



## Arab leaders should focus on Darfur, says Ban ki-Moon

Addressing the Arab League at its summit in Riyadh on 28 March, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the Darfur crisis should claim the "political and humanitarian energies" of Arab leaders. He also called for a redoubling of efforts to bring all concerned parties to the peace process and for a speedy deployment of the UN's heavy support package for Darfur.

On the summit's sidelines, Mr. Ban met with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. He also took part in a meeting on Darfur, chaired by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and attended by Mr. al-Bashir, Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa, and AU Commission Chairman Alpha Oumar Konaré.

## UN and Sudan sign humanitarian agreement on Darfur

The UN and Sudanese government signed on 28 March a Joint Communiqué to ease humanitarian access in Darfur. The Communiqué contains provisions on issuance of visas, travel documents, registration of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), conditions of work and recruitment of INGO personnel and custom clearance of INGO items.

## Special Envoys visit Khartoum, Darfur, Chad

Seeking to re-energize the Darfur peace process, UN Special Envoy for Darfur Jan Eliasson and his AU counterpart, Salim Ahmed Salim, visited Sudan from 23 to 28 March. They met in Khartoum with Government of Sudan (GoS) First Vice-President Salva Kiir, Foreign Minister Lam Akol, Presidential Adviser Majzoub Al Khalifa, opposition leaders and Senior Assistant to the President Minni Minnawi.

The Envoys also traveled to Nyala, capital of South Darfur, where they spoke with local government officials, tribal leaders, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and representatives of civil society, the UN and NGOs. Mr. Eliasson then visited N'Djamena, where he met with the Chadian Prime Minister, senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and leaders of Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) non-signatory groups.

## USG for humanitarian affairs concludes Sudan visit

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes concluded his visit to Sudan on 26 March, after discussing the country's humanitarian needs with high-level government officials in Khartoum, Juba and Darfur.

In Juba meetings with President of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) Salva Kiir and GoSS Vice-President Ryak Machar, Mr. Holmes stressed the need for donors to fully support southern development and assist hundreds of

### HEARD on RADIO MIRAYA:

*On the joint meeting between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the National Congress Party...*

*"We have reiterated our commitment to the implementation of the CPA (Comprehensive Peace Agreement). In that regard, we came up with many decisions within the framework of the Security protocols, the situation of the other militias, border demarcation, the human rights committee etc. A two month plan has been also set forward to tackle many of the unresolved issues between our parties, amongst which is the Abyei case."*

**Pagan Amum**  
Secretary General, SPLM  
(27 March)

*On militias and illegal weapons...*

*"Even though many forces were disarmed and integrated into the SPLA, other militias such as Al Fursan still possess weapons which endanger security. There are still many weapons changing hands in Juba town... I believe with the continuous collaborated efforts, a complete disarmament of illegal weapons in the jurisdiction of Juba town can be achieved"*

**Paul Mayom Akec**  
GoSS Minister of Interior  
(27 March)

*On the humanitarian agreement signed between the UN and*

thousands of IDPs now returning home. In Darfur, he met with the state governor, tribal leaders, NGOs, and UN agencies in El Fasher, capital of North Darfur, and visited IDP camps. He said problems faced by humanitarian workers there were multiplying, mainly due to continuing violence and decreased access to the camps.

## IDPs and refugees return to south and transitional areas

A total of 8,944 IDPs have returned since January 2007 to various locations in Southern Sudan and the transitional areas in the framework of assisted return operations. In addition, about 900 spontaneous returnees from Tonga and Jezeera have arrived in Phom El Zeraf since the withdrawal of SAF and Gabriel Tang forces on 21 February.

UNHCR reported that ongoing organized and spontaneous repatriation of Sudanese refugees to Southern Sudan and Blue Nile state has reached 113,556 returnees, of whom 43,071 individuals returned under organized and assisted self-repatriation operations. From 18 to 24 March, some 3,467 Sudanese returnees reached home, the highest per week total since repatriation began in December 2005.

## FAO issues locust warning for northeastern Africa

The Food and Agriculture Organization has called on northeastern African countries to intensify operations against locusts, especially on the Red Sea coast of Eritrea as well as in Sudan and northwest Somalia. If swarms were not controlled on the Red Sea coast, they would likely migrate to cropping areas in the Tokar Delta on Sudan's coast and the Eritrean Highlands, where stopping them from attacking pastures and crops would be difficult.

