



UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

UNMIS

Media Monitoring Report 30.3.2008

(By Public Information Office)

NOTE: Reproduction here does not mean that the UNMIS PIO can vouch for the accuracy or veracity of the contents, nor does this report reflect the views of the United Nations Mission in Sudan. Furthermore, international copyright exists on some materials and this summary should not be disseminated beyond the intended list of recipients.

IN THE NEWS TODAY:➤ **UN/ Agencies**

- WFP air service in Sudan get one-month reprieve (ST)
- UNAMID Adada tells World Churches Darfur force will help to resume peace talks (ST)
- UN Human Rights Council affirms improvement of human rights situation in Sudan (Sudan Vision)

➤ **GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)**

- Edward Lino: SPLM wants to administer Abyei without interference from any party (Rai Al-Shaab)
- China delivers more advanced weapons to Sudan (ST)
- Australia accuses Sudan of obstructing peacekeepers in Darfur (ST)
- Sudan's Bashir paints rosy picture of humanitarian situation in Darfur (ST)
- US to restore ties with Sudan (The Citizen)
- President Al-Bashir addresses Arab Summit, says Sudan will spare no efforts to bring the views of the Arab states closer together

➤ **GoSS**

- SPLM official denies Secretary general involvement in Akol assassination attempt (ST)

➤ **Darfur**

- UNAMID prepares for possible attack against UN and personnel in Darfur (Al-Khartoum)
- 30 persons killed and wounded in clashes between Tarjam and Abala at a site 15 km southwest of Nyala, South Darfur (Al-Sahafa)
- Darfur rebel JEM calls for boycott of Sudan census and elections (ST)
- Ethiopia begins logistical deployment to Darfur hybrid force (ST)

➤ **Miscellaneous**

Highlights

UN/ Agencies

[WFP air service in Sudan get one-month reprieve](#)

(ST) March 29, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The UN World Food Programme air operations in Sudan and Darfur particularly won a temporary reprieve for one month from imminent closure thanks to generous donations totalling more than US\$6 million, the agency announced on Friday.

In early March WFP warned that by the end of March it would be forced to ground the helicopters and aeroplanes that carry crucial supplies and relief workers to remote parts of Darfur because no confirmed donations had arrived to its US\$77 million budget this year. It also said that rampant banditry is delaying vital food deliveries to Darfur.

The UN WFP-Humanitarian Air Service (WFP-HAS) will be able to keep flying for another month, until 30 April, because four donors responded quickly to a recent announcement that the air operation would be grounded by 31 March due to lack of funds.

The WFP received US\$6.24 million from the European Commission (US\$4.5 million), Ireland (US\$740,000), the UN Common Humanitarian Fund, US\$500,000 and US\$500,000 from Not On Our Watch — founded by Hollywood actors George Clooney, Don Cheadle, Matt Damon, Brad Pitt, producer Jerry Weintraub and civil rights lawyer David Pressman — to finance the delivery of humanitarian aid by aircrafts.

"We are hoping that more funds will come in, because there is a big gap between the US\$6 million we have now and the US\$77 million that we need this year," said Kenro Oshidari, WFP Representative in Sudan, adding that the air service is especially vital amid deteriorating security on the roads.

The helicopters are more important than ever because insecurity and banditry mean that many roads are 'no go' for humanitarian workers. Just this week, WFP announced that three drivers of WFP-contracted trucks had been murdered recently in Sudan.

An average of 8,000 relief workers in Darfur, who provide essential food assistance, water and healthcare services, use WFP-HAS each month. This number includes 3,000 passengers on the six helicopters travelling to the most remote parts of Darfur.

More than half of WFP-HAS passengers work for non-governmental organizations and charities, while others work for UN humanitarian agencies such as WFP, UNICEF the World Health Organization and others.

[UNAMID Adada tells World Churches Darfur force will help to resume peace talks](#)

(ST) March 28, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The Chief of Darfur joint mission told a visiting delegation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) that the full deployment of Darfur peacekeeping troops would help to create conducive conditions to resume peace talks.

The Geneva-based WCC delegation, currently visiting Sudan, led by Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, the Council's Secretary-General, comprises a number of key members including WCC Deputy Secretary-General for Africa's Affairs Rev. Dr Simon Dossou, and Rev. Dr William J. Shaw, president of the US National Baptist Convention.

