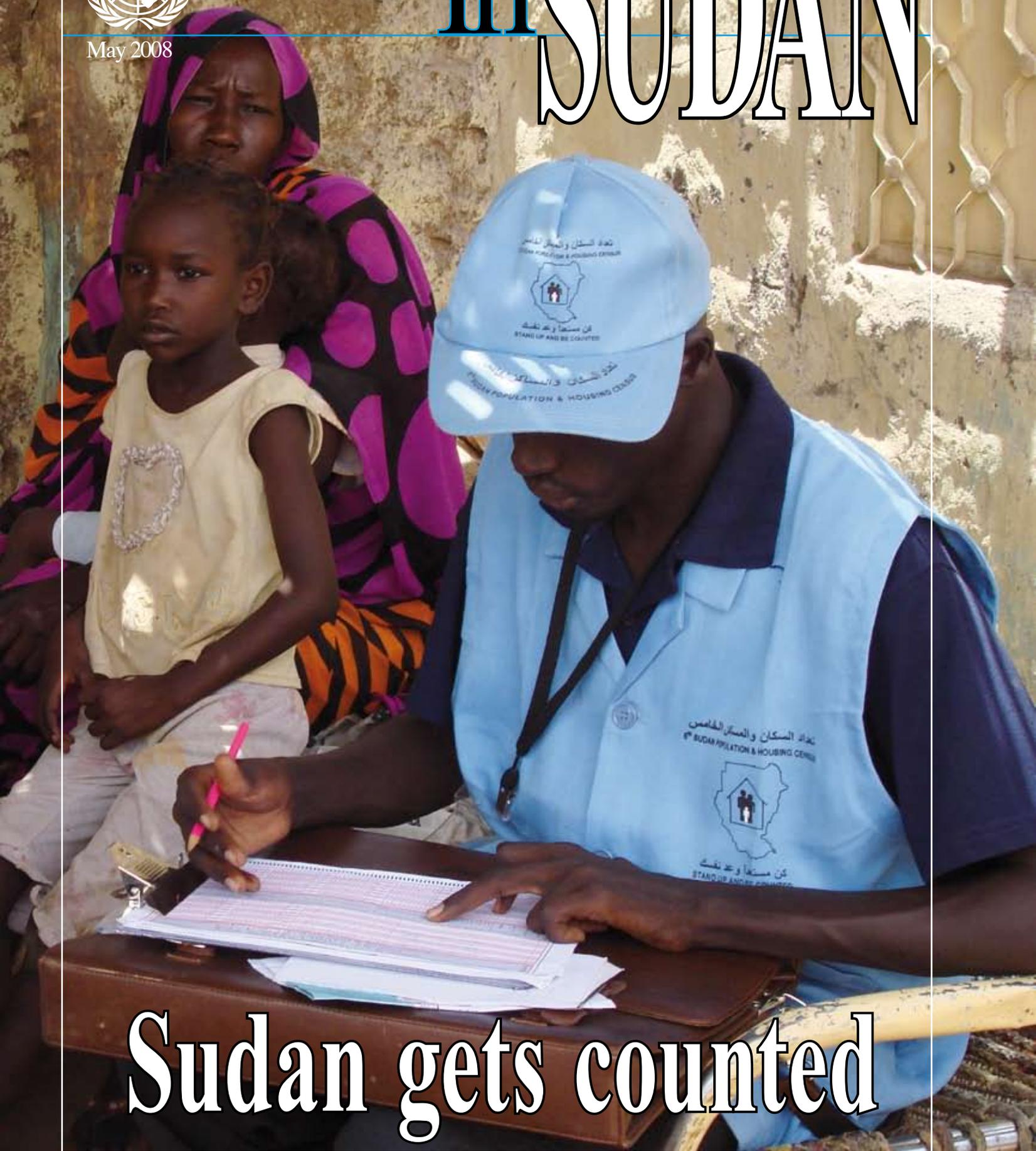


United Nations Mission



May 2008

In SUDAN



Sudan gets counted

DIARY

- **7 April:** UNMIS Force Commander Lt. Gen. Jasbir Singh Lidder held a farewell press conference marking the end of his two-and-a-half year assignment in Sudan. He gave updated figures for SAF and SPLA redeployments and spoke about the security situation in Abyei. In saying farewell to the mission and to the people of Sudan, General Lidder offered his best wishes for the country's future peace and stability.
- **9 April:** Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ashraf Jehangir Qazi urged parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to sustain Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) momentum. He was addressing the Round Table on DDR, organized by the National DDR Coordinating Council, in Khartoum.
- **11 April:** A workshop on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was organized in Rumbek by UNMIS Public Information and Civil Affairs. UN Police briefed the 43 workshop participants on the importance of community policing.
- **18 April:** UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the Government of National Unity's decision to proceed with holding the national census. He pointed out that the Sudanese people, with the assistance of the international community, looked forward to a full and peaceful enumeration process.
- **19 April:** The Military and Police Advisers Community (MPAC) delegation from New York began a seven-day visit to UNMIS. The MPAC performs military and police advisory functions in permanent missions to UN Headquarters in New York.
- **20 April:** The first UN Global Road Safety Week was launched as a platform especially dedicated to hundreds of millions of young people traveling the world's roads each day.
- **22 April:** The 5th Population and Housing Census was launched nationwide with a national one-day holiday to help facilitate the first day's enumeration activities.
- **24 April:** Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guehenno presented the Secretary-General's quarterly report on Sudan to members of the Security Council.

