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Casa de Galicia
Casado del Alisal, 8

Speech by Diego Hidalgo to open the seminar on "International organizations' response to the Darfur crisis"

Good morning to you all. As president of the *Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior*, FRIDE, I have the great pleasure of welcoming you to this seminar on "International organizations' response to the Darfur Crisis", which FRIDE has organized with the support of the Consejería de Educación of the Comunidad de Madrid and the Association for Canadian Studies.

Sudan, Khartoum, Darfur a Juba 1975

In the context of an international agenda overloaded with new global challenges such as the growing shortage of energy resources, climate change and the intensification of religious and ethnic conflict, Darfur stands out as a crucial case, interlinking all these challenges while also posing its own specific difficulties. The recent adoption of the principle of the Responsibility to Protect by the United Nations in its 2005 summit in has provided a normative framework for international interventions, in Darfur and elsewhere, but the practical response by the Sudanese government and the international community to the terrible hardships and bloodshed in Darfur leave much to be desired.

While Darfur is one of the most complex ongoing crises faced by the international community, defining the conflict, responses to it, and the principles on which intervention should be based has puzzled key actors for the last few years. International debate seems to

FRIDE's hope is that this seminar will stimulate national and international debate, as well enrich our understanding of the responses of major international organizations - the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union - to the crisis in Darfur. FRIDE's objective is to provide a critical perspective through dialogue between experts and policy makers from Europe, United States, Canada and Africa. Two short presentations by academic experts, practitioners and policy makers will introduce the four panels. A participative debate should lead to final conclusions and recommendations, which will be summarized at the end of this event.

Thank you once again for taking part in the event, and I hope you have a fruitful day.