Briefing on Friday March 28 the WCC delegation, The UN/AU Joint Special Representative for Darfur, Rodolphe Adada, said that the improvement of the security situation on the ground will create a climate conducive to the resumption of the peace talks and the realization of comprehensive peace.

With 26000 multinational troops the UNAMID is the largest peacekeeping mission in the history of the UN. It is jointly run by the United Nations and the African Union. However there are only 9000 deployed troops and by the end of this month their number will rise to 12000 with the expected first batches from Ethiopian and Egyptian troops.

Adada shed light on the multi-faceted nature of the Darfur crisis, highlighting aspects relating to the joint operation. He explained that all efforts are now exerted to ensure that additional forces join UNAMID in the near future, thus, impacting positively on overall security and the protection of civilians in the region.

He also referred to UNAMID's ongoing efforts to build reliable channels of communication with civil society actors in Darfur. He explained that, by empowering civil society to effectively represent its constituents on the negotiation table, the momentum and durability of the peace process will be strengthened.

The visiting delegation was accompanied by high-level officials representing the Sudanese Council of Churches.

WCC's Secretary-General, Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, expressed readiness to support UNAMID fulfill its mandate and restore security and stability in Darfur, citing the Council's contributions to humanitarian assistance in the region and the role it played in support of the Naivasha peace process.

He stated that the Council's current visit to Sudan targets, among other things, acquiring first-hand knowledge of the challenges and difficulties facing the various components of the peace process and progress made in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Moreover, he expressed the Council's willingness to contribute to the healing and reconciliation process in Darfur.

The delegation had met, earlier, with Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the Darfur-Darfur-Consultations, Mr. Abdul Mohammed, and Deputy Head of the Darfur Peace Agreement Implementation team, Mr. Boubou Niang.

[UN Human Rights Council affirms improvement of human rights situation in Sudan](#)

(Sudan Vision) The UN Human Rights Council has unanimously approved a draft resolution on the human rights situation in Sudan, which referred to the improvement in the human rights situation in the country on the light of the positive developments in Darfur.

The resolution was considered objective and came far away from politicization and selectivity. The draft resolution was sponsored by the African Group through consultation and contacts with the European Group and the backing of Russia, China and Cuba. The draft resolution stated that the human rights situation conditions are improving in Darfur, referring to the cooperation of Sudan government with the United Nations concerning the deployment of the hybrid operation in Darfur. The resolution also pointed to the cooperation between Sudan and the international bodies which are concerned with human rights. The draft resolution called on Sudan government to work for protection of the civilians from humanitarian violations. It also urged all parties to sit together in the negotiation table toward putting an end to the humanitarian violations that result from the conflict in Darfur. The draft resolution was suggested by Egypt on behalf of the African member states at the UN Human Rights Council. Meanwhile, deputy envoy of Sudan mission to the United Nations in Geneva, Ambassador Omer Dahab, said that the UN Human Rights Council acknowledged the improvement in the situation of human rights in Darfur and the steps adopted by Sudan government in this regard.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Edward Lino: SPLM wants to administer Abyei without interference from any party (

(Rai Al-Shaab) The visit of SPLM leader, Edward Lino, to Abyei has increased tension amid some Messeriya tribes who have considered the visit as a challenge posed by SPLM. They have also considered Lino's visit as an occupation of the area and an attempt to impose fait accompli.

A group of Messeriya warned that the visit might lead to renewal of conflict in the area particularly that the issue of who should take over as Abyei Administrator was still not resolved.

Mr. Lino has denied that his visit to the Abyei area was defiance or disregard of agreements saying that he had just assumed his political functions conferred on him by SPLM.

Mr. Lino explained that SPLM wants to administer Abyei without interference from any party.

China delivers more advanced weapons to Sudan

(ST) March 28, 2008 (HONG KONG) — China has shipped its latest-version FN-6 portable ground-to-air missiles to Sudan, video footage of that country's 2007 Independence Day military parade has revealed. These are the most advanced ground-to-air missiles China has introduced to the international market, and the footage is the first evidence that the missiles have actually been exported.

The FN-6, referred to internally by the People's Liberation Army as the HY-6, is equipped with an all-digital infrared seeker. It has a maximum range of 5 kilometers (just over 3 miles), maximum firing latitude of 4 kilometers (2.5 miles), and a response time of 10 seconds. The total weight of the system is 16 kilograms (35 pounds), its flight speed is 600 meters per second (1,342 miles per hour) and maximum maneuverability is 18G.