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IN SUDAN is published monthly by the UN Mission in Sudan. Contents do not necessarily reflect the official position of the UN or that of UNMIS. Articles and contents may be freely reproduced.

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Front cover: Census enumerators in Khartoum. PHOTO: UNMIS/Ismini Palla

PROGRESS ON CPA STILL “LACKING”

While parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) are striving to overcome remaining difficulties through dialogue, progress in key areas of the accord is still “lacking”, according to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's latest report on Sudan.

“I urge the parties to summon the political will to address difficult outstanding issues, particularly the status of Abyei and the disputed 1 January 1956 border. Further delay in resolving those issues may complicate the situation and lead to unintended conflict,” the Secretary-General says in the report, which was issued on 24 April.

The report notes that the security situation has remained relatively calm, but the continued presence of Sudanese Armed Forces and Sudan People's Liberation Army personnel around the oilfields and other areas along the disputed 1956 borderline was a continuing source of tension.

Moreover, recent clashes over dry-season grazing routes in Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Abyei have continued to cause considerable unrest, says the report, which covers the period since the end of January. The mission was unable to properly verify reported incidents, as it faced serious movement restrictions around Abyei, including denial of security clearances for air patrols.

Other remaining CPA milestones include Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants; the formation of Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) combining northern and southern forces; and preparations for next year's elections, according to the report. “Those issues are interlinked. Progress must be made in parallel ... delay or confrontation in one area will affect implementation in the other areas.”

The Secretary-General expresses particular concern about election delays, stressing the need for more rapid progress and clarification of support needed from the UN. “If elections are to take place before 9 July 2009, as stipulated in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the timelines for preparing effective United Nations and donor assistance are already very short.”



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. PHOTO: UNMIS/Tim McKulka

On DDR, the Secretary-General notes that significant progress has been made by the parties and United Nations in preparing for the multi-year DDR programme. “I recommend that the Security Council support the initial disarmament, demobilization and

reintegration of veterans and special needs groups, to begin in 2008.”

The report also welcomes recent cooperation between the Government of National Unity and Government of Southern Sudan in preparing a plan for economic recovery and development targeting war-affected areas.

“Preserving the partnership between the National Congress Party and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement is fundamental to the success of the peace process,” the Secretary-General says.

The report emphasizes the importance of broad-based support to the CPA as well as stability after the 2011 referendum (on the south's continued unity with the north or secession). “Our activities should ... contribute to laying a foundation for stability post-2011 ... whether within a federal structure or as neighbouring states.”

For a successful outcome after 2011, institutions should be developed and political, economic and security ties strong enough for either outcome of the referendum to be peacefully contemplated, the report concludes.

“I urge the parties to summon the political will to address difficult outstanding issues, particularly the status of Abyei and the disputed 1 January 1956 border. Further delay in resolving those issues may complicate the situation and lead to unintended conflict”

SUDAN GETS COUNTED



Census enumerators interviewing residents in Juba, Southern Sudan. PHOTO: UNMIS/Tim McKulka

An estimated 60,000 enumerators fanned out across Sudan as the fifth National Population and Housing Census was launched on 22 April. Apart from heavy rains in much of the south on census night, and a surprise shower in Khartoum, it got off to a smooth start in most areas of the country.

Inaugurating the census in the south, First Vice-President of Sudan and President of Southern Sudan Salva Kiir held a press conference in Juba on census eve, stressing its importance for upcoming elections

and the referendum (on the south's continued unity with the north or secession). His family was the first to be counted just after midnight.

First to be enumerated in the north was Sudanese Vice-President Ali Osman Taha, who emphasized the significance of the census for the country's democratic, economic and political future. Urging all Sudanese to be counted, he expressed hope that the event would represent a major step forward in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

As 22 April had been declared

a public holiday, Khartoum and Juba wore deserted looks, with most businesses remaining closed and vehicles staying off the road. The police were out in greater numbers, stopping some vehicles and telling people to return home. Enumerators swarmed Khartoum's international airport on census night, counting passengers who had just arrived.

In urban areas, each enumerator was expected to cover 200 to 250 households, but in rural areas only 100 to 150, due to long distances between households. In some enumerator areas (EAs), the number of households exceeded the limit, putting extra pressure on enumerators.

"I have 287 households in my EA," said enumerator Louis Nyaingo as he trudged from house to house in Tomping, close to Juba's airport, after the night of heavy rain. The gumboots he wore helped him negotiate the muddy path.

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), some 3,500 vehicles were driven by supervisors around enumeration areas in the north to review work at the end of the day. In the south, some 400 cars, 800 bicycles, a few motorcycles and 50 boats were made available for the census.

Deputy Chairman for the Census in Southern Sudan John Macheik confirmed on 27 April some transportation problems. "Enumerators had to walk long distances on foot, and many places were rendered inaccessible due to rain." He added, however, that census operations were moving smoothly, despite such obstacles.

Still, some enumerators in Southern Sudan had difficulties getting around. "We are facing problems with transportation ... some are spending from their own pockets to move around their EA," said Fatima Abdel, an enumerator in Wau, Western Bahr El Ghazal State. In Yeï, enumerators





Family ready to be counted in Bahri locality, Khartoum. PHOTO: UNMIS/Ismini Palla

reportedly had to “paddle all the way” to their enumeration areas because of heavy rains.

For the most part, residents were eager to be counted. In Yambio, the capital of Western Equatoria State, the mood was one of eager participation. Sitting outside her house, Juliet Sabina said, “This is my first time to be counted and I am proud to welcome the enumerators in my home.”

