

Office of the Chief Public Relations Officer  
Jamia Millia Islamia

Press Release

**Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan calls on VC and Registrar JMI to discuss future academic collaborations; "Education is needed more in times of crisis and war" - Dr Eltom**

New Delhi, May 23, 2025

H.E. Dr. Mohammed Abdalla Ali Eltom, Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan, along with Mr. Mohamed Ali Fazari, Counsellor in the Embassy, yesterday called on Prof. Mazhar Asif, Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) and the Registrar, JMI, Prof. Md. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, at the university's Yasser Arafat Hall to discuss avenues to strengthen academic collaboration and exchange between institutions of higher education in Sudan and Jamia Millia Islamia.

Following the felicitation of the H.E. Ambassador and Counsellor by the VC and Registrar of JMI, Prof. Ushvinder Kaur Popli, Dean of International Relations, JMI formally welcomed the Sudanese delegation, and introduced JMI, its rich historical legacy, and provided an overview of the university's current rankings and achievements. She discussed the long-standing friendly relations between India and Sudan, the humanitarian aid and diplomatic efforts extended by India over the years and how it paves the way to foster collaborations in the domain of research and teaching. She also welcomed the Head of the Department of Arabic, JMI, Dr. Nasim Akhtar who joined the deliberations.

H.E. Dr. Mohammed Abdalla Ali Eltom, expressing his satisfaction on his first visit to a central university in the capital, extended his congratulations to the university administration for the extremely high reputation that JMI holds on the world academic map. He said that Sudan has always been a beacon of education in Africa and that India and Sudan share a very old and historically cordial relationship that goes back to a time before Sudan became an independent country. H.E. Dr. Eltom said that the two nations have in common a shared colonial experience and have both participated in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). He recalled that India was among the first countries to recognize Sudan after its independence and notably Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru paid a visit to Sudan. H.E. Dr Eltom expressed sorrow and deep anguish on the ongoing war and internal conflict situation in Sudan, stating that it has resulted in heavy death toll, loss of infrastructure and widespread devastation of his country. Therefore, the way to address the challenges that lie ahead is through education, the Ambassador said. Adding that "education is needed more in times of crisis and war", Dr Eltom said that he

was committed to intensifying academic cooperation between India and Sudan. He expressed his happiness that a large number of Sudanese students are able to pursue higher education in India due to scholarships granted by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

Prof. Saima Saeed, Foreign Students' Advisor (FSA) JMI presented a detailed report on the world-class teaching and research at JMI that has significantly contributed to the university's high national and international rankings. She emphasized on the resources that JMI provides to its large and diverse community of international students, hailing from over 31 countries. Prof Saeed discussed how the FSA office helps students from the moment they apply until they complete the admission and scholarship applications and then throughout their stay at JMI. She explained how the FSA office acts as nodal centre, assisting international students to acclimatize to a new academic and cultural environment by providing bonafide certificates and documentation support, organizing short-term English language courses, hosting orientation programmes, managing on-campus hostel accommodations for boys and girls, and guiding international students throughout their academic journey at JMI. Additionally, she highlighted that JMI has over the years become the institution of choice for African students seeking higher education overseas.

In his Presidential remarks, VC-JMI Prof Asif said that India-Sudan relations are marked not only by historical friendship but remarkable civilizational and cultural similarity. Emphasizing that the ties between India and Sudan date back to ancient times, he said, "We are the products of two most important civilizations, the Nile and the Indus Valley civilizations." Prof. Asif said that JMI was honored by the presence of Ambassador Dr Eltom and averred that "JMI is not just a university but it is a *fikr*, a school of thought, and a movement." Prof. Asif said that the university houses the illustrious Department of Arabic, which is one of its oldest departments and has seminal and path-breaking work to its credit. Prof. Asif informed the delegation that India is a land of tremendous cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, and therefore, all people feel at home in the country due to its plural character. He expressed his optimism that the two sides would work towards signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) soon and collaborate in the areas of Islamic Studies, *sharia*, Science and Technology, Law and the teaching of Arabic language.

In his closing remarks, Prof Rizvi delved on the bilateral relations between India and Sudan, highlighting how the political, economic and trade ties between the two nations go a long way. He stated that this meeting and the future course of cooperation in the form of an MoU will facilitate more active academic exchange between JMI's various departments and Centres, especially, the Department of Arabic, Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution, MMAJ Academy of International Studies and the Department of Islamic Studies. Prof Rizvi emphasized India's significant participation in

peacekeeping operations in Sudan. He went on to say that given these historical and political ties, JMI hopes to actively cooperate with institutions of higher education in Sudan so as to pursue a long-term academic dialogue and meaningful research in some of these areas of mutual interest. Prof. Rizvi added, "Such an academic cooperation will be significant, especially as Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has time and again emphasized the need to strengthen relations between India and African countries."

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to H.E. Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan and the Counsellor in the Embassy for their visit to JMI and their keen interest in developing future academic collaborations and exchange between JMI and Sudanese higher education institutions.

Prof. Saima Saeed  
Chief Public Relations Officer  
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