Recent high-resolution satellite photos also show that Sudan's Wadi Sayyidna Air Force Base is fielded with A-5S attackers and K-8 trainers made by China's Nanhang Aircraft Company. The new satellite images also show that there are two A-5S attackers, one F-7 fighter and one K-8 trainer fielded at the airport. Of course there would be other aircraft anchored inside the hangars, unrevealed by the photographs.

It can now be concluded that the mainstay combat aircraft of the Sudanese Air Force are from China. There has been speculation for quite some time that the Sudanese Air Force was armed with Chinese-made A-5S attackers, but this report has never been confirmed by the Sudanese government or the Chinese authorities. A careful analysis of these images confirms that China has indeed for the first time exported to Northern Africa its latest upgraded attacker.

The A-5S aircraft in Sudan have been coated with the latest camouflage paint, and a total of eight fighter aircraft hangars have been built at the Wadi Sayyidna Air Force Base. Each aircraft hangar can accommodate two to four fighters or attackers, and another eight helicopter hangars have also been constructed at the same airport.

In addition, the satellite photos show that at least nine F-7/MiG-21 and three F-6 fighters have been abandoned at the airport. Two MiG-29s were also found fielded at the same airport, but a source from the Russian military industry says that these fighters were delivered before 2003. Since 2003, the Russian government has prohibited the export of weapons to Sudan.

The A-5 has evolved from the Chinese-made MiG-19 fighter and has undergone new upgrades since 2005. The latest variant of the A-5 is called the A-5G.

It was in 2005 that China and Sudan reached a whole package of military cooperation agreements. These included the sales of at least two A-5 attackers and six K-8 trainers to the Sudanese Air Force, as well as the latest-version T-92 infantry fighting vehicles and T-96 main battle tanks to the Sudanese Army. The best combat units of China's PLA Army did not receive this equipment until after 2000.

The value of the whole 2005 military deal was US\$80 million. In the same year, Sudan exported to China 6.6 million tons of crude oil.

The A-5's fuselage is about 25 percent longer than that of the MiG-19. The air intakes are moved from the nose section to the two sides of the fuselage, and the internal fuel tank is redesigned, with a 70 percent greater fuel capacity than that of the MiG-19.

The main equipment fitted on the A-5 includes two 23-millimeter guns, two PL-5 air-to-air missiles, and four 250-kilogram (550-pound) bombs. The attacker has a maximum speed of M1.2 (913 miles per hour) combat radius of 210 kilometers (130 miles) — 1 kilometer Hi-Low-Hi — and a maximum ammunition load of 2,000 kilograms (4,400 pounds).

(ST) Australia accuses Sudan of obstructing peacekeepers in Darfur

March 29, 2008 (UNITED NATIONS) — Australia's new prime minister on Saturday accused Sudan's government of obstructing deployment of a U.N.-African Union peacekeeping force to help end the five-year conflict in Darfur.

At a news conference after meeting with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Kevin Rudd called Darfur "a continuing humanitarian tragedy" and said that action by the international community "is currently being frustrated still by the government of Sudan."

"And our government is of the view that these matters soon need to be brought back to the U.N. Security Council so that the government of Sudan can be held properly to account for its continued obstruction," he said.

More than 200,000 have died in Sudan's Darfur region and 2.5 million have fled to refugee camps since 2003, when local ethnic African rebels took arms against the Arab-dominated central government, accusing it of discrimination. Sudan denies backing the janjaweed militia of Arab nomads accused of the worst atrocities in the conflict.

The Sudanese government has demanded that the 26,000-strong AU-U.N. force for Darfur comprise almost entirely African contingents. While there are Chinese engineers, Khartoum has refused to approve troops from Nepal and Thailand.

Rudd said on Saturday that he had agreed to send nine military officers to assist with preparations for the deployment of the force in Darfur, the same number as Britain and Canada. He also announced that Australia would be providing \$4.58 million in humanitarian aid to Darfur.

"The government of Sudan generally has not welcomed any more substantial military commitments than that from Western powers. I regard that as unfortunate, but that is the reality," Rudd said.

The Australian prime minister flew to New York from Washington, where he met Friday with President Bush. The two leaders played down signs that Rudd has distanced his government from some of the pro-U.S. policies of his immediate predecessor, John Howard.

