



UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

UNMIS

Media Monitoring Report 6 April, 2008

(By Public Information Office)

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[UN Chief says political process crucial to end Darfur crisis](#)

(Sudan Vision) The U.N. chief today said that security situation in the five year war-torn Darfur has deteriorated particularly in West Darfur. However the stressed on the need to accelerate the political settlement process to end this conflict.

Ban Ki-moon Some 4.27 million civilians, including 2.45 million internally displaced, continue to suffer. As a result of ongoing attacks by armed forces and groups, more than 100,000 civilians have been forced to flee from violence this year alone, at a rate of 1,000 per day.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged in a statement released on Friday with the presentation of his monthly report to the UN Security Council “all parties and stakeholders to immediately focus on the fundamental requirement for the protection of civilians and the establishment of sustainable peace and stability in Darfur.”

“A peacekeeping operation can be only effective when there is a peace to keep.” He further said.

Ban’s comments came after the U.S. presidential envoy for Darfur, Richard Williamson, sent him a letter urging him to speed up deployment of peacekeepers to Darfur and ensure that at least 3,600 new soldiers and police are there by June.

Ban Ki-Moon detailed in his 10 pages report to the Security Council the ongoing efforts to hasten the deployment of the 26000 hybrid peacekeeping force in Darfur.

He explained the delay by the ongoing Construction of the mission’s infrastructure which is hindered by the lack of sufficient military engineer units.

Also, he indicated that Sudanese government has still not provided UNAMID with the land it requires in El Geneina, Western Darfur. “This is already leading to logistical difficulties and will delay the deployment of troops and police to the area.” He added.

However, he said that the remainder of the battalion will complete its deployment on 15 May.

More than that he disclosed that Sudan had given the green light for the deployment of the Thai infantry battalion and the Nepalese forces

“They will be deployed once the Egyptian and Ethiopian battalions have arrived in Darfur.” Ban wrote in his monthly report.

The international body had insisted on the critical need for an infantry battalion from Thailand and a Special Forces unit from Nepal because they will be used as rapid intervention troops.

Despite his insistence on the importance of the political process to end the conflict, Ban Ki-Moon contented himself with an appeal to "all parties involved to immediately abandon the path of military confrontation, commit themselves to the political process.”

He also said that Geneva meeting on 17 and 18 March held by the UN-AU envoys to Darfur with the regional initiative countries agreed that security is the current priority in Darfur, and stressed that all possible efforts must be made to improve the security environment, and to encourage the parties to put an end to the violence.

Ban Ki-Moon didn't stop on the structure of the current joint mediation team and its future.

U.N. special envoy Jan Eliasson and his AU counterpart, Salim Ahmed Salim, whose joint leadership has come under fire, will soon be replaced by a single chief, said Sam Ibok, one of the veterans of Darfur peace mediation since Abuja.

In an effort to break the stalemate, future talks will focus on a short list of urgent issues, such as security, victim compensation and power-sharing, Ibok told the Los Angeles Times early this week.

[No peace in Darfur without security – UNAMID experts](#)

(ST) April 5, 2008 (EL FASHER) — Darfur peacekeeping mission experts on April 2 met to find the best way to restore security and build confidence in the war-torn region in order to create a conducive environment for a lasting peace.

Over 30 UN experts held a two-day closed doors meeting in the capital of North Darfur to discuss enhancing UNAMID's strategies and performance in the field, in light of its mandated role in support of the implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) and subsequent agreements.

Peace and Security experts insisted that any peace agreement cannot be implemented in an atmosphere of distrust and instability. Security and confidence building are prerequisites to creating an environment conducive of positive talks and sustainable reconciliation.

During the meeting the UNAMID official participating in the seminar had to identify functional strategies and tactics to address these issues and identify creative mechanisms for implementation, the joint peacekeeping mission said in a press statement received by Sudan Tribune.

The head of Darfur joint mission, Rodolphe Adada, told the meeting that "part of our task is to identify those areas of the DPA that hold no controversy, are broadly accepted and are seen to be beneficial to the people of Darfur."