In the Al Ezba area of Khartoum's Bahri locality, one of the poorest locales in the capital, enumerators also received a warm welcome. Bahri Commissioner Siddig Mohamed Ali Elshaikh said the census would help with “right and proper planning for the future”, addressing education, health, security, water and electricity facilities.

Some initially resisted the census, including residents of rebel-controlled

areas and internally displaced persons camps in Darfur. “Of course we have some difficulties in Darfur,” said CBS Director General Yasin Elhag Abdin. But he was optimistic that over 90 per cent of the region would be covered.

News also came on day one of the count that the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Southern Kordofan was resisting the census. That problem, however, was resolved by the governor's quick intervention.

Originally scheduled for 15 April, the census launch was delayed after the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) announced it wanted the event deferred. Taking into account strong concerns of the GoSS Council of Ministers, the Presidency swiftly reacted, deciding to postpone the start by a week to 22 April, a move that was commended by the UN Secretary-General.

“It [the postponement] added [both] cost and value”, Dr. Abdin said. “The Ministry of Finance promised to meet the cost of the enumerator's wages. We agreed that we would keep them in place and use the time to revise the management and administrative work they did and get prepared.”

With the completion of the fifth Population and Housing Census, a major milestone of the 2005 CPA will have been crossed. Its outcome will contribute to the definition of power and wealth sharing structures until elections in 2009. ■

Reporting team: Ashim Choudhury, Ismini Palla, James Sokiri, Emmanuel and Taban Kenyi, Ojja Bosco and Emmanuel Kackoul

LIVE ON MIRAYA FM!

UN Radio Miraya FM began educating listeners about the census in June last year, on the premise that it would take place in November 2006. The first among a series of educational programmes broadcast was a radio play featuring a girl coming back from school, holding papers in her hands.

Upon arriving home, the girl found her mother and two friends sitting under a tree in the family compound, plaiting their hair. The mother asked her daughter, "What are those papers you are holding in your hands?" The girl explained that the teacher had given all the pupils identical papers to take back to their families. The papers were about something called the census, the pupil explained.

Then followed an interesting exchange, with each woman showing off her knowledge of the census. Along the way, some of the women gave erroneous information -- a deliberate ploy aimed at correcting myths and misconceptions. Judging from the listeners' phone-ins,

How can I listen to Radio Miraya?

Miraya FM currently broadcasts on FM frequency 101 MHz in Juba, Malakal, Wau, Rumbek, Torit, Maridi, Yambio, Bor, Yei, Bentiu, Aweil, Nassir.

Miraya Sudan broadcasts on short wave daily from 6 – 9 p.m. local time on 9825 KHz in the 31 metre band. From Monday to Friday, this programme of news and current affairs is broadcast throughout Sudan (and beyond), with priority focus on Southern and CPA topics from 6 to 7.30 p.m. and an emphasis on the North and Darfur from 7.30 to 9 p.m. A special Darfur news bulletin is broadcast at 8.30 p.m.

The Miraya website, in Arabic and English, (www.mirayafm.org) provides live audio streaming of all broadcasts, scripted news bulletins and audio access to a selection of other programmes.



Radio Miraya journalist. PHOTO: UNMIS/Fred Noy

producers realized that radio drama was one of the best ways of getting messages across to a largely illiterate audience.

By early this year, when talk of the census livened up again, Miraya had already broadcast a variety of messages to attract listeners. A "special projects" department was set up for production of programmes needing deeper analysis and elaborate treatment on such topics as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, census, elections and referendum. Staff with translation and acting skills were recruited.

The new department led census education programming by producing several radio dramas and plays, features and specialized interviews. It forged close relations with the Southern Sudan Commission for Census, Statistics and Evaluation, whose members were featured on various programmes to demystify complex questions.

Almost every evening, there was a programme featuring census experts,

consultants and politicians. Listeners could directly ask questions like, "If my parents die before the census night will they be counted?" Several dramas were produced dealing with various aspects of the census.

Meanwhile, Miraya FM's News and Programmes departments ran their own programmes on the census. For instance, Miraya sent reporters across many states in Southern Sudan collecting material from local people aimed at deepening awareness of the forthcoming event.

When the census date was finally set for 22 April, Radio Miraya devised an elaborate schedule of trips to 26 destinations in the north and south. Reporters relayed live reports from these locations on conduct of the census and participation of locals. Recording and relaying voices of the people, they conducted interviews with enumerators and government officials. Listeners at say, Mellut, knew what was going on in Yambio.

A MODEL FOR SUCCESS

Jemma Kumba, the only woman governor in Southern Sudan

Citizens of Yambio, Western Equatoria State, recently gathered in large numbers at the town's Freedom Square to welcome their new governor, Jemma Nunu Kumba, the only woman to hold that office in Southern Sudan.

Ms. Kumba urged the crowd to work with her for sustainable development and a better future, identifying her top priorities as agriculture, education and security. Describing Western Equatoria as the "bread basket" of Southern Sudan, she said, "We need to make sure that we fully use our potential."

She added that the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) was working in collaboration with the UN and non-governmental organizations to modernize agriculture and provide training for farmers.

Ms. Kumba also addressed illiteracy among women and their traditional role, which results in a high primary school dropout rate among girls. "Send all your boys and girls to school for a better future," she said. Among other activities, she said the GoSS planned to open a women's development centre to offer skills training for destitute women.