Bush said he understood Rudd's decision to withdraw Australia's combat troops from Iraq and praised Rudd's commitment to the fight in Afghanistan. The leaders also tried to strike a delicate balance on China, criticizing Beijing's crackdown on Tibetan protesters without alienating a crucial economic and political partner.

Rudd will visit China before returning to Australia and he was asked whether his criticism Friday of the country's human rights abuses in Tibet would have an impact.

"I've said from day one there are human rights abuses," he replied. "I believe the right course of action is for the government of China to exercise restraint."

"It's important for the Chinese through their intermediaries to engage with the Dalai Lama and his intermediaries. I think that would be a right and useful way ahead," Rudd said.

Rudd also announced Saturday that Australia will seek a seat on the U.N. Security Council for 2013-2014 and intends to "run like fury."

Australia last served a two-year term on the U.N.'s most powerful body in 1986, he said, and "I think 30 years is a fair enough old wait between drinks." He said he expected a difficult race because there are already two candidates for the Western seat - Finland and Luxembourg - and there will likely be more.

Sudan's Bashir paints rosy picture of humanitarian situation in Darfur

(ST) March 29, 2008 (DAMASCUS) — Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on Saturday painted a rosy picture of the humanitarian situation in Darfur saying that Darfur displaced have started voluntarily to regain their villages.

Addressing the opening session of Arab summit in the Syrian capital al-Bashir said more than 350 thousand IDPs have returned to their villages. He pointed out that the Sudanese government is now working to enforce the reconstruction programme and the return of displaced persons.

He further said that the government has enlarged the circle of basic services and development projects in stable areas that include most of Darfur region.

The Sudanese president also praised Arab the convening of the Arab Conference to support and address the humanitarian situation in Darfur and applaud Arab generous pledges.

"We have begun to see some of it reality on the ground a matter that stimulates the voluntary return of displaced persons to their villages, which have already begun and exceeded more than 350 thousand returnees." Al-Bashir said

At the end of February the UN refugee agency said that more than 13,000 Sudanese have fled to a remote area of Chad following the new wave of attacks by the Sudanese army in West Darfur.

The UNHCR said Chad's camps already house 240,000 people uprooted by the five-year conflict in Darfur, in which the Sudanese Government and militias are fighting rebel factions and in which over 200,000 people, mainly non-combatants, have died.

He also announced that Sudan is poised to receive two thousand Palestinian refugees trapped on the Syrian-Iraqi border. He underlined that his government is committed to the Palestinian cause and intends to "contribute to the reduction of the suffering of our Palestinian brothers."

The Sudanese President further condemned the republication of a cartoon of the Prophet Mohammed in Danish newspapers and called for a charter to guarantee respect for religions. He called for "a legally binding international charter to guarantee the respect of religions and beliefs to all the peoples of the world."

[US to restore ties with Sudan](#)

(The Citizen) The US is offering to gradually normalize relations with Sudan if the government in Khartoum settles issues such as the Darfur crisis and carries out elections next year, US and Sudanese diplomats said Friday.

Sudan would have to remove obstacles to the deployment of a UN led peacekeeping force, stop violence against civilians in Darfur, release US shipping containers stuck in customs and carry out the CPA between North and South Sudan, including elections in 2009, officials said.

Sudan's ambassador to the United Nations, Abdalmahmood Abdalhalee, called it "a strategic shift," made possible by his government's "exemplary" cooperation on terrorism matters.

President Al-Bashir addresses Arab Summit, says Sudan will spare no efforts to bring the views of the Arab states closer together

Damascus, March 29 (SUNA) - President of the Republic Field Marshal Omer Al-Bashir has affirmed that Sudan will spare no efforts to bring the views of the Arab states closer together, calling for a positive approach for ending differences between the Arab countries to reach a common understanding to solve the crises facing the Arab world. Addressing the opening session of the Arab Summit in Damascus Saturday, President Al-Bashir called for unification of Arab ranks to confront the challenges and threat facing the Arab world, noting that holding of the Arab summit regularly is one of the biggest accomplishments in the process of the joint Arab work. President Al-Bashir added in his address that attempts by some countries of the world and their work for realizing their narrow interests reflected negatively on the situations in the Arab world especially in Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq and Somalia by attempting to internationalize the issues of the area. President Al-Bashir pointed out that the Palestinian issue has continued to remain as the main question of the Arab world, referring to the continuation of the oppressive and expansionist policies of Israel of building of the racist separation wall and what is going on in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, calling on all Palestinian factions to unite to enable the Arab world to unite its efforts through the Arab League and in the regional and international forums to end the Israeli occupation. Meanwhile, President Al-Bashir said efforts continued in Sudan internally, regionally and internationally to boost peace and stability in Darfur like what happened in the southern and eastern parts of the country, pointing out that the government participated in all rounds of negotiations and dialogue, declared cease-fire unilaterally and agreed on the joint operation of the United Nations and the African Union besides implementing development and services projects and programmes for rehabilitation and return of the displaced people, lauding the initiative of the Arab states of holding a conference for supporting the humanitarian situations in Darfur. President Al-Bashir said that insults renewed to the Arab and Islamic nation through the cartoons insulting the Prophet Peace Be Upon Him, a matter that constitutes an insult to all Islamic values. President Al-Bashir called for formulating an international charter to respect the religious beliefs of all peoples of the world a matter that boost the dialogue of the civilizations.

