
The humanitarian crisis in Darfur

Resolution 1570 (2007)¹

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls and reaffirms United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1556 (2004), 1706 (2006) and 1769 (2007) on the crisis in Darfur.
2. It also takes note of the report presented by the High-Level Mission created by the United Nations Human Rights Council pursuant to its decision S-4/101.
3. The Assembly is alarmed by the scale of violence in the Darfur region of Sudan, where 85 000 people have been killed and more than 200 000 people have died of hunger or disease during four years of conflict between local rebels, the Sudanese army and their allied Janjaweed militia. As a result of this crisis, more than 2 million people live in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) scattered over the vast area of the Darfur region, while another 230 000 individuals have fled Sudan and sought asylum in Chad.
4. It is gravely concerned that, despite the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement in May 2006 and the recent ceasefire agreement between the Government of Sudan and the rebel groups (11 January 2007), the Sudanese Government has failed to put a stop to the violence in the region and improve the humanitarian situation.
5. The Assembly strongly condemns the continuing violation of human rights of the civilian population in the Darfur region perpetrated by the parties to the conflict, including violence against women and children, torture and rape, all of which constitute major violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.
6. Noting that the crisis in Darfur has led to one of the world's largest humanitarian aid efforts, which involves nearly 14 000 aid workers helping 3.8 million people with food, medicines and water, the Assembly is particularly alarmed by the Sudanese Government's continuing obstruction of international humanitarian assistance and the deterioration in the treatment of the civilian population.
7. Thirteen United Nations agencies, more than 80 non-governmental and various components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), are giving humanitarian support to the affected population in the Darfur region. Despite a high degree of insecurity and continued harassment of humanitarian organisations and workers, the humanitarian community has been able to safeguard humanitarian standards in IDP camps. Unfortunately, the current funding of humanitarian operations will run out in a few months, with every prospect that the crisis could become further aggravated.
8. The Assembly welcomes the latest agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sudan (28 March 2007) on facilitation of humanitarian activities in Darfur. However, access to humanitarian assistance is endangered by continuing security problems for humanitarian workers and a number of bureaucratic obstacles.

9. The Assembly is especially concerned with the situation of internally displaced persons and refugees whose numbers have significantly increased in 2007.

10. Therefore, the Parliamentary Assembly:

10.1. demands that the government of Sudan immediately and fully comply with all resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, and in particular put an immediate end to :

10.1.1. violence against the civilian population;

10.1.2. violations of human rights, in particular the forced expulsion of people from their home villages;

10.1.3 multiple acts of violence against women and girls, in particular the use of rape as a cruel instrument of war;

10.1.4. blockage to relief efforts in the region;

10.1.5. restrictions regarding the access of humanitarian workers to the affected population;

10.2. urges the Government of Sudan to:

10.2.1. fully cooperate with UN concerning the joint United Nations – African Union proposal (Addis Ababa agreement) regarding the deployment of an effective hybrid peacekeeping mission;

10.2.2. increase the efforts aimed at the promotion of the national reconciliation process to realize peace and stability in the region;

10.2.3. provide immediate support to all international agencies and humanitarian organisations in order to facilitate delivery of humanitarian aid to people in need;

10.3. calls on the Government of Sudan and all parties to the conflict to pay special attention to the protection of women and girls and others who are in a particularly vulnerable situation;

10.4. asks all parties not to enlist in their troops children under the age of 18 and calls on the Sudanese authorities to take all the necessary steps to protect displaced children, especially unaccompanied minors, in accordance with the conventions in force;

10.5. appeals to the Government of Sudan in co-operation with the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to ensure that natural resources, such as water and firewood and humanitarian assistance are fairly shared between the local population and IDPs;

10.6. calls all the parties to the conflict which have not signed the Darfur Peace Agreement to do so without delay.

11. The Assembly calls on all countries which maintain close co-operation with Sudan, such as China, India and Russia, to use their political influence with the authorities of Sudan to put an end to the conflict in the Darfur region.

12. The Assembly calls on the international community to :

12.1. ensure the immediate and effective enforcement of the arms sales sanctions agreed by the United Nations;

12.2. restart negotiations in order to find a political solution to the crisis in the Darfur region that is acceptable to all parties; and, above all, include women in the peace negotiations as required under UN Security Council Resolution 1325;

12.3. ensure the effective protection of the civilian population of the Darfur region through the deployment of United Nations / African Union peacekeeping forces;

12.4. provide protection and assistance to the internally displaced population in Sudan and refugees in Chad and in the Central African Republic;

12.5. strengthen security in the refugee camps;

12.6. take the necessary steps to ensure that children, and especially girls, can pursue their education;

12.7. support the exercise by the International Criminal Court of its jurisdiction;

12.8. encourage and support the negotiations scheduled to start in Tripoli on October 27, 2007.

13. The Assembly calls upon all parties to the conflict to start, continue and conclude the negotiations starting in Tripoli on October 27, 2007 in good faith.

14. Furthermore, the Assembly calls on the member states of the Council of Europe and other stakeholders to:

14.1. contribute generously to the extension of humanitarian assistance to the region through appropriate agencies;

14.2. provide the humanitarian operations of the UNHCR, UNOCHA, UNICEF and ICRC with financial and material resources;

14.3. assist the local authorities with humanitarian demining assistance;

14.4. oversee the immediate demilitarisation and rehabilitation of former combatants, including child soldiers.

15. The Assembly reiterates its support to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Committee of the Red Cross, together with the other national and international humanitarian non-governmental organisations, in their efforts to save the lives of thousands people in the Darfur region.

¹ Assembly debate on 2 October 2007 (30th Sitting) (see Doc. 11355, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, rapporteur: Mrs Vermot-Mangold; and Doc. 11394, opinion of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, rapporteur: M. Hancock). Text adopted by the Assembly on 2 October 2007 (30th Sitting).