Describing Ms. Kumba as a "role model", State Minister of Education Grace Datio, who was also attending the event, said, "She has proven that women are capable when they are given the opportunity to have an education." Similarly, Nzara Country Commissioner Sitta Santin said Ms. Kumba's appointment would encourage mothers to send their daughters to school. "They will realize that the secret behind her success is education."

Born in 1966, the soft-spoken Governor received her higher education at the University of Zambia, Lusaka, where she studied Leadership and Development for Women. She then obtained a degree in Economics and Management from the University of Namibia.

Ms. Kumba entered politics in 1990, when she joined the Sudan



Jemma Kumba at welcome rally in Yambio, Southern Sudan. PHOTO: UNMIS/HailemichaelGebrekrstos

People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). Following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, she was appointed a member of parliament in the National Assembly, where she rose to become Chairperson of the Economic Committee, one of the three committees allocated to the SPLM in the Assembly.

Ms. Kumba's appointment as governor on 8 March, the eve of International Women's Day, signaled the GoSS' commitment to implement

the policy of affirmative action guaranteeing women 25 per cent of public offices (as stated in the region's interim constitution).

Rounding off her Yambio address, Ms. Kumba expressed concerns about security, including the presence of the Lord's Resistance Army in the state. "These bandits and foreign invaders must go," she told the rally to loud applause. ■

Hailemichael Gebrekrstos

BACK IN

Bottleneck removed

Providing a much needed lift to commerce with neighbouring Kenya and Uganda, the Government of Southern Sudan recently completed repairs to Juba Bridge.

The 25-year-old bridge buckled and partially collapsed about a year and a half ago, under the weight of tons of cement being hauled across it by a Benz semi-trailer truck. No injuries were reported, but the bridge was cut from two lanes to one, greatly straining traffic to Juba via the Nimule road.

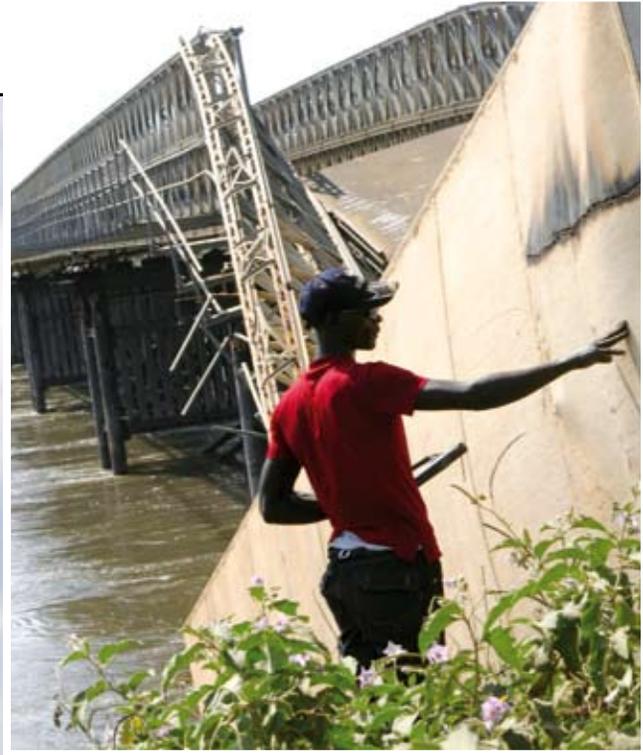
Area residents are heavily dependent on the Juba-Nimule road, which is the shortest route for merchandise from Uganda. The alternative Arua-Kaya-Yei-Juba route is riddled with gullies and potholes, which worsen during the rainy season.

With the bridge reconstructed and two lanes now in use, a major bottleneck in the flow of goods and passengers in or out of Juba has been removed.

PHOTOS: UNMIS/Tim McKulka



BUSINESS



REMOVING THE MINE DANGER

Landmines and unexploded ordnances (UXOs) used in Sudan's civil war continue to plague the country's roads and fields, endangering lives, obstructing humanitarian aid and hindering development.

Under the overall coordination of the UN Mine Action Office (UNMAO), the Government, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been working since 2005 to rid the country of mines and UXOs, making roads their highest priority.

Cleared roads are vital for economic growth as well as trade between major Sudanese towns and neighbouring Kenya, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, said Joseph McCartan, Deputy Programme Manager of UNMAO. "That Juba (the capital of Southern Sudan) is a bustling city with new businesses springing up daily is a testament to the opening of road links"

So far, some 25,206 kilometres of road have been cleared, providing links between major southern towns and opening up routes with the north. With passable roads now linking Aweil, Wau, Rumbek, Juba and Bor,

the current priority is to clear the Bor-Malakal route. "When Malakal and Bor are linked, it will be possible to drive from Khartoum to Juba for the first time," Mr. McCartan said.

Including roads, UNMAO and its partners have identified 3,080 "dangerous areas" and cleared 1,440 of them. These areas have paved the way for schools on the Juba-Yei road, agricultural projects in Wau, a rice plantation in Aweil and an educational centre for the blind in Rejaf. They have also allowed airstrips in Juba, Kapoeta and Bor as well as Juba Custom Market to be rebuilt.

