



All sides must compromise, says Ban Ki-moon

A political solution to the Darfur conflict would be neither easy nor quick, and all sides will need to make painful compromises, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said at the opening of peace talks in Sirte, Libya.

Speaking through a message delivered by his Special Envoy to Darfur, Jan Eliasson, Mr. Ban expressed disappointment that some Darfur rebel leaders were absent from the talks. "To them, I wish to say that the door remains open, but that if they continue to stay away, there is much they stand to lose".

Mr. Eliasson said the international community understood that some movements needed time to unify their positions, adding that all sides were accountable for their decisions. "There are those who may want to harm the process. We must not fall into this trap. We must all work together to chart the road to peace."

AU Special Envoy Salim Ahmed Salim said the hope and expectation of UN and the AU mediation was to have maximum participation from the movements. "It is unfortunate that this has not been the case so far," he said, adding that movements who had stayed away to reach common consensus could do so through consultations in Sirte.

Displacement, insecurity in Darfur continue

Displacement, insecurity and limited access continued to challenge the humanitarian response to urgent needs in Darfur, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan Ashraf Qazi said on 30 October in Khartoum.

Speaking at the Arab League Donor Conference for Darfur, Mr. Qazi said the Joint Communiqué signed between the Government of Sudan and UN on facilitating humanitarian activities in Darfur had been an important step forward. He also welcomed ongoing Darfur peace talks in Sirte, Libya, expressing hope they would pave the way for recovery activities at the community level.

Also attending was Ameerah Haq, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, who said the humanitarian community was concerned about current insecurity in Darfur IDP camps, including proliferation of arms within the camps and increased levels of violence.

Ms. Haq stressed that sustainable peace must be complimented by a longer term plan for reconstruction, adding that the humanitarian community was committed to peacebuilding and livelihood support activities, where pockets of security permitted.

HEARD on RADIO MIRAYA

On the decision of UN and AU mediators for Darfur peace talks between the government and the movements in Sirte, Libya, to postpone direct negotiations between the two parties ...

"The negotiations are continuing. Some people are going back to their groups in Juba to finish discussions which had started, some are going to consult their people. We will see ... how long it will take for them to go and consult and come back.

Ibrahim Derij

Chairman of the Darfur
Federal Movement
30 October

Speaking at the Khartoum Arab League Conference on the Humanitarian Situation in Darfur about rebels who were not attending the Sirte talks ...

"I call upon all those who are carrying arms to join the peace process and participate in the negotiations we have facilitated for these peace talks. That is why we have announced a ceasefire in Darfur. We hope to receive a positive response."

Omar Al Bashir

President of Sudan
30 October

Humanitarian chief alarmed by forced relocation

UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes expressed alarm on 30 October about reports of forced relocation two days before from Otash camp in Nyala, South Darfur, which is home to over 60,000 internally displaced persons.

Mr. Holmes stressed that any relocation should be voluntary and adhere to the guiding principles of internal displacement. "Given that security forces were threatening the displaced with sticks and rubber hoses at Otash camp, the involuntary nature of this relocation is clear, and is contrary to agreements with the Government," he emphasized.

Progress slow in human rights, says Rapporteur

Protecting human rights in Sudan was still a huge challenge, although slow progress had been made, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Sudan Sima Samar told the General Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) on 30 October.

Presenting her report, which covers the period from 1 August 2006 to 31 August 2007, Ms. Samar noted that portions of the CPA to improve human rights had not been implemented. The legal and institutional human rights framework was still weak, the National Human Rights Commission had not yet been established and some 60 laws must be reformed in an open and inclusive way.

Among her recommendations, she said the Government should carry out legal reforms, disarm and demobilize militia, transparently investigate human rights violations, cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court, guarantee freedom for journalists and human rights defenders, and ratify remaining international human rights instruments. Warring factions should respect international human rights law, assist with humanitarian assistance, fully cooperate with UN and AU peacekeeping forces and support the political process to peacefully resolve the Darfur conflict.

