15:25 – 15:35	Mr. Guma Kunda Komey Assistant Professor in Peace and Development Studies, University of Bahri
15:35 – 15:45	Mr. Volkmar Klein MP and Spokesperson on economic cooperation, CDU/CSU group at the German parliament (Bundestag)
15:45 – 15:55	Ms. Kholood Khair Managing Partner, Insight Strategy Partners
15:55 – 16:25	Questions & Discussions
16:25 – 16:30	Closing remarks by Mr. Thomas Volk

Please register for the event and note that all information may be subject to change

Organization: Regional Program Political Dialogue South Mediterranean
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
T +21670029460
Info.poldimed@kas.de

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Biographies

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Kholood Khair

Kholood Khair is a managing Partner of Insight Strategy Partners, a think-and-do tank based in Khartoum. She is also Senior Advisor to the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in the Horn of Africa, focusing on Sudan. Kholood has been published in Aljazeera and other publications and is the presenter and co-producer of Spotlight 249 Sudan's first English-language political and debate talk show on Capital FM.

Guma Kunda Komey

Guma Kunda Komey holds PhD in Human Geography from University of Khartoum, Sudan (2005), and M.A in Development Economics from International University of Japan (1991). His is an academics, civic activist, researcher, and consultant with focus on issues of peace and development, conflict resolution. He was assistant professor of Geography at University of Juba (2005-2011), senior research fellow at Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Halle, and Max Planck Institute of Social Anthropology in Germany (2005-2012). He is associate professor at Centre for Peace and Development Studies, and College of Humanities, the University of Bahri, Khartoum. He published numerous articles in referred Journals, and author of a book: Land, Governance, Conflict and the Nuba of Sudan (James Currey London, 2011). Currently, Komey serves as Peace Advisor at the Office of the Prime Minister.

Steven Siqueira

Steven Siqueira has served as the Chief of Staff, ad interim, for the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) since October, 2020. Prior to this appointment, he was the Secretary of the Palestinian Rights Committee of the General Assembly from December 2013 to March 2015. While serving as Committee Secretary, Mr. Siqueira served as a coordinator for the Secretary-General's "Rights up Front" initiative, which sought to mainstream the protection and promotion of human rights across the work of the Organization. Mr. Siqueira also served as a member of the Secretary-General's Change Management Team, which produced Secretary-General Ban's Change Plan for the United Nations. Earlier in his career, Mr. Siqueira served as Senior Political Affairs Officer in the Office of the Under-Secretary for Political Affairs (2006-2010) at UN Headquarters in New York. He worked in the private sector as the Director of International Government Affairs, Asia-Pacific Region at American Express International (2000-2003).

Volkmar Klein

Volkmar Klein is a German politician of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU). He is a member of the German Bundestag since 2009 and was a member of the Landtag of North Rhine-Westphalia from 1995 until 2009. In 1986, Klein finished his studies in the University of Bonn as a graduate economist. In his first two legislative terms in the German Parliament, he served on the Budget Committee and the Subcommittee on European Union issues. Klein also was a member of the parliamentary Financial market committee, a committee that monitored the federal bank rescue package worth 480 billion euros passed on October 17, 2008 and advised on fundamental and strategic issues as well as long-term developments in financial market policy.

Jean-Baptiste Gallopin

Jean-Baptiste Gallopin is a researcher specializing on Sudan and the Horn of Africa. In 2020, he wrote "Bad Company: How Dark Money Threatens Sudan's Transition" (European Council on Foreign Relations). More recently, he was the primary author of Amnesty International's "The Massacre in Axum", a report which documents potential crimes against humanity in the conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia. He regularly serves as a commentator in international media and his writing has appeared in the Washington Post, Le Monde Diplomatique, African Arguments, Aeon, War On The Rocks, and Democracy & Security. Gallopin previously worked as a political analyst in the private sector and as the Sudan researcher for Amnesty International. He holds a PhD in sociology from Yale.

Thomas Volk

Thomas Volk is the director of the Tunis-based Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) Regional Program Political Dialogue South Mediterranean. Prior to this position, Thomas was the KAS Resident Representative for Senegal and the Gambia in Dakar. From 2014, Thomas was the Coordinator for Islam and Interfaith Dialogue in the Policy and Consulting Department at KAS headquarters in Berlin. He studied Middle Eastern Studies in Freiburg and Basel and finally graduated from the German-Turkish Master's Program in Social Sciences at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara and the Humboldt University in Berlin.