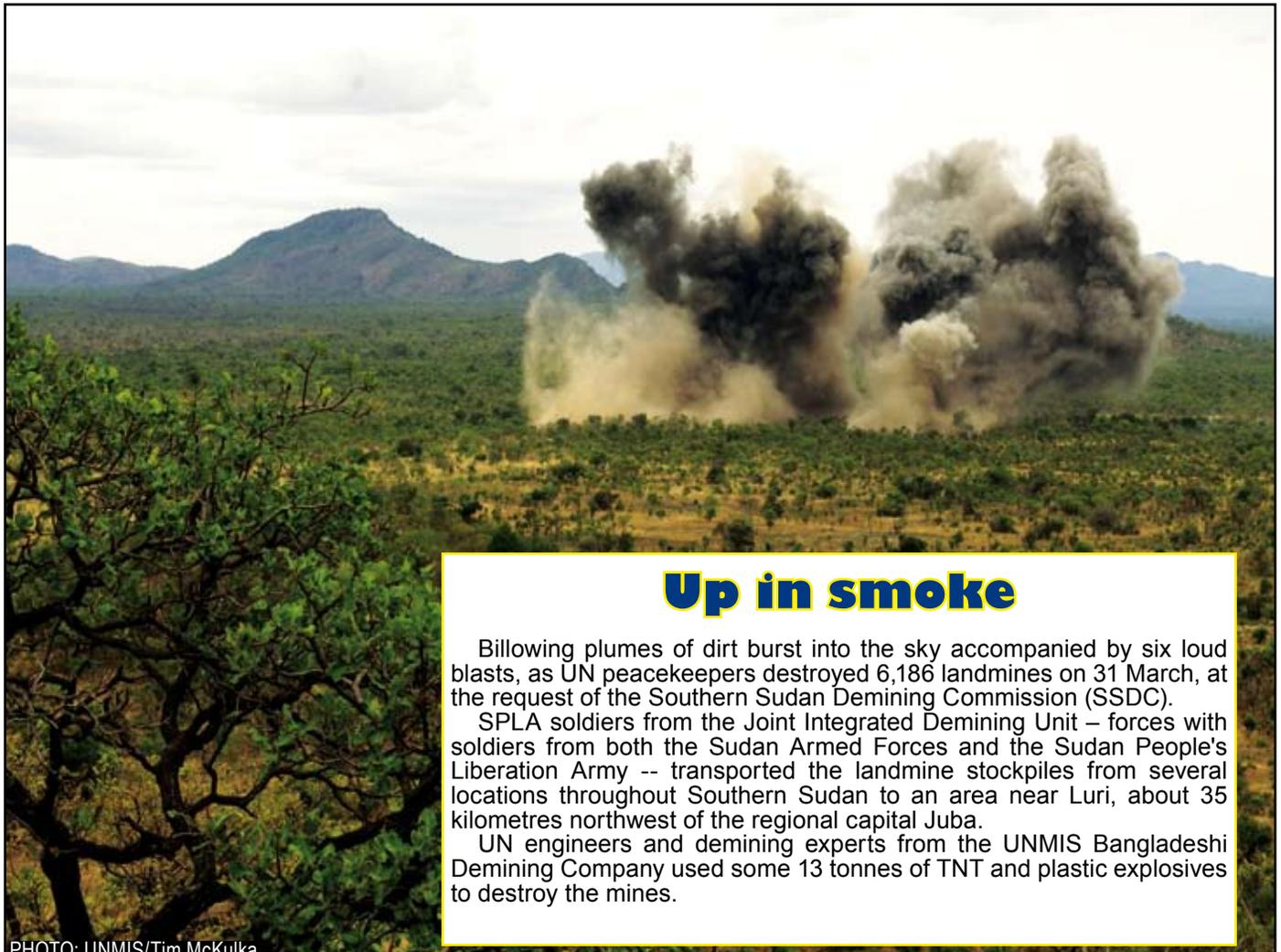
Efforts have also been made to educate individuals still at risk, especially internally displaced persons and refugees returning home, and to assist the more than 4,000 mine victims. Over the past three years, UNMAO and UNICEF have delivered Mine Risk Education to over two million people and have been working with the Ministry of Education to make mine awareness a part of the school curriculum.

In addition, UNMAO, the National Mine Action Centre and Southern Sudan Demining Commission have



developed a Victim Assistance National Strategic Framework and Victim Assistance Work Plan, and are implementing mine/UXO victim needs assessments and victim assistance projects.

Badreldeen Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director of the national NGO ABRAR, which deals with the war disabled, noted that victim assistance had improved since the Government, UN and NGOs joined forces in mine work. As the victim of a mine accident himself 14 years ago, he commented, "Mines change the lives of victims ... you are another person ... you need lots of social support to gain independence again." ■



Up in smoke

Billowing plumes of dirt burst into the sky accompanied by six loud blasts, as UN peacekeepers destroyed 6,186 landmines on 31 March, at the request of the Southern Sudan Demining Commission (SSDC).

SPLA soldiers from the Joint Integrated Demining Unit – forces with soldiers from both the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army -- transported the landmine stockpiles from several locations throughout Southern Sudan to an area near Luri, about 35 kilometres northwest of the regional capital Juba.

UN engineers and demining experts from the UNMIS Bangladeshi Demining Company used some 13 tonnes of TNT and plastic explosives to destroy the mines.

PHOTO: UNMIS/Tim McKulka

A DEMINER'S TALE

With 14 years of demining experience, Bangladeshi deminer Major Luful Karim is no stranger to the task. But even he admits that demining in Southern Sudan can be “difficult and risky”.

The minefields are larger than in other post-conflict areas, reaching up to a million square metres in size, the 38-year-old deminer said. And mines are laid out in unconventional patterns, with some lying outside assessed fields.