Expert also tackled thematic aspects of the Darfur Peace Agreement, including security arrangements, the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultations, power and wealth sharing. Experts are also expected to explore the challenges UNAMID needs to overcome in order to play its part more effectively.

The splintering of rebel movements, the fact that the Ceasefire agreement is not in effect and the further instability caused by the war in Chad, are among the security challenges to the implementation of the agreement.

In this context, Adada remarked, "Security is, without doubt, the issue of greatest concern to the Darfurians ... UNAMID must deliver ... on the issue of security... and how we are to approach this challenge."

The joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping mission took over in January from a beleaguered AU force to try to stem the violence. But it only has about 9,000 troops and police on the ground, out of a total of the authorized 26,000.

Further Security situation has deteriorated in the region following inter-tribal clashes, rebel infighting and raids of government forces against rebel positions in West Darfur.

The fact that the international community and the peacekeeping mission agree on the need to establish security and stability on the ground goes with the demand for "conflict suspension" presented by the Sudan Liberation Movement led by Abdelwahid al-Nur.

In a series of separate meetings held in Geneva on 17 and 18 March between the AU-UN envoys to Darfur, the regional initiative countries, UN Security permanent members and the SLM leader Abdel-Wahid al-Nur, the parties agreed on the need to make security in Darfur a top priority issue before the resumption of peace talks.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

[EU criticizes Sudan for refusing to extradite war crimes suspects](#)

(ST) April 05, 2008 (BRUSSELS) — The European Union (EU) issued a statement this week condemning the Sudanese government for handing over war crimes suspects to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

“The EU expresses its profound dismay with the Government of Sudan’s continued failure to comply with its obligations under UNSC Resolution 1593 including its

refusal to arrest and surrender these men to the ICC for prosecution, much less allow the ICC to question them” the statement read.

“The EU once again calls on the Government of Sudan to cooperate unconditionally with the International Criminal Court and to surrender the two individuals for whom it issued arrest warrants”.

The judges of the ICC issued their first arrest warrants for suspects accused of war crimes in Sudan’s Darfur region in early May.

The warrants were issued for Ahmed Haroun, state minister for humanitarian affairs, and militia commander Ali Mohamed Ali Abdel-Rahman, also known as Ali Kushayb. Sudan has so far rejected handing over the two suspects.

The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) circulated a notice for the arrest of both suspects in mid-2007.

The UN Security Council (UNSC) which asked the ICC to investigate Darfur crimes under a Chapter VII mandate in resolution 1593 three years ago, appears reluctant to force Sudan’s compliance.

However, the EU threatened certain measures if they continue to block attempts to extradite Haroun and Kushayb.

“In the event of continued non-compliance with the terms of UNSC Resolution 1593, the EU will support appropriate further measures against those who bear responsibility for Sudan’s failure to cooperate with the ICC,” the EU said.

The prosecutor of the ICC Luis Moreno-Ocampo will brief the UNSC in June on the status of investigations and Sudan’s cooperation. He has already informed the council of Sudan’s non-compliance last December.

Ocampo has expressed his frustration with lack of pressure on Sudan by world community to hand over suspects. He also revealed that he has been approached by a number of countries suggesting that he should try and indict “lower level perpetrators, easier to arrest than Ministers or powerful militia leaders”.

Sudan has not ratified the Rome Statute, but the UN Security Council triggered the provisions under the Statute that enables it to refer situations in non-State parties to the world court if it deems that it is a threat to international peace and security.

International experts estimate 200,000 people have died in the conflict. The Sudanese government says 9,000 people have been killed.

[Foreign powers plan to de-stabilize Sudan - Vice President Taha](#)

(ST) April 5, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Sudan’s Second Vice-President Ali Osman Taha warned the political parties that foreign powers he did not name are planning to de-stabilize the country during the next year general elections.

Taha said in a political meeting in the eastern Sudan city of Gadarif on Friday that foreign intelligence and organizations are planning to turn the coming general election to boiler to feed political conflicts.

He urged the political parties to agree a strategic national deal for the nation-building through development projects and housing for the renaissance of the citizen, praising the efforts of the government to establish a tycoon homeland where all find themselves.

