



Ban Ki-moon: Paris a step forward

After attending the high-level meeting of the International Contact Group on Sudan in Paris on 25 June, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called the conference a constructive step towards resolving the Darfur crisis. Participants reconfirmed the UN's central role in the political, security and humanitarian domains in Darfur as well as the region's future development.

The Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Darfur, Jan Eliasson, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and Margareta Wahlström, Assistant Secretary-General for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, also attended the Paris meeting.

AU Council authorizes hybrid, extends AMIS

In a communiqué issued on 22 June, the AU Peace and Security Council authorized deployment of the AU-UN hybrid operation as soon as possible. The AU body also requested the UN Security Council to urgently authorize deployment of the hybrid operation, which is to be funded through UN-assessed contributions and managed according to UN procedures, rules and regulations. Meanwhile, the AU Council has extended the mandate of AMIS for another six months, until 31 December.

Annabi briefs Council on hybrid operation

Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hédi Annabi briefed the UN Security Council on 27 June on the UN-AU hybrid operation in Darfur as well as progress in implementing UN support to AMIS. He said the Council would next adopt a resolution on establishing such a mission, and a budget would then be prepared.

Mr. Annabi said the current focus was on speeding up deployment of the heavy support package. Most offers for military personnel had been received and potential contributors would be visiting Darfur to determine equipment needs, he added.

UNEP: Environment a cause of Sudan conflict

Sudan is unlikely to see lasting peace unless widespread environmental damage is urgently arrested, according to a UN Environment Programme (UNEP) report released on 22 June. Desertification has significantly added to stress on traditional agricultural and pastoral livelihoods, the report notes. With declining rainfall, crop yields are expected to fall by as much as 70 per cent in the most vulnerable areas.

The report raises serious concerns about land degradation and desertification, saying

HEARD on RADIO MIRAYA

Reiterating Sudan Armed Force's (SAF) commitment to redeploy its troops from the South by the 9 July deadline...

"There are no militias belonging to the SAF in the south. We have withdrawn 85 per cent of our troops, and the remaining number will be completely withdrawn on time by the set deadline."

Lt. Col. Sawarmi Khalid
Director, SAF Spokesperson's Office
26 June

On the international day in support of victims of torture, celebrated around the world on 26 June...

"The Human Rights Council has not reported any cases of torture since its inception, except for human rights violations such as rape cases, which occurred in Darfur and other conflict areas. These cases have been acknowledged by the government."

Al-Tayeb Haroun
Head, Human Rights Advisory Council, Ministry of Justice
26 June

that deserts have spread southwards by an average of 100 kilometres over the past four decades. Noting a marked decline in rainfall, especially in Darfur, the report says the scale of climate change in northern Darfur is almost unprecedented.

For assessment and related news release see: www.unep.org/documents

Southern Sudan has highest maternal mortality

Southern Sudan has the highest maternal mortality rate in the world (2,030 per 100,000 births), says a survey presented at the first Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) Health Assembly, which took place from 18 to 21 June in Juba. The document – the Sudan Household Survey -- also highlighted other health concerns, including low rates of immunization coverage, high incidences of malnutrition and poor HIV/AIDS awareness.

The Assembly brought together over 300 delegates from the GoSS Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, health ministries of all ten southern states, the Diaspora, international agencies, civil society and private corporations. Its aim was to define responsibilities at central, state and county levels as well as the roles of the UN, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector in ministry health care systems, clarify resource allocation and funding possibilities, and strengthen coordination and communication mechanisms.

More than 36,000 OAGs integrated

Participants at a recent ceremony on the integration of Other Armed Groups (OAGs) heard that more than 36,000 of the roughly 45,495 OAGs in Sudan at the beginning of 2006 had integrated with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and about 9,500 with the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF). More than 2,300 OAGs were disarmed unilaterally by the SAF, with UN logistic support and assistance from UN Military Observers.

The ceremony, organized by the Sudanese National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission and the Other Armed Groups Collaborative Committee (OAGCC), was held at the SAF Officers Club in Khartoum. Participants included UNMIS' Deputy Force Commander and other mission staff as well as senior Sudanese government and SAF officials.