Deminers must also detect three anti-personnel and two anti-tank types of mines, rather than the one or two varieties normally used, Major Karim said. Compounding the difficulties of the task, extreme weather can hamper and slow down operations. “The ground is hard and the weather is very hot, so the work is also tedious and consumes a lot of time.”

An Operations Officer with the Bangladeshi Military Demining Company, Major Karim has been working for UNMIS since March 2007, directing operations in Juba and surrounds. He gathers data from the field, ensures operations are safe for the company’s 135 deminers and monitors implementation of the Company’s plans.

So far, the Bangladeshis have cleared 99,238 square metres at Rajaf minefield, 15,936 at MAFAO minefield, and 14,400 at Khor Romla. Including battle areas, they have



Major Luful Karim coordinating demining operations near Juba, Southern Sudan PHOTO: UNMIS/Tim McKulka

cleared a total area of 809,200 square metres.

The work has not been without casualties. The Company suffered an unfortunate accident in January of this year, when Cpl. Mizan Nur Muhammad lost his right eye and injured his left in an anti-personnel mine explosion at Rajaf field.

Despite the hazards, Major Karim has no regrets about coming to the region. “Coming to Southern Sudan to carry out demining was important for me ... to save people from the risk of mines.”

He added that the region was a

“The ground is hard and the weather is very hot, so the work is also tedious and consumes a lot of time”

“good place to live” with friendly and hospitable people. It was also blessed with natural resources, fertile soil and abundant rainfall, which people could use to produce all they required. “They just need a safe environment.”

Before working in Sudan, Major Karim spent a year demining with the UN Mission in East Timor. He comes from Dhaka, where he has mainly been training deminers. The Major received his education at the Bangladesh’s Military Academy, Engineer’s Centre and School of Military Engineering. ■

Emmanuel Kenyi



Bangladeshi deminers preparing to demolish anti-personnel mines. PHOTO: UNMIS/Tim McKulka

CROSSING MILESTONES

After leading the mission's forces for over two years, former UNMIS Force Commander Lt. Gen. Jasbir Singh Lidder left the mission in early April. General Lidder was commended by several senior UN officials for raising the profile of the Ceasefire Joint Military Commission (CJMC), a key component in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). At an emotionally charged "farewell" CJMC meeting in Juba, members of both the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) emphasized what a huge loss his departure would be. Later that day, In Sudan met with him for an impromptu chat.

In Sudan: You first arrived in the mission in January 2006. What has changed since then?

Lt. Gen. Lidder: When I took over, redeployment had just started – the SPLA from Eastern Sudan and the SAF from Southern Sudan. The Other Armed Groups (OAGs) had not integrated (with the SAF or SPLA) and Joint Integrated Unit (JIU) mobilization had barely begun. No one was quite sure of the CPA.

As I leave, I can say we crossed a few milestones. In July 2006, the SPLA was redeployed from Eastern Sudan. To date, 97.8 per cent of SAF have redeployed from the south ... I hope this will be completed in coming days. But the SPLA is now disputing the redeployment of SAF to Higlig, saying it is a contested area. We need to resolve that.

The SPLA also started redeploying to the south last July, but the rains halted that. Movement has now begun again and by January this year SPLA redeployment to the south was 12 per cent, although the SPLA claims it has redeployed much more than that.

About 86 per cent of JIUs have mobilized to their locations. OAGs have fully integrated, even though there remains some dispute about the Fursans in Raja County of Northern Bahr El Ghazal.

The CJMC has been described as one of the best institutions in UNMIS. What

made it work?

The CJMC structure has a very precise mandate and well-defined, clear-cut roles. We kept the meetings dynamic, holding them in places there were problems. We also held them in outside locations like Nairobi, Kampala and Cairo. That had a very positive effect on gelling between the parties and between the parties and the UN, as it promoted better interaction.

Tell us about the role of the CJMC and what it has achieved so far.

Its role is basically to monitor the ceasefire and resolve conflicts whenever they arise. To that effect, we have been very successful. When there has been a violation, like in Malakal, we have been able to swiftly control it. But for the CJMC's intervention, the casualty figures in Malakal could have been much higher.

The CJMC without you ... will it lose its vigour?

(Laughing) Although personalities do make a difference, it is the institution that counts more. The CJMC has very good structures.

What's your parting message to the SPLA/SAF?

I want to express my deep gratitude to both parties for the immense cooperation and respect they showed me. There may be challenges ahead, but violence is not the answer. I would urge them to resolve issues through continued dialogue.

What are your unfinished tasks? Do you have any advice for your successor?

The JIUs should have taken control of the oilfields more fully. Also, they have not had meaningful training.

I would ask my successor to consolidate the gains we have made so far. It will need perseverance



Lt. Gen. Jasbir Lidder. PHOTO: UNMIS/Fred Nov

to carry the parties along ... they are our biggest stakeholders. Notwithstanding Abyei and the line of 1.1.56, we shall resolve everything.

How are the last two issues you mentioned going to be resolved?

These are very contentious issues. Both parties have strong justification for their respective stances. It will require a lot of persuasion on the part of UNMIS and the international community. More importantly, both parties will have to show a lot of flexibility and pragmatism.

What made you so popular with the forces?

I'm fortunate. I traveled extensively to visit the forces, even in remote team sites. I socialized with them, played sports, created an environment that was relaxed ... they liked my style, I guess.

On a personal note, whenever you came to Juba, you chose to stay with the Bangladeshi contingent rather than your own Indian compatriots ...