Taha said that Western powers that used to rely on authoritarian and dictatorial regimes in Latin America, Africa and the Arab world began moving to raise the slogan of democracy and good governance.

He added "They want democracy without political stability it even came across a political programme supported by a national will," pointing out that democracy and good governance advocated by the West aimed at creating political battles and conflict that leads to the destabilization of the country.

Taha called to face this plot through national reconciliation in the country and across inclusive national dialogue involving all segments of society to agree on national principles.

The Second Vice-President has been largely marginalized in recent years following a power struggle within the ruling National Congress Party (NCP). Taha has maintained a low profile ever since.

According to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, free presidential and parliamentary elections have to be held in 2009. The electoral law is still under discussion between the two peace partners.

[Sudanese army says SPLA closed Abyei road](#)

(ST) April 5, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Northern Sudan army renewed its accusations to the southern Sudan army of violating a peace deal signed in 2005. Today Khartoum said that SPLA troops closed the main road to the disputed Abyei.

Brigadier Osman Mohamed Al Aghbash, the spokesperson of Sudan Armed Forces said on Saturday that troops from the Sudan People's Liberation Army were deployed 5km north of Abyei and closed the main road to Abyei.

The SPLA force moved from Al Ni'am camp, northern west Abyei, Al-Aghbash indicated.

He pointed out that SPLA troops ambushed a passenger bus and looted passengers' properties.

He added that the Joint Control Commission had been notified of the violations and the joint board decided to conduct joint patrol to visit the site where SPLA troops are deployed.

Al-Aghbash said that this incident is a negative indicator and clearly breaches the security arrangements in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

The SPLA and the SAF trade accusations of troops build-up.

Further the northern Sudan ruling the National Congress Party demands the removal of a SPLM administration led by Edward Lino.

Since the signing of the CPA, Abyei has remained without any government or official status after the northern National Congress Party (NCP) rejected the borders outlined by an independent commission.

Censorship of Sudan's media threatens elections - SPLM

(ST) April 5, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Control of Sudan's media by the dominant National Congress Party is "poisoning" hopes for a free political process in the run up to the first democratic elections in more than 20 years, the junior partner in government said on Saturday.

The former southern rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) joined a national coalition government following a 2005 north-south peace deal which ended Africa's longest civil war and paved the way for democratic transformation with elections due next year.

However, SPLM Deputy Secretary-General Yasir Arman told Reuters three years since the accord the NCP had stalled new laws to govern the media, still censored the printed press and had total control over state television and radio paid for with tax money.

Arman said under these circumstances it would be difficult to hold truly fair elections

"How do you go to the elections with the media controlled by the state? There will be no equal opportunities," he said.

NCP officials were not immediately available to comment.

While Sudan's printed press is freer than in other Middle Eastern countries with sporadic censorship, television and radio remain firmly in the NCP's grip.

Critics, however, often complain of a link between advertising by state companies in print media and editorial content.

"If you are not pro-NCP you will not be given an advertisement which is the main source of funding news print media," he said. "They are poisoning the environment of democratic transformation."

Arman said some of the NCP controlled newspapers played a "destructive role" by writing false stories which incited religious and ethnic hatred.

"These are issues at the heart of the (democratic) transformation," he said.

"I believe there are certain quarters in the NCP who would like to keep the status quo of yesterday (who) are not willing to accept the new realities and build a new society.

Arman said the SPLM were also to blame for not making it a priority to develop their own strong media structures.

"It is key to democratisation that the SPLM take a major role in building parallel media institutions which respect professionalism and are available to everyone to express their views."

Sudan's north-south civil war broadly pitted the Islamist Khartoum government against the mainly Christian and animist southern rebels. The conflict, which claimed 2 million lives, was complicated by oil, ethnicity and ideology.

[Sudan lashes out at UN over accusation of census money short](#)

(ST) April 4, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — A Sudanese official denied the accuracy of statements made by a UN adviser saying that Khartoum did not release money needed to pay census workers.

Sudanese government has not released \$13 million in funds needed to pay those carrying out the Fifth Sudan Population and Housing Census. Sudan has "only released \$5 million" Herbert Kandeh, the chief U.N. technical adviser to the census, said in an interview with BBC and Reuters last week.

