



The United Nations and Darfur

FACT SHEET

Background

More than 200,000 people are estimated to have died and at least 2 million displaced from their homes in Darfur since fighting broke out in 2003 between Government of Sudan forces, allied Janjaweed militia and other armed rebel groups. Atrocities such as the murder of civilians and the rape of women and girls have been widespread and continue, underscoring the necessity for urgent action.

The UN raised the alarm on the crisis in Darfur in 2003 and finding a lasting resolution has been a top priority for the Security Council and two consecutive Secretaries-General. In addition to pursuing a political solution, the UN and its partners are currently operating the largest aid effort in the world in Darfur and in refugee camps in Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR). In parallel, UN human rights experts have reported on abuses, and monitored efforts by local courts to bring perpetrators to justice.

Under the auspices of the African Union (AU) and with support of the UN and other partners, the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was signed on 5 May 2006. Intensive diplomatic and political efforts to bring the non-signatories into the peace process continue and are yielding promising results.

In accordance with the decision of the 16 November 2006 High-Level consultations in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, — attended by the former Secretary-General, the five Permanent Members of the Security Council, representatives of the Government of Sudan, the AU and other States and organizations with political influence in the region, and some African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) troop contributing countries — the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has developed, adapted and is now implementing a three-phased approach to augment AMIS and deploy an unprecedented AU/UN Hybrid peacekeeping operation in Darfur, referred to by its acronym, UNAMID.

Intensive private and public diplomacy by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and several actors in the international community resulted in Sudan's acceptance of this force in June 2007 and in its formal establishment through Security Council resolution 1769, adopted on 31 July 2007.

Political and diplomatic efforts

The Secretary-General is pursuing a political settlement to the crisis in Darfur as a top priority. He has worked extensively with all stakeholders in the region and the wider international community. He has also regularly discussed the issue with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, including during face-to-face meetings on 29 January 2007 in Addis Ababa, and again on 28 March 2007 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The UN Security Council visited Khartoum to meet with President al-Bashir on 17 June 2007, seeking explicit acceptance of all elements of the hybrid force. In Khartoum, Council members indicated they would recommend funding of the joint operation, after receiving assurances its command and control structures and systems would be provided by the UN.

The Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Darfur, Jan Eliasson, appointed in December 2006, is engaged in intensive shuttle diplomacy alongside his AU counterpart Salim Ahmed Salim in pursuit of political progress. The benchmarks of their efforts are an end to violence, a strengthened ceasefire ensured by peacekeepers, improvements in the humanitarian situation, and an end to the marginalization of Darfur through an inclusive peace agreement, with power and wealth-sharing provisions.

On 9 June 2007, the Special Envoys presented their road map towards peace in Darfur to the UN Security Council. It contains three stages: the first is to unite all ongoing peace initiatives; the second entails shuttle diplomacy to Khartoum and to the non-signatories of the 2006 DPA; and the third phase is peace negotiations. They have echoed the Secretary-General's appeals for all sides to end the fighting and bombings to create an atmosphere favourable to negotiations.

From 3 to 5 August 2007, representatives from the non-signatory movements met in Arusha, Tanzania, for talks chaired by the Special Envoys. They reaffirmed their commitment to the road map and presented a common platform on power-sharing, wealth-sharing, security arrangements, and land and humanitarian issues for the final negotiations to be held towards the end of the year. The non-signatories agreed that parties that did not participate in the Arusha consultations could join the common platform at a later date. The Special Envoys have welcomed the outcome of the talks in Arusha and are now consulting the Government of Sudan and other stakeholders.

Security Council sanctions

The Security Council imposed an arms embargo on all non-governmental entities and individuals, including the Janjaweed, operating in Darfur on 30 July 2004 with the adoption of resolution 1556. The sanctions regime was strengthened with the adoption of resolution 1591 (2005), which expanded the scope of the arms embargo and imposed additional measures, including a travel ban and an assets freeze on four individuals — two rebel leaders, a former Sudanese air force chief and the leader of a pro-government militia.

Peacekeeping

The UN is implementing a three-phased approach to bolster AMIS and deploy a robust peacekeeping force in Darfur. Agreement on the concept was reached at the 16 November 2006 High-Level consultations in Addis Ababa; and endorsed at the 30 November meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, of the AU Peace and Security Council, and with the 19 December 2006 Presidential Statement by the UN Security Council. The Government of Sudan has stated that it accepts all three stages of the plan.

The approach consists of measures to augment AMIS in the form of a Light Support Package (LSP), a Heavy Support Package (HSP), and culminates in the AU/UN Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID). Each phase has required its own set of agreements and understandings among the UN, the AU and the Government of Sudan. In order to reach these, the UN has undertaken a complex round of negotiations, including on the level and type of support, issues of command and control, and the legal framework governing the effort. UNAMID represents a unique model of partnership for peacekeeping between the UN and a regional organization.