Miraya celebrates first anniversary

Miraya FM, the UN radio station in Sudan, celebrated one year of broadcasting in Southern Sudan on 30 June. To mark the occasion, the station produced a CD of peace songs with 20 Sudanese artists and bands from all over the country.

In Juba, Miraya celebrated the event in the French Cultural center at Juba University, where four of Sudan's most prominent artists, Paul Jami, Jimmy Bob, Abbas and Paulino, representing the northern, southern, and western parts of Sudan, gave live performances. In Khartoum, several live bands hosted a free concert, sponsored by Miraya FM at the French Cultural Center.

Miraya FM can now be heard on FM 101 Megahertz in Juba, Malakal, Wau and Rumbek. New FM stations will open shortly in Torit, Yambio and Maridi. Before the

On the Government of Sudan boycotting the international conference on Darfur held in Paris...

"The Sudanese Government was not interested in the conference because it was not consulted or invited beforehand. The success or failure of the conference does not depend on Sudan's participation or not."

Faisal Mohamed Saleh
Political Analyst
25 June

The Sudanese Government's reaction to the French initiative...

"France has interests in the African continent and in the western boundaries of Sudan. It has had an influential presence in the continent in the past. Therefore, it is not surprising for it to have personal interests in the region."

Ali Al-Sadiq
Spokesperson, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs
24 June

end of the year, Miraya will cover all major populations of Southern Sudan.

Miraya can also be reached live at www.mirayafm.org.

Security and Humanitarian Developments

South Darfur

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) called a meeting on 20 June to discuss the continued influx of new internally displaced persons (IDPs) into Al Salam camp, which now has a population of 33,007. Another 2,333 are still being verified.

The NGO Nomads Organization for Peace and Development agreed with an international INGO to run mobile clinics three times a week in Domaya.

On 22 June, two armed men killed a rebel movement commander, identified as the second-in-command of Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) Peace Wing faction, and another man with him in Dereig IDP camp. Stray bullets also killed a woman and injured her 12-year-old daughter.

West Darfur

People in Seraf Jidad are unable to go outside the village due to harassment by nomads and the presence of Chadian opposition settlers in the area. An assessment mission recommended punctual food aid distribution to help the community make it through the hunger season.

Southern Sudan and Transitional Areas

The nutrition survey recently conducted in Khorflus County, northern Jonglei State, showed that malnutrition rates exceeded the emergency threshold, with a global malnutrition rate of 32.6% and a severe malnutrition rate of 6.6%.

The UN Population Fund has been providing emergency obstetric and neonatal care training in Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, and Upper Nile states. It has also offered reproductive health kits to main referral hospitals in the three states and is assisting in setting up maternity and antenatal clinics.

On 25 June, an unidentified gunman entered the house of a Southern Sudan police officer in Inkass, Eastern Equatoria State, and killed four people.

Seven Dinka-Luac tribesmen were killed on 21 June by Nuer tribesmen in Abuong Toic, Tonj East County. Tension between the two began in April 2007, when Nuer tribesmen looted over 100 cattle from the Dinka-Luac tribe.

A group of about 50 armed Lou-Nuer tribesmen attacked residents on 26 June in Mandieng, Nyakang and Tourkiech, Jonglei State, killing three men and seriously wounding two. They also stole about 100 cattle.

MIRAYA HIGHLIGHTS

Police Powers to Arrest

Brigadier Joseph Lado Lako, Deputy Police Commissioner in Central Equatoria State, UN Police advisor, Sowe Moudu, Deputy Advisor UN Police discuss the issue (26 June).

Two Hundred Days Action Plan

Minister of Social Affairs and Gender at the GoSS, Hon. Mary Kiden, discusses her plans (22 June).

Interviews

Director-General of the International Organization for Migration, Brunson McKinley, on progress and difficulties faced with the return of southern Sudanese to their home towns (16 June).

UN Mirror – Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)

Interview with Mohamed Seedon, DDR officer based in Kadugli. Also, a report and feature about efforts by DDR offices to integrate former fighters into the community.

Darfur: The Road to Peace Behind the Scenes

In Part 2 of this special episode, journalists and presenters discuss their work in Darfur, with anecdotes on making the programme.