The head of Sudan's census and general manger of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Yassin al-Haj Abdin rejected the UN official allegations. He reiterated the commitment of Sudanese government to disburse the pledged money for the census.

In a speech at the launch of a media campaign for the fifth census in Khartoum state on Thursday, Abdin said that the United Nations was not the financial manager of the CBS.

He expressed surprise at the silence of the UN on its financial obligations for 2008.

Abdin explained that some organizations had requested that the government pays its 2008 financial commitments in advance, a matter indicating that these organizations did not have confidence in the government's abidance.

He announced that he had agreed with the ministry of finance on a cash flow that would correspond to the dates for monetary requirements and that the UN had nothing to do with these arrangements.

He called on all organizations which he said "stuck their noses" into things that did not concern them regarding the census, to stop this useless talk.

The census is due to start on April 15 and for two weeks will employ around 60,000 people throughout the million square mile nation to count the number of people, with questions on whether they are northern or southern.

North DDR Commission, IDB strike minor project deal

(Sudan Vision) North Sudan DDR Commission and the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) signed an agreement for funding minor projects for the benefit of soldiers demobilized from the armed forces.

The agreement provides for 500 projects, dedicated to soldier handicapped by war, to be launched as of the coming April.. Staff Brig. Abdulkarim Faraj had inked the agreement on behalf of the Armed Forces while IDB was represented by its General Manager Ahmed Mohammed Ali.

Last week, the Commission had signed another agreement with Raghad Agricultural Society for investment in several agrarian schemes in West Omdurman, to be dedicated to the persons displaced from the armed and popular forces

Lino adopting foreign agenda, prominent Abyei figure

(Sudan Vision) Abyei Liberation Front (ALF) criticized the recent visit made to Abyei by US Charge d'Affaires, Alberto Fernandez and UNSG Representative Ashraf Qazi and their meeting with Edward Lino. ALF Chairman, Mohammed Al-Ansari told Sudan Vision that the United States is the direct cause of the present development in Abyei and that the visit of the two officials comes within their efforts to prolong that development, affirming that Edward Lino is carrying out foreign agenda.

"We cannot hope for a solution from Washington which is the direct cause of what is now happening in Abyei," Al-Ansari said, affirming that the previous disorder that took place in Abyei will not be repeated. He dismissed Lino's recent threats as ineffectual and said they are committed to calming down the situation in the region in response to a request made by NCP. "This does not mean that we are unaware of what is going on in the region," he reiterated, noting that the situation is calm between the Messiriya and Dinka, though SPLA has mobilized forces in the southern area of Bahr-al-Arab in Jingai and Faribab regions, 15 km from Abyei, he added.

Al-Ansari stressed that the Front will stand by the government in its pursuit for a peaceful solution and expressed his appreciation for the statements made by NCP leading members on the step taken by Lino, which, he said, clearly indicates that NCP leaders are seeking to establish peaceful co-existence among citizens. He underlined that social relations between Messeriya and Dinka are presently quite normal, adding that "our basic problem is with SPLM and SPLA."

National Plan of North and South Sudan DDR Commissions approved

Khartoum, April 5 (SUNA) - The national plan on the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of the North and South Sudan DDR Commissions and the related policies have been approved.

Executive Secretary of the National Council on DDR Coordination, Brig. Osman Nuri pointed out in a statement to SUNA that the Preparatory Technical Committee is making arrangements for the coming Round Table Conference between the

government and the United Nations in Khartoum on issues pertinent to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes prior to submitting them to the donors conference that is to be convened in Paris end of current April on support to peace in Sudan.

[SAF accuses SPLA of violating CPA, Messeriya threaten to declare Jihad in Abyei \(Al-Rai Al-Aam\)](#)

(Al-Rai Al-Aam) SAF accused SPLA of violating security arrangements set out in the CPA and described the violations as negative indication that run counter to the agreement.

Meanwhile the Messeriya tribe threatened to declare Jihad in Abyei in the wake of the SPLM unilateral appointment of administration in Abyei.

