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Speech by Principal Prince Claus Laureate Kamala Ibrahim Ishag on the occasion of the 2019 Prince Claus Awards at the Royal Palace, Amsterdam on 4 December 2019

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of Sudan and my people, and on behalf of the Sudanese artists, I wish to express my utmost gratitude to the Prince Claus Fund for the honour they bestowed on me. It is indeed a humbling experience to be awarded the Principal Award for 2019. I also wish to thank all members of the Jury of the Prince Claus Fund for the Award they thought I deserved. I also thank the Netherlands and its people, and most specifically the staff of the Prince Claus Fund, for their kind hospitality, and the care with which they have surrounded me, my family and all my friends and guests, since we arrived.

When I received the first call to inform me about the award, I thought it was a hoax, and at best a joke from a friend. And then, I asked the two ladies who called me: WHY ME? Seeking an affirmation, I contacted a friend and a colleague, who indeed confirmed and assured it was not a joke. So thank you Joumana and thank you Fariba for being bearers of the good news.

The Award could not have come, at a more appropriate time, as the Sudanese people have achieved a major victory after a revolution that set an example for the whole world, of peaceful struggle for freedom, justice and equality. So with this in mind, I wish to dedicate this award to the Sudanese people, and most specifically to the hundreds of young women and men, who sacrificed their lives (and to their families who suffered the loss), so we can achieve such victory on the road to restoring peace and justice. Among those there have been many artists, who contributed murals, paintings, posters, in addition to the musicians, singers, and poets, who made the revolution to become a carnival of beauty and creativity.

Finally, I wish to express my utmost gratitude to my family, friends and everyone in this room for being here tonight.

Once again I am grateful.