GoSS

[SPLM official denies Secretary general involvement in Akol assassination attempt](#)

(ST) March 29, 2008 (JUBA) — The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Secretary General Pagan Amum was not involved in the alleged assassination plot of the Sudan's former foreign minister Lam Akol that left three people dead in the Upper Nile state, a senior official at the Southern movement said.

The deputy Secretary General Ann Itto of the SPLM denied reports that Amum was involved "in the conspiracy to assassinate Comrade Lam Akol Ajawin" which took place last week.

Itto said the incident which occurred along Panika road, 15 miles from Malakal capital of Upper Nile state, was carried out by cattle rustlers who instantly shot dead three occupants of the vehicles while Akol was in Malakal town.

The SPLM Deputy Secretary further revealed that the cattle rustlers had earlier conducted a raid and escaped with many heads of cattle's moving towards Nadia and the driver was inform but he did not heed to peoples' advices.

As the car of former minister and member of SPLM Interim Political Bureau was coming from Malakal town, it was ambushed by raiders at 6.00 pm who opened fire and killing three occupants and injuring one.

Asked why it has taken long for SPLM to counter what she termed degrading rumors, Ann Itto said SPLM "did not expect southern Sudanese to believe such unfounded and fabricated stories aimed at creating fears, enmity and dividing the great leaders of southern Sudan who worked tirelessly for realization of the CPA".

Itto accused some political parties of being behind creating insecurity "in order to undermine the implementation of the CPA" but declined to name them. She called on all Sudanese particularly those in the south to love and respect each other views and opinion because SPLM as a governing party "stand for democratization of its structure from grassroots to the top".

In response to questions whether there were political differences between Akol and Amum who are both from the same state and county, Itto said that political differences are normal but the important thing is that SPLM is one party and therefore its members "are not expected to plot against each other".

She said the SPLM had talked to the two strong leaders from Upper Nile state and both agreed that there was no animosity between them since they are members of the SPLM Interim political Bureau.

Itto noted that other political parties cause problems in Malakal as they envied the two greater SPLM leaders.

Darfur

[UNAMID prepares for possible attack against UN and personnel in Darfur](#)

(Al-Khartoum) UNAMID announced yesterday that it would beef up its forces to counter any possible attacks against UN and humanitarian workers and to carry out its mandate of protecting civilians in Darfur.

UNAMID Force Commander Gen. Martin Luther held a lengthy meeting with the former SLA and discussed with them cooperation to protect civilians and to ensure access for humanitarian agencies.

Gen. Martin said the deteriorating security situation forced them to involve movements in preserving security and pointed out that the meeting was a significant step towards cooperation with movements' leaders on the ground.

30 persons killed and wounded in clashes between Tarjam and Abala at a site 15 km southwest of Nyala, South Darfur

(Al-Sahafa) eight civilians killed and 22 others wounded in a clashes between the Tarjam and Rizeigat Abala tribes in the areas of Digras and Kassar Al-Ezzam, 15 km southwest of Nyala, the capital of South Darfur State. The clashes continued for two days.

Eyewitnesses said a group of Abala attacked the areas of Digras and Kassar Al-Ezzam, which were witnessing voluntary return of the Tarjam tribes who were forcibly displaced due to clashes with Abala over the past months. The eye witnesses have confirmed that the attack caused loss of 8 lives and 22 injuries.

