October 2009, the Panel presented its findings stating that the “problem of Darfur requires a political settlement,” and stressed the importance of a comprehensive negotiation process built on the values of power sharing, wealth sharing and national reconciliation countrywide.

In September 2008, four months after Basolé’s appointment, a political dialogue was revived through the establishment of the Doha Process under the leadership of Bassolé and the Qatari Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmed bin Abdullah al-Mahmoud.

Doha Process

In launching the Doha Process, the mediators aimed to reestablish trust between the various parties and to overcome the debilitating failures of Abuja and Sirte during a difficult period: JEM attacks on Khartoum in May 2008 posed a serious security challenge to the government and put into question the viability of peace talks; and in July the International Criminal Court indicted Sudanese President Al Bashir on counts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, a move that some observers saw as further jeopardizing the Doha Process. Yet, working with Ahmed bin Abdullah al-Mahmoud, Joint Chief Mediator Bassolé secured a goodwill agreement between the GoS and JEM on 17 February 2009. This achievement marked the first stage of Doha, a process that was nevertheless to experience several set backs.

By mid March 2009, five factions - hitherto outside of the peace talks - agreed to join the Doha process by signing a “common ground agreement” in Libya forming, with a sixth faction, the “Tripoli Group.” A second coalition, the “Addis Ababa Group,” initially comprised of four additional factions, formed in August. Despite commitments by the newly formed alliances to reunite, efforts to synchronize their strategic platforms, and overcome their leadership differences became a serious challenge.

Meanwhile, the negotiations in Doha went ahead. In November 2009, consultations with Darfur civil society groups were held for the first time. The resulting “Doha Declaration” proposed several areas for negotiations and basic principles for