SAF spokesperson, Brig. Osman Mohamed Al-Aqbash, said in a new development of SPLA's violation of the CPA a force from SPLA moved from Al-Naam camp yesterday to a site 15 kms northwest of Abyei and have blocked the main road and deployed in an area 5 km north of Abyei.

The spokesperson said the force stopped a minibus traveling on the road and looted its load.

He said the joint monitoring committee was notified about these violations and it held an emergency meeting and decided to undertake joint patrol to visit the areas of deployment of this force.

[Vice President Taha accuses SPLM of violating rights of Muslims in southern Sudan](#)

(Al-Sahafa) the Vice President, Ali Osman Taha, has accused the SPLM of violating rights of northern and southern Muslims which, he described, as a breach of the constitution and the CPA.

Mr. Taha who made the statement while addressing yesterday the General Convention of NCP in Gedaref State, has criticized the harassment of northern and southern Muslims in southern Sudan and called on GoSS to respect the Constitution, CPA, treat Muslims equally and safeguard the rights enshrined in the constitution and the law.

[Foreign Office spokesperson: There is no room for NATO in Darfur peacekeeping](#)

(Al-Khartoum) The Government of Sudan made it very clear that there would be no room for NATO to assist peacekeeping operation in Darfur.

Foreign Office spokesperson, Mr. Ali Al-Sadiq said there would be no space for NATO in Darfur peacekeeping operation.

He said the reference for handling Darfur would be resolution 1769 and no body, apart from AU, was authorized to handle Darfur issue.

He hoped that NATO would be able to keep peace in Afghanistan.

[Resolution of Abyei crisis lies in the hands of the two partners](#)

(Al-Sudani) The United States of America declared there was no alternative for CPA parties to resolve Abyei except Abyei protocol or compromise between NCP and SPLM.

The US Charge d’Affaires, Alberto Fernandez, has described his visit to Abyei as useful and interesting adding that he had met with Messeriya and Dinka leaders in Abyei and Muglad besides a meeting with Edward Lino and NCP representative Zacharia Atim.

He said he had also had meetings with SAF, NISS, and UN besides local community for discussion on the crisis in the area.

He said his country supported resolution of the crisis between the two partners on the basis of the references contained in the CPA .

He has denied that his country had launched any initiative in this regard adding that his country was seeking to resolve the issue within the framework of dialogue.

With regard to humanitarian assistance to the population of Abyei, he said USAID would increase assistances to that area.

[Eliasson and Salim are due in Khartoum today to push the peace process](#)

(Al-Ayyam) The two Special Envoys, Mr. Eliasson and Mr. Salim are expected to arrive in Khartoum today on seven-day visit for meeting with Government officials, Senior Presidential Assistant Minnawi and the political parties to push Darfur peace process forward.

AU chief negotiator told Al-Ayyam that the two envoys would conduct intensive consultations to push the peace process forward.

He said the two envoys would also meet with Darfur movement leaders, civil society and political parties.

[Armed Forces Spokesman refutes claims on entry of Armed Forces troops in Abiyei Area](#)

Khartoum, April 4 (SUNA)- Spokesman of the Armed Forces, Brig. Dr. Osman Mohamed Ahmed Al-Agbash, has described as false the claims on entry of Armed Forces' troops in Abiyei area. He said in a press statement to SUNA that the currently

existing forces in Abiyei area belong to the 31st battalion of the Armed Forces which returned to their positions after performing tasks outside the area with the knowledge of the United Nations and the Joint Military Committee. Brig. Al-Agbash said that like such false reports were intended to undermine the security and stability at the area and to harm the mutual confidence between the two partners.

[Association for Political Parties and Organizations calls for commitment to Comprehensive Peace Agreement](#)

Khartoum, April 4 (SUNA) - The Association for Political Parties and Organizations has called on the two partners to abide to the text and spirit of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and to implement the items of Abiye Protocol and referring any issues relevant to Abiyei to the Presidency. The association warned from the risk that might ensue from violation of the peace agreement and return to the war square. The association's Chairman, Abboud Jabir, called on Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) to be committed to Abiyei Protocol toward guaranteeing the political and social stability at Abiyei area till holding of the referendum on the future of Abiye by the end of the interim period. He also called on the citizens of Abiyei to stick to self-restraint and to refrain from any acts that would lead to reoccurrence of tragedy in the area and to adhere to the method of peaceful co-existence that has been prevalent in Abiye area. Jabir called for a sooner demarcation of the border and normalization of the situation in the north and the south and permanence of stability at the area.