Ha! Ha! ... When you wear the blue beret, you represent the United Nations, so it was normal for me to be hosted by the Sector Commander. The Bangladeshis took good care of me. I enjoyed staying with them. ■

NEWS BRIEFS

Machar urges active role for Peace Commission

Southern Sudanese Vice-President Riek Machar recently urged the Southern Sudan Peace Commission (SSPC) to play a major role in promoting peace in the region.

Speaking at the inauguration of a new office block for the SSPC in Juba, Vice-President Machar said, "The peace agreement was signed in 2005, but a lot more needs to be done to transform this peace into reality." The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded the block, which was constructed by Pact Sudan.

Thanking USAID for its support, Dr. Machar said the SSPC could serve as a centre for research and early warning for the Government of Southern Sudan. He also hailed the support of Pact Sudan in building peace across Southern Sudan through the governors' and commissioners' conferences held in Torit in 2007 and Upper Nile in 2008.



Government of Southern Sudan Vice-President Riek Machar (right). PHOTO: UNMIS/Tim McKulka

Eastern Equatoria signs constitution

Bringing in supreme law for the entire state, Eastern Equatoria signed its constitution in Torit on 11 April.

Eastern Equatoria State Governor Brig. Gen. Alosio Emor Ojetuk called the signing a "milestone" in the state's history. "As this state is multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious, the constitution will help control and govern ethnic diversity in accordance with the Interim National Constitution (INC) and the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan (ICSS)."

Sabina Dario Lokolong, Speaker of Eastern Equatoria's Interim State Legislative Assembly, said the signing would help promote peace and full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. He added that the constitution also defined boundaries for Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei and Central Equatoria states, as per the 1956 border demarcation.



Brig. Gen. Alosio Emor Ojetuk holding new constitution. PHOTO: UNMIS/Emmanuel Kenyi

UN mourns fallen staff

In a ceremony at New York Headquarters on 25 April, the United Nations honoured some 294 of its staff who had lost their lives in service over the past two and a half years.

The memorial concluded with a reading of the names of those who had died. The list included 17 staff members killed in the December 2007 bombing of the UN office in Algiers, seven staff who died in a helicopter crash in March and four UN military observers killed in the July 2006 aerial bombing of an observer post in southern Lebanon.

Addressing the event, Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro called on Member States to increase protection for UN personnel. UN Staff Union President Stephen Kisambira asked states to ratify the 2005 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Safety of UN and Associated Personnel, which expands the Convention to cover personnel involved in delivering humanitarian, political or development assistance. The Protocol is not yet in force, as only 11 countries have ratified it.

The fallen include 152 military personnel, 20 police officers and 75 local staff. Forty-seven were serving with the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), 39 with the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and 35 with the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).

Sadly among the latest UN staff to pass away were UN Mine Action Office Regional Co-ordinator for North Sudan Jan Bosman, and Ronco (international demining contractor) Operations Officer Sylvia Bodgany, who died in a car accident in North Sudan on 30 April.

NEWS BRIEFS



Internally displaced persons in Zalingei, West Darfur. PHOTO: UNMIS/Fred Noy

WFP to cut Darfur rations

The World Food Programme (WFP) announced in Khartoum on 17 April that it would be forced to cut monthly rations in Darfur in May due to banditry against WFP-contracted trucks.

The cereal ration would be cut in half to 225 grams per person per day, pulses would be cut in half to 30 grams and sugar by half to 15 grams. This would reduce the daily kilocalorie value of the ration by 40 per cent (down to 1,242 k/cal per day from the recommended rate of 2,156 k/cal).

At this time of year, WFP-contracted trucks should be delivering 1,800 metric tons of food daily to Darfur to supply warehouses ahead of the rainy season, due to begin next month. But deliveries have dropped to less than 900 tons per day.

Since the beginning of this year, 60 WFP-contracted trucks have been hijacked in Darfur, with 39 trucks still missing and 26 drivers unaccounted for. One driver was killed in Darfur last month.

Ex-combatants graduate as prison officers

The second batch of over 700 Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) ex-combatants, including 210 women, recently graduated from Lologo Prison Training Centre in Juba as prison and non-commissioned officers.

The colourful graduation parade came after three months of intensive training aimed at preparing the former SPLA soldiers to become prison officers. UNMIS provided technical support for the course, while the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) assisted with funding.

Addressing the ceremony, attended by officials from the Government of Southern Sudan and UNMIS, Director General of Training and Colleges Maj. Gen. Mathew Jiet Abol said the new graduates were ready to assume their duties in prisons throughout Southern Sudan, in line with international human rights standards.

Western Equatoria gets Traditional Leaders Council

More than 133 chiefs and paramount chiefs from four Southern Sudanese states recently met at a four-day conference in Yambio to form a Traditional Leaders' Council (TLC) for Western Equatoria.

The conference, which brought together over 130 chiefs and paramount chiefs from Western Equatoria and three paramount chiefs from Eastern Equatoria, Central Equatoria and Lakes States, elected a 25-member body representing all tribes and language groups in the state.

The Council, which will work on conflict prevention and resolution, will be accountable to its members' communities. Strictly apolitical, the TLC will also advise authorities and development agencies on issues directly affecting the livelihood, values, and cultures of the communities.

Organized by the non-governmental organization Policy, Advocacy and Strategy Studies (PASS), the conference was funded by the Swiss Government and the United States Institute of Peace. So far, four Southern Sudanese states -- Eastern Equatoria, Central Equatoria, Lakes and Western Equatoria -- have TLCs.

