



AU appoints new Force Commander for Darfur

The AU announced on 23 May that Commission Chairperson Alpha Oumar Konaré, in consultation with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, had appointed General Martin Luther Agwai of Nigeria as new Force Commander in Darfur. The new Commander, who will report to the AU-UN Joint Special Representative for Darfur, will serve first as Force Commander of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) and ultimately as Force Commander for the AU-UN Hybrid Operation.

UNDP supports police and correctional service

The World Bank and UN Development Program (UNDP) signed on 22 May a \$5.3 million grant to increase the capacity of police in Southern Sudan and reorganize its prisons. The grant, dubbed "Southern Sudan Police and Correctional Service Support", is funded by the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Southern Sudan (MDTF) administered by the World Bank.

Under the agreement, the UNDP will construct a network of police stations and training centres, provide equipment, train police forces, and assist in developing a code of ethics to enhance professionalism in the force. In prisons, the UNDP will improve infrastructure, provide equipment and help with reorganization and training to ensure more humane treatment of prisoners.

UN outlines 2006 achievements in Sudan

The UN and its partners provided food support for over 5.8 million refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and vulnerable communities across Sudan in 2006, Manuel Aranda da Silva, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the UN in Sudan, said on 23 May. Briefing journalists on 2006 achievements, he added that 2.6 million children had been enrolled in schools, of which 507,000 were in Southern Sudan, doubling the number enrolled there since 2005.

Among other activities, 1.9 million Sudanese – about 5 per cent of the country's total population -- received access to clean water, two million got new sanitation facilities and 45,000 new proper latrines were built. Some 1.8 million children under the age of five were immunized against polio and 2.4 million against measles. In addition, about 554,000 households – between five and ten million – received seeds and tools to boost production through the direct intervention of the UN and its partners.

Workshop on women, peace and security

UNMIS Gender Unit and Attiat Mustafa, Head of the Ministry of Justice Unit for Combating Violence against Women and Children, agreed in a meeting on 17 May to hold a workshop in Khartoum during the second week of June to promote UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. It was suggested that the workshop be replicated in Darfur and that a taskforce be formed to draw up an action

HEARD on RADIO MIRAYA:

On the alleged involvement of UN peacekeepers in an exchange of weapons obtained from a demobilization exercise for gold in the Democratic Republic of the Congo...

"The situation in Sudan differs a great deal from that of the DRC. As far as UNMIS is concerned, no disarmament campaigns have started yet. We have only been involved in civilian disarmament as observers. The UN is not involved in the collection of weapons. But even when the DDR starts, we will institute requisite standards of operating procedures. There will be a rigorous mechanism of accounting, proper storage and disposal."

Lt. Gen. Jasbir Singh Lidder
UNMIS Force Commander
(23 May)

Al Sudani journalist Othman Mirghani, on his release from detention for a column he wrote that led to his arrest and the closure of his paper by the Minister of Justice...

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"I was arrested following procedures conducted under the rules of the law of the jungle. Only the misuse of article 159 of the law provided the possibility of opening a case against me. I was detained for three days, after which there was an attempt

plan for implementing its recommendations.

UNMIS trains almost 10,000 Sudanese police

UNMIS Police trained 9,927 Sudanese police officers, including 1,800 female officers, through courses, workshops and lectures since it began working in the country. In 2007 alone, a total of 2,273 Sudanese police officers, including 492 female officers, were trained.

Carjackings reach 60, hamper humanitarians

The hijacking of two INGO trucks in Azerni (30 kilometres west of El Geneina) on 21 May brought total humanitarian organizations' vehicles taken this year to about 60. Such security threats have severely hampered the humanitarian community's ability to reach conflict-affected areas in North Darfur. One INGO was forced to relocate its staff from Khazan Tungur and another to temporarily close its clinic in Tawilla, leaving about 83,000 IDPs and conflict-affected residents in Tawilla and Tawilla Rural without medical support. In addition, food distribution was suspended on 12 May to 85,000 people in Dar Zaghawa due to threats, abduction and carjackings of UN and INGO staff.

Large numbers displaced in Kutum Rural

An interagency humanitarian assessment in Kutum Rural on 16 and 17 May found that large numbers of people in several villages had been displaced to nearby wadis (valleys) or mountains, due to a large-scale ground offensive in November and December 2006 and GoS bombings between 19 April and 3 May of this year. High priorities included water access, health services, plastic sheeting, jerry cans and mosquito nets ahead of the rainy season. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs was planning the distribution of non-food items, medical supplies, and potentially spare parts to repair several hand pumps on 24 May.

Security and Humanitarian Developments in Darfur

North Darfur

Fighting reportedly took place between a rebel group and government forces in the Rockero area on 19 May, but no information was available on casualties. On 17 May, Tawilla inhabitants complained of harassment by armed men suspected of belonging to the Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minawi faction, which had resulted in 20 families reportedly leaving Tawilla for El Fasher in April.