The Light Support Package (LSP) provides support to the management capacity of AMIS and consists of 105 military staff officers, 34 police advisers, and 48 civilians, as well as material and equipment. While the majority of the LSP had been deployed as of the end of July 2007, the dispatch of 36 armoured personnel carriers was still pending. It is, however, envisioned that these vehicles will be deployed to Darfur in tandem with an additional two battalions provisionally scheduled to arrive towards the end of 2007.

The Heavy Support Package (HSP), to be deployed in the second half of 2007, is designed to support AMIS until the Hybrid operation deploys and comprises 2,250 military, 721 police and 1,136 civilians at a cost of US \$287.9 million to be funded by the UN. Preference is to be accorded to African troops. If no suitable African personnel are found, the UN will strive to find capable personnel of countries acceptable to all the parties.

The AU-UN Hybrid operation was finally endorsed on 12 June 2007 by the Government of Sudan after intense diplomatic activity by the Secretary-General and after long, complex technical discussions between the UN, AU and Sudanese Government.

UNAMID

On 31 July 2007, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1769 which authorized the establishment of UNAMID under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, for an initial period of 12 months. It has the protection of civilians as its core mandate, as well as contributing to security for humanitarian assistance, monitoring and verifying implementation of agreements, assisting an inclusive political process, contributing to the promotion of human rights and rule of law, and monitoring and reporting on the situation along the borders with Chad and the CAR. In addition to its mission headquarters in El Fasher and sector headquarters in El Fasher, El Geneina and Nyala, UNAMID will have up to 55 deployment locations throughout the three Darfur states.

In his statement to the Security Council following the adoption of the resolution, the Secretary-General stated that in establishing UNAMID it was “*sending a clear and powerful signal of your commitment to improve the lives of the people of the region, and close this tragic chapter in Sudan’s history*”. He called the decision “*historic and unprecedented*” but warned that it is “*only through a political process that we can achieve a sustainable solution to the conflict*”.

At full deployment and incorporating AMIS, the mission will be composed of almost 20,000 troops, more than 6,000 police and a significant civilian component. At full strength, UNAMID will become one of the largest UN peacekeeping missions in history, and larger than the UN peace operation currently in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UNAMID is scheduled to have its management and command and control structures in place by October 2007 and will assume operational command over the LSP, the HSP and AMIS by the end of the year. DPKO is exerting all possible efforts to ensure that UNAMID will consist of a predominantly African force, and a number of pledges from African troop and police contributing countries have already been made. Pledges for key enabling capabilities in areas such as aviation and ground transport, however, remain outstanding.

The Secretary-General has made it clear that the pace of deployment will depend on the Government of Sudan keeping its commitments to provide unconditional support to the three-phased approach, the timely provision of personnel and equipment by Member States, and the necessary infrastructure and resources, such as water, being available to sustain an influx of peacekeepers. The Secretary-General has urged the international community to provide the funds and resources required to deploy UNAMID to Darfur. He has recommended that UN Member States provide funding for UNAMID through the UN assessed budget.

UNAMID leadership

Rodolphe Adada of the Republic of the Congo has been appointed Joint AU-UN Special Representative (JSR) designate for Darfur to lead UNAMID. He will report to both the UN Secretary-General and the AU Commission Chairperson. The JSR is assisted by a jointly appointed Deputy Special Representative designate, Henry Anyidoho of Ghana. Directives to the JSR will be issued through the AU Peace and Security Commissioner and the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. The day-to-day functioning of the force will be in accordance with the concept of operations which has been jointly agreed upon by the AU and the UN. That is, in accordance with agreements made in Addis Ababa and Abuja in 2006, and as specified in the joint report on the Hybrid operation from June 2007, the command and control structures for the mission will be provided by the UN.

General Martin Luther Agwai of Nigeria has been appointed Force Commander designate of UNAMID by the AU, in consultation with the UN, and will report to the JSR. Prior to the deployment of UNAMID, General Agwai will command the AMIS force. The same appointment procedure and reporting lines will apply to the UNAMID Police Commissioner, once appointed. The AU and the UN strategic headquarters will ensure effective consultation through a Joint Support Coordination Mechanism (JSCM) in Addis Ababa, which will consist of a number of liaison officers and communications equipment.

Humanitarian efforts

UN humanitarian agencies are leading the largest current relief effort in the world aimed at assisting the approximately 4.2 million conflict-affected people in the Darfur crisis. Of these, 2.2 million are internally displaced, and an additional 236,000 Sudanese refugees are in eastern Chad. More than US \$650 million in aid to Darfur is planned for 2007 by the UN and its partners, and more than 12,000 humanitarian workers are deployed in the region to bring assistance to those affected by the crisis. They include staff from 13 UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent societies and more than 80 non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Over the last four years, this massive humanitarian effort has saved hundreds of thousands of lives. Mortality rates have been brought below emergency levels and global malnutrition has been halved from the height of the crisis in mid-2004. However, civilians continue to be forcibly displaced as a result of attacks from all sides, with more than 190,000 displaced in Darfur in the first seven months of 2007 alone. With populations growing, many IDP camps can no longer absorb new arrivals, tensions are rising, and for the first time since late 2004, nutritional indicators in some camps are above emergency thresholds.