UN trains prison medical personnel

A specialized medical training course aimed at building the capacity of 30 prison service medical personnel from all 10 states of Southern Sudan opened on 14 April in Juba.

The course was funded by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), with assistance from UNMIS Rule of Law section in collaboration with the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) Ministry of Health.

The two-week session focused on basic prison medical care, management of vulnerable prisoners, diseases related to water and sanitation, management of medical records, prevalent prison diseases and duties of prison medical staff. Participants also viewed actual case studies and completed practical attachments at Juba's Teaching Hospital and prisons.

Opening the training, GoSS Director of Training and Colleges Maj. Gen. Mathow Jiet noted that most existing prison medical personnel in the south needed to upgrade their skills. Robert Leggat, UNMIS Rule of Law Correction Advisory Coordinator, urged all participants to serve prisoners with standards befitting human dignity.

APPLYING TO UNMIS

As part of the UN system, UNMIS uses the so-called "open application" system to recruit both international and national staff. This means applications can be made at any time, without waiting for a vacancy. Since UNMIS has allocated 73 per cent of its posts to national staff, recruitment for these positions is ongoing.

In applying, a few simple rules should be followed. Most application errors, according to the Human Resources Unit, concern the "notorious" P-11 form, which takes the place of a CV. "Usually candidates send both the P-11 and their CV. But often the information on their P-11s is different from their CVs (due to different formats), and we have to check the applications again."

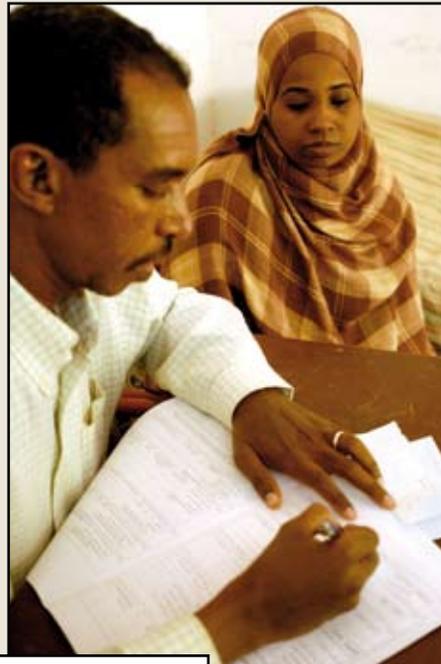
Candidates should send only a P-11 form. If they also wish to send CVs, they should ensure that both CV and P-11 contain the same information. Interested candidates can obtain P-11 forms from the internet by simply logging on to the UNMIS website (www.unmis.org), which operates in both English and Arabic.

UNMIS encourages applicants to submit their P-11s electronically at unmis-recruitmentgs@un.org for general services posts, unmis-recruitment@un.org for national professionals and eltaib@un.org for national UN volunteers.

Lacking internet access?

If internet access is difficult, more traditional means are available. Applicants can pass by UNMIS Khartoum Headquarters in Ebeid Khatim Street and ask for a copy of the P-11. From the beginning of May, a new service will be available, as a Human Resources Application Centre will be opening outside the mission gate. P-11 forms can be obtained there and an officer will explain in English or Arabic how to fill them in.

Post is also an option.



Candidates should send ONLY a P-11 form

Candidates can mail their applications to the Chief Civilian Personnel Office, UNMIS, Ebeid Khatim Street, P.O. Box 69, 11111 Khartoum, Sudan.

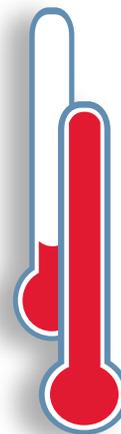
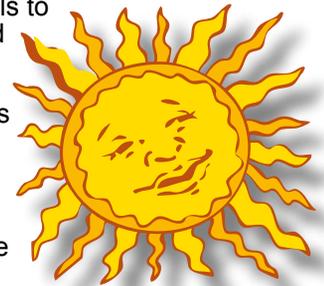
Applications are also accepted by hand delivery to Khartoum Headquarters, and to all mission field stations – namely, Juba, Malakal, Wau, Rumbek, Kadugli, Ed Damazin, Abyei and El Obeid.

ENGLISH needed

English is required for all positions related to administrative and substantive units of the mission. Once applications are reviewed and qualifications are met, candidates must take an English writing test. If the test is passed, an interview is scheduled, and the selection process continues.

COPING WITH THE HEAT

New arrivals to Sudan should be aware that it takes several weeks to become accustomed to the heat and humidity. Overexposure to the sun can cause burns and skin cancer. Overexertion may cause heat exhaustion, heat stroke, heat rash and heat cramps.



Heat exhaustion can lead to heatstroke, which is potentially fatal. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include severe thirst, nausea, rapid breathing, headache, high body temperature and increased sweating.

Heat stroke occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature and it rises dramatically. Symptoms include throbbing headache, dizziness and nausea, confusion, reddened dry skin, extremely high body temperature, breathing difficulty and decreased responsiveness.



What to do?

- Wear sunglasses or a wide-rimmed hat.
- Wear light (cotton or linen) or white, loose-fitting clothes.
- Apply sun screen (of at least SPF 15) to exposed body parts 15 minutes before exposure.
- Carry water at all times and drink at least two litres of it per day, even when you are when not thirsty.
- Eat small meals and eat more often.
- Avoid high protein foods, which increase metabolic heat.
- Avoid prolonged physical activity or perform it when temperatures are lower, during the early morning or evening.