Darfur rebel JEM calls for boycott of Sudan census and elections

(ST) March 29, 2008 (LONDON) — One of the major Darfur rebel groups today issued a strongly worded statement rejecting the upcoming census and elections and called on the Sudanese political parties to boycott them.

“The regime in Khartoum is excited about the census to put the Sudanese people and the international community in front of an outcome they want to see. They are building their strategy of a Sudan with a demographic structure in accordance with the theory of the National Congress Party (NCP)” the statement by Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) read.

“We will absolutely not accept this census” JEM said.

The statement by JEM is the latest in a series of positions opposing conducting the census or the elections at a time when Darfur is far from stabilized.

Sudan's senior presidential assistant Minni Arcua Minnawi told Sudan Tribune last month that the insecurity in Darfur means that no population census can be conducted and consequently no elections.

Minnawi who is also the head of Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) faction which signed a peace agreement with Khartoum in 2006 said that “you cannot have elections without Darfur. If you do, then this means that you don't consider Darfur to be part of Sudan”.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the North and South in 2005 mandated that a census be conducted as a prerequisite for next year's elections.

However the five year conflict in Darfur casted shadows over whether the census can be fair at a time when millions of Darfuris are displaced in and out of Sudan.

JEM said that the Sudanese government "is aware that the number of refugees and displaced have surpassed 3 million, a third of which are outside of Sudan. How can you conduct a census when 10% of the population are outside the circle of citizenship?"

"No sane person can accept this census to occur at a time when the people of Darfur are crushed in displaced camps" JEM said.

Some analysts have suggested that the government would benefit from instability in Darfur to prevent a region which has historically been hostile to the NCP, from voting in the next elections.

Al-Tigani Abdullah, a senior adviser to Minnawi said that the NCP could not win the elections in Darfur unless under these "chaotic circumstances".

"They resettled all these Arab tribes from West Africa in Darfur giving them lands and drove the original owners out. They want these tribes to vote for them in the elections" Abdullah said.

JEM echoed the accusations in the statements and said that the government "wants to bring people from outside Sudan in accordance with a demographic they have in mind and as a result build an essential block to impose a de facto situation on all marginalized people which is against their interests".

Sudanese officials have made contradictory statements on whether census can be carried out in Darfur.

The Information Secretariat official At the NCP, Kamal Obeid and the minister of State for Information said that the general elections in the country can be completed without the participation of Darfurians due to the political instability in the region.

But the power presidential assistant Nafi Ali Nafi told the official news agency (SUNA) that "elections can be held in 99% of Darfur".

Nafi said that security has prevailed in Darfur and that the fighting is confined to a small area in West Darfur as a result of Chadian support to Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebel group.

"If for any reason elections can't be held in parts of Darfur they can completed at a later date" he added.

Sadiq al-Mahdi, the leader of Umma party which is considered the largest Northern political party, told Sudan Tribune that his party is not prepared to be part of the elections if the Darfur crisis is not resolved.

The Umma party has a large presence in Darfur and achieved a landslide victory in the region during the last free elections held in 1986.

The Darfur rebel group urged "all patriotic brothers and journalists to stand together against the census and elections".

International experts estimate 200,000 people have died in the conflict, which Washington calls genocide, a term European governments are reluctant to use. The Sudan government says 9,000 people have been killed.

Ethiopia begins logistical deployment to Darfur hybrid force

(ST) March 29, 2008 (ADDIS ABABA) — Ethiopia on Friday began transporting military logistics to Sudan as part of the United Nations/African Union peace keeping mission.

The Ethiopian ministry of defence today said that all the necessary military logistics required for the Ethiopian peacekeeping force to carryout its mission successfully are being transported to the area through the Djibouti port.

Ethiopia, among other African countries sending peacekeeping forces to Sudan, offered 5000 peace keepers to Darfur but so far 1500 of them are accepted to join the hybrid force.

According to Brigadier General Nigussie Lemma, who is in charge of the Ethiopian mission to Darfur, Ethiopia will deploy its forces in Darfur following the military logistics arrival.

Ethiopia has also promised to provide two helicopters to the hybrid force.

The AU and UN have started last month to deploy peacekeeping forces to bring peace and stability in Darfur.

The hybrid force will consist of about 26,000 peacekeepers; the majority of them are expected to be African troops.

Since the beginning of this year the UNAMID replaced the 7,800 forces of the AU Mission in Darfur (AMIS). From the 26000 troops of the hybrid force, only 9000 are deployed now on the ground

Miscellaneous