CPA cornerstone of peace, says Qazi

Meeting recently with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ashraf Qazi said the UN would assist the parties in implementing the CPA, which was the cornerstone of sustainable peace and stability in Sudan and a major achievement for its people.

President Bashir stressed the importance of the CPA and the government's commitment to fully implementing it, expressing the hope that dialogue and direct consultations would continue to characterize working relations with the UN.

On Juba Girls Senior Secondary School teachers going on strike because they did not receive salaries for two months ...

"The months which we did not receive our salaries are September and October. If we receive salaries for September and October and a solution is found for this problem we will return to classes because these are our children."

Margret Miling Kumba
Juba Girls Secondary
School teacher
30 October

On a commission formed by the Council of Ministers in Central Equatoria State to oversee payment of salaries for state employees

"We have some people who have died, but still their names appear on the pay sheets ... We are trying to find a good solution to this problem. After that we will develop a strategy for payment of salaries ... and we might think of making new appointments."

Mr. Henry Danga
Deputy Governor of
Central Equatoria State
30 October

Security Council meets on Sudan

Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guéhenno presented Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's latest report on Sudan to the UN Security Council during closed consultations on 30 October. The report assesses the country's overall situation since the previous report in August, gives an update on UNMIS activities, and recommends that the mission's mandate, which expired on 31 October, be extended.

Security and Humanitarian Developments

North Darfur

Two unknown armed men broke into an international non-governmental organization (INGO) compound on 27 October in Shangil Tobayi (80 kilometres south of El Fasher) and stole money for payment of salaries from the organization's safe. No injuries were reported.

A convoy of three vehicles (two UN and one INGO) was attacked on 24 October in Donki Shatta Locality (15 kilometres out of El Fasher). Personal effects were stolen from passengers and one vehicle was carjacked.

South Darfur

Fighting between the Habaniya and Salmat tribes was reported in Amtashah (about 30 kilometres west of Buram) on 26 October, which reportedly resulted in the deaths of 16 Salamats. On 19 October, Habaniya tribesmen attacked the Salmat village of Manzula (120 kilometres southwest of Nyala) and on 22 October, Salmat tribesmen retaliated by attacking the Habaniyas in Samasin (about 38 kilometres southwest of Buram). Over 120 members from both tribes were killed during the three clashes.

West Darfur

Militiamen, suspected of being Janjaweed, attacked and looted the village of Marary (about seven kilometers southeast of Um Dukhun) on 24 October. Villagers fled towards Um Dukhun.

Southern Sudan and Transitional Areas

An Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) soldier fired shots into the air at Malakal airport on 28 October, when he and other soldiers were prevented by the Joint Integrated Unit from boarding a UN flight to Juba because they were armed. The situation was brought under control after the intervention of SPLA senior officers.

MIRAYA HIGHLIGHTS

Talk Shows/Phone Ins

Land Crapping: Robert Land, Chairperson of Land Commission in the Government of Southern Sudan (25 October).

How can young people become useful in societies and why it's important to plan for their future?: M.K Opio (26 October).

Importance of maintaining your personal hygiene: Dr. Mathew Kinyi, UNMIS (26 October).

What is census reference night and why is it important?: Pelad Nanfua, Deputy Technical Advisor for Southern Sudan Commission for Census Statistics and Evaluation (29 October).

Polio Awareness campaign: Mr. George Lasuba, Central Equatoria State Ministry of Health (29 October).

Features and Interviews

Programmes focused on World Food Day Celebration 2007, SPLM & Darfur factions meeting in Juba, Creators of Peace (a local NGO) in Southern Sudan, flash floods in South Kordofan, wrestling of the Nuba Mountains, disputes in South Kordofan, UN Day with a report about desertification in Sudan and environmental conservation issues in Bor.

Darfur: The Road to Peace

Members of the Sultan of Geneina's Tribal Council describe their history of intertribal relations in El Geneina, West Darfur.