The Food and Agriculture Organization sent a team to verify reports of suspected infection of camels by tick paralysis in Abu Gamera and villages north of Kabkabiya on 17 May. Out of 2,000 camels in the Abu Gamera area, 1,400 were reportedly infected and 57 had died, while in the north Kabkabiya area, 625 were infected and 75 had died from the disease.

South Darfur

Government of Sudan (GoS) forces reportedly launched an attack on Leiba (110 kilometres northwest of Nyala) and Fugoly against positions of the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdawahid Nour faction on 22 May. Two Sudan Armed Forces companies

to prolong my detention had it not been for my lawyer, who stood his ground and defeated the move. In this case, the Justice Minister was the judge and the executioner as well. What happened shows that if laws are not respected there is no point talking about reforming them."

(21 May)

Response of Sudan's Justice Minister, Ali al Mardi, to the release of Amnesty International's report for 2006, which heavily criticizes Sudan for human rights violations, rape and torture...

"The report is a mere fabrication again. It is part of a sinister campaign to tarnish the good name of Sudan by this organization which has allowed itself to be a tool in the hands of the EU and USA. These countries use the AI as a spearhead against Sudan. AI is an organization that does not respect its credibility."

(23 May)

reportedly carried out the attack using eighteen land cruisers and four trucks, looting the Fugoly market and targeting the water point. Two civilians were killed, 18 pupils wounded and some cattle were also killed or looted.

Some 70 families from villages southwest of Tullus -- Sesseban, Khorshaman and Umm Sakeikini and Umm Bereida -- were reportedly in Al Salam IDP Camp on 20 May. The newly arrived IDPs said they fled their villages after an attack on 12 May by armed Arab militia. In addition, 38 families arrived on 20 May in Al Salam Camp on two trucks.

Large population displacements have been reported by various sources due to alleged GoS and militia attacks, including aerial bombardments against rebel forces in Buram locality. An inter-agency team was scheduled to visit Korshaman and Antikina villages on 21 and 22 May to verify HAC reports of large displacements and assess humanitarian needs.

West Darfur

On 22 May, seven armed militiamen attacked 30 civilians returning from Kondobi to Birsiliba (60 kilometres north of El Geneina). One civilian was injured and brought to El Geneina for medical treatment, while another was reported missing.

Fighting took place between the Local Defense Force in Abu Surug (35km North of El Geneina) and about 120 armed men, suspected to be Arab Militia on 19 May. The circumstances of the fighting are unclear and the number of casualties not known.

Security and Humanitarian Developments in Southern Sudan and the Transitional Areas

Two of four civilians abducted by the LRA in Dimo village in Central Equatoria state on 19 May were released the next day, after negotiations led by the Southern Sudan Information Minister and an LRA Brigadier General. A Joint Monitoring Team (UNMIS-SAF-SPLA) visited Dimo Village (15 kilometres northeast of Yei), where the two other abducted civilians were still in the custody of the LRA.

A tribal clash between the Pakam tribe of Lakes State and Luac tribe of Warrab State took place on 22 May, resulting in the death of one member of the Pakam tribe. Policemen were dispatched to the area to help defuse the tension. The Governor of Lakes States, the Police Commissioner, the Commander of the SPLA and the UNMIS Head of Office were expected to pay an assessment visit to the location on 24 May.

A tribal clash occurred at Malual Baai village on the border between Gogrial West and Aweil East Counties on 23 May, reportedly over a dispute between an Awan tribesman under the influence of alcohol and Luo tribe members who beat him up for misbehaving in public. Other members of Awan tribe got involved to assist their tribesman and 15 people were wounded.

The World Health Organization (WHO) identified five suspected cases of measles in individuals from Gole village in Abyei hospital. A team from the NGO GOAL, the Ministry of Health and the WHO has visited the area to verify the cases and vaccinate all children between 6 months and 15 years of age, in case the disease is confirmed.

MIRAYA HIGHLIGHTS

LIVE DEBATE

Mundari and Bari representatives on reconciliation between their tribes:

Hon. Clement Maring, Chairperson for Security, Central Equatorial State represented the Mundari and Hon. Tongun Latu Rombe, of the security apparatus, represented the Bari (18 May).

INTERVIEWS

GoSS initiative for farmers: Samuel Ajo Wani, acting Director General in Ministry of Agriculture, on GoSS programme for distributing seeds and tractors to farmers in Southern Sudan (17 May).

Protecting forests: Isaac Ladu Samson, Director of Agriculture and Forestry, Central Equatoria State on measures to protect forests of South Sudan (18 May).

Diplomatic visitors: Elisabet Borsin Bonnier, Swedish Ambassador, on her visit to Southern Sudan (21 May).

Dennis McNamara, UN Special Representative on Displaced Populations, at the office of Humanitarian Affairs, Geneva (22 May).

Darfur: The Road to Peace

Abdul Mohamed, Chairperson of the Preparatory Committee for the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation discusses frequently asked questions about the DDDC.

UN Mirror: Women and Elections: Interview with Aisha Haghamed, Gender Officer with UNMIS, discussing women's participation in upcoming elections.

Reports on the recently passed Political Parties Act and the quota for female members of parliament