The humanitarian operation and its staff continue to be targeted by violence and there has been a rise of 65 per cent in carjackings in the first half of the year compared to 2006. As of 30 July 2007, 100 aid workers had been temporarily abducted, 55 convoys had been attacked or looted, and 81 humanitarian vehicles had been hijacked. Humanitarian organizations have been forced to relocate on 22 occasions, citing violence against aid workers.

The UN estimates that more than half a million people across Darfur are currently cut off from humanitarian assistance. This is an improvement in access since February 2007, when 900,000 were inaccessible, and is attributed to increased efforts by humanitarian workers to reach conflict-affected populations through innovative and often expensive means — not to any improvement in security. The UN has continued to press the authorities in Khartoum for improved humanitarian access and security for aid workers, as stipulated in the joint communiqué signed in March 2007 by the Government of Sudan and the UN to effectively ensure and facilitate humanitarian activities in Darfur.

Donors have funded 61% of the Darfur aid operation (as of 15 June 2007, US \$394.5 million had been pledged or committed out of the US \$651.5 million required), mostly for food aid. Other sectors are seriously under funded and require commitments. In the face of continuing insecurity, the UN and its humanitarian partners are effectively holding the line for the survival and protection of millions.

Human rights

The Government of Sudan agreed in July 2004 to allow the deployment of UN human rights monitors to Darfur as part of the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) monitoring the North-South peace agreement. They have reported regularly on human rights violations and recommended corrective actions to the authorities in Khartoum.

In August 2004, the Secretary-General dispatched Louise Arbour, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Juan Mendez, his Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, to Darfur to assess the situation on the ground and to urge all sides to put a stop to the serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. The Special Adviser returned to Darfur in September 2005 to review the status of implementation of their previous recommendations.

On 7 October 2004, the Secretary-General announced the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry to determine whether acts of genocide had occurred in Darfur. In its final report, the Commission concluded that while the Government of Sudan had not pursued a policy of genocide, its forces and allied militia had “conducted indiscriminate attacks, including killing of civilians, torture, enforced disappearances, destruction of villages, rape and other forms of sexual violence, pillaging and forced displacement.” The panel concluded that “international offences such as the crimes against humanity and war crimes that have been committed in Darfur may be no less serious and heinous than genocide.” It urged the Security Council to “act not only against the perpetrators but also on behalf of the victims”.

On 21 April 2005, the Commission on Human Rights (predecessor of the Human Rights Council) appointed a Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Sudan. The Special Rapporteur, Sima Samar, has travelled to Sudan regularly and issued oral and written statements to the Commission (and later the Human Rights Council) and to the Third Committee of the General Assembly.

In February and March 2007, the Human Rights Council deployed a special mission to report on the human rights situation in Darfur. The Council subsequently set up a human rights expert group to work with the Sudanese Government and the AU to ensure implementation of all resolutions and recommendations on Darfur in relation to human rights. On 20 June, the mandate of the expert group was extended for another six months. In its seventh report on the human rights situation in the Sudan (18 May), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported on aerial attacks conducted from January to March 2007 against civilians in Darfur. The Secretary-General has repeatedly drawn the attention of the Security Council to the continuing violence in Darfur and has condemned the targeting of civilians, including aerial attacks on villages.

International Criminal Court

Following a recommendation by the Commission of Inquiry (see above), in March 2005, the Security Council, in resolution 1593, referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and ordered Sudan to cooperate with the Court's investigations. On 2 May 2007, the ICC issued arrest warrants for crimes against humanity and war crimes against former Minister of State for the Interior of the Government of Sudan and current Minister of State for Humanitarian Affairs, Ahmad Harun, and Janjaweed commander Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman.

Environment

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) reported on 21 June 2007 that there was evidence of long-term regional climate change in several parts of Sudan, manifested by a decline in rainfall, most noticeably in the Kordofan and Darfur states. The scale of climate change as recorded in Northern Darfur was almost unprecedented, and its impacts closely linked to conflict in the region, UNEP reported.

In addition, decades of social strife and conflict are rapidly eroding environmental services in several key parts of the country. UNEP said that investment in environmental management, financed by the international community and from the country's oil and gas exports, will be a vital part of any peacebuilding effort in Sudan.

North-South peacekeeping

UNMIS was authorized in spring 2005 to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government of Sudan/National Congress Party in Northern Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in Southern Sudan. Based in Sudan, UNMIS currently includes some 10,000 troops and 600 police. The mission's current mandate expires in October 2007, but is expected to continue at least through the full implementation period of the CPA, i.e. 2011.

Security Council resolutions

Relevant Security Council resolutions include SCR 1590 (2005) establishing UNMIS; SCR 1556 (2004) and SCR 1591 (2005) imposing sanctions over Darfur; SCR 1706 (2006) giving UNMIS a mandate in Darfur and authorizing its troop strength; SCR 1755 (2007) extending the mandate of UNMIS until October 2007; and SCR 1769 (2007) establishing UNAMID.