GoSS

[Bentiu fighting erupts with casualty, injuries \(Sudan Tribune\)](#)

(Sudan Tribune) Fighting over the boundary between Rbkonana and Chit Counties in United State has erupted again for the second time with two tribal groups both claiming ancestral rights. One person died and another 23 were injured in the fighting.

“The attack was instigated as a revenge by the same community whose son had been stabbed to death last year,” an eyewitness told Sudan Tribune by phone. The argument is between the Leek Nuer of Rubkoana Country and the Jikany Nuer of Guit, he said.

“I was deeply disappointed for this second incident which left many of my people wounded and no further improvements have been made since the crisis erupted,” said Rubkona’s county commissioner.

Darfur

[South Darfur State Affirms Readiness to Conduct Population Census \(SUNA\)](#)

Khartoum, April 5 (SUNA) - South Darfur State has affirmed its readiness to conduct the Fifth Population Census at the mid of current April. Following his return from a field tour to Darfur states, Chairman of Transport and Communications Department at the National Population Census Committee, Brig. Yousuf Abdel-Fatah said in statement to SUNA that he discussed with the government of South Darfur State the

arrangements concerning transport and provision of sufficient fuel. He added that all requirements were provided.

Miscellaneous

[Government of Japan Contributes towards Mine Action in Sudan \(Press release by United Nations Mine Action Office, Khartoum Sudan, 4 April 2008\)](#)

The Government of Japan has recently disbursed 997,000,000 Japanese Yen (equivalent to approximately US\$ 9,774,500) for mine action activities to contribute to conflict prevention and peace-building in the Republic of Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of the Sudan. The donation provided through the United Nations Mine Action Service will allocate approximately US\$6.4 million towards mine action projects for 18 months, under the coordination of the United Nations Mine Action Office (UNMAO) in Sudan.

Sudan's landmine problem is a legacy of years of civil war. While landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) continue to kill and maim people in Sudan every year, they also continue to hamper delivery of humanitarian aid, the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), implementation of humanitarian and development projects, and ultimately hinder the smooth implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

The UN estimates that 19 of the Sudan's 25 states have been affected by landmines and/or ERW, but the true extent and impact of Sudan's landmine problem remains unknown. UNMAO has records for over 1,500 dangerous areas throughout the country that still need to be cleared. Many roads need to be surveyed and cleared in order to allow refugees and IDPs to go back to their own communities, as well as to allow key recovery and development projects being implemented. The ongoing conflict in Darfur poses an additional ERW threat.

Accomplishments in mine action in Sudan to date include the clearance of 36 million m² of land, over 20,000 km of roads assessed and re-opened through assessment, 2,700 km of road cleared of mines and re-opened, and the safe destruction of 5,725 anti-personnel mines and 2,456 anti-tank mines. Under the overall coordination of UNICEF, over 2 million Sudanese people have received mine risk education, raising their awareness and knowledge of landmines and how to reduce the risk of injury. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is providing technical assistance and support to enable the national authorities to coordinate and implement mine action operations and meet their obligations under the Mine Ban convention. These activities have been undertaken in partnership with national mine action agencies including the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), the South Sudan Demining Commission (SSDC) and national and international organizations.

The contribution from the government of Japan will allow for emergency survey and clearance activities in the South Kordofan and Jonglei and Upper Nile States in Southern Sudan, where high mine/UXO contaminations are suspected and also large number of return of refugees and IDPs are expected. Additionally, this project

provides for Mine Risk Education (MRE) in order to reduce injuries and casualties related to landmines and ERW, especially among returnees and children.

The Government of Japan has been a strong supporter of Mine Action Programs in Sudan, by disbursing approximately US\$45 million of assistance to UN agencies, UNMIS and NGOs, including grassroots assistance funding to support NGOs working in mine action in Sudan, and provision of demining equipment to UNMIS peacekeeping demining teams.