## SLA and police hold shoot-out in Omdurman

A shoot-out between Government police and Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minawi (SLA/MM) soldiers in Omdurman (north of Khartoum) took place on 24 March. Unconfirmed reports indicated that two government police officers and eight SLA/MM soldiers were killed, and eight police officers as well as 18 SLM/MM soldiers wounded. Reports conflicted on the causes of the confrontation.

## Security and Humanitarian Situation

### North Darfur

UN personnel continue to be denied access to various locations in North Darfur in violation of the Status of Forces Agreement signed between the Government of Sudan and UNMIS. On 28 March, a UN Demining team was denied passage to Tawila by Government check point officials at Zam Zam.

### South Darfur

The Humanitarian Affairs Commission (HAC) suspended local NGOs in South

Sudan...

*"This agreement sends a message of hope to the people of the region that peace and stability still stand a good chance. This could not be achieved by merely depending on humanitarian aid, but by an effective political settlement with the acceptance of the non-signatory parties on the Abuja agreement."*

**Kosta Manibi**

Sudanese Minister of  
Humanitarian Affairs  
(28 March)

*"Signing agreements is good, but the most important thing should be the ability to implement them effectively on real grounds. I am strongly convinced that today is a significant and a positive step in regards of realizing a stronger cooperation between the humanitarian organizations, the UN, and the Government of Sudan..."*

**Manuel da Silva**

Deputy Special Representative  
to the Secretary-General for  
Humanitarian Affairs  
(28 March).

## MIRAYA HIGHLIGHTS

### LIVE STUDIO GUESTS WITH PHONE-INS

#### HIV/AIDS in Southern Sudan:

James Tongun, Chairman  
South Sudan Aids Commission  
(26 March)

#### Motor accidents in Juba:

Major General Mathiang  
Aluang, Assistant Inspector  
General, Southern Sudan  
Police, (26 March)

**SPLA soldiers ordered not to frequent public places armed in uniform:** Maj. Gen. Kuol

Darfur on 25 March, stating they lacked resources and equipment to perform their approved activities and were carrying out unregistered activities. On 21 March, HAC expelled 58 NGOs from South Darfur, following recommendations from its assessment committee.

Four SLA/Peace Wing members were reportedly abducted on 25 March by unknown armed men between Ishma and Um Zeifa (37 kilometres east of Nyala). At the same location the day before, unknown armed men ambushed a SLM/MM convoy killing Abdil Shaffi Juma Arabi, the Head of SLA/MM Security Committee in Nyala and two of his bodyguards and wounding two others.

### **West Darfur**

A man was reportedly shot near his house in El Geneina on 25 March and later died in hospital. In the aftermath, GoS security fired shots at a crowd protesting the incident, which resulted in the death of three demonstrators and serious injury to four others.

On 24 March, armed Arab tribesmen attacked Sirba village (45 kilometres north of El Geneina), reportedly killing three people and injuring 15 as well as destroying 35 houses. The UN evacuated 13 INGO/NGO staff members from Abu Surug and Sirba .

### **Southern Sudan and Transitional Areas**

Restriction of access continues to be imposed on UNMIS by both SAF and SPLA to the north and south of Abyei.

Lord's Resistance Army rebels were reportedly observed in the Omuliara area (36 kilometres west of Torit) on 27 March, occupying a strategic water point and displacing the local population to Gunyoro village (18kilometres west of Torit). Suspected LRA elements attacked Zumara village on 25 March, driving out residents and reportedly looting food from farms before the SPLA intervened.

Deim Kuol, SPLA Spokesperson. (27 March)

**Political violence against students:** Niamat al Alla Ragab lecturer Al Nelein University (27 March).

### **Gossip a social disease ? :**

Lively call in programme, in which listeners talked about the issues close to their hearts. Is it only women who gossip? Or, as one caller said, women's gossip is harmless, but when the men start gossiping things get out of hand and the situation turns really dangerous. Are our politicians not full of gossip? (27 March)

### **INTERVIEW**

Under-Sec. Gen. for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator on Returnees, John Holmes, talked about the return of IDPs to their homes in South Sudan (28 March).

### **UN MIRROR**

#### **Rule of Law**

An interview with Habib Dahdouh, a Judicial Affairs Officer with UNMIS Rule of Law Unit. A feature profiling juvenile delinquents in Khartoum and a report on leprosy in Sudan.