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**Special Media Monitoring Report on the activities of the Joint Technical
Assessment Missions and related issues**

20th June 2006

(By UNMIS Public Information Office)

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Highlights:

President Bashir vows to lead resistance against deployment of UN force to Darfur

(*AlSahafa, AlRai AlAam* – 20th June. **Khartoum**) President Bashir said yesterday that he will not allow an international force into Darfur as long as he is the President of the country.

The President who was addressing a meeting in Khartoum of his National Congress' Party's National Parliamentary Council said he prefers to lead the resistance to the

deployment of such a force to Darfur than to remain president in a country in which United Nations troops are deployed.

The President pointed out that there are other alternatives to the deployment of international forces to Darfur. He said among the most important of these alternatives is that the state in Sudan has 16,000 troops from the SAF and the SPLA ready to be deployed and carry out the job in the three states of Darfur.

El-Bashir lashed out on opposition leaders who expressed support for the deployment of United Nations troops to Darfur (reference to el-Sadiq el-Mahdi, Dr. Turabi, Mohamed Ibrahim Nugud and Ali Mahmoud Hassanein of the Umma, Popular Congress, Sudan Communist and Democratic Unionist parties respectively) whom he said, “went at night to the Security Council delegation with their beards and turbans urging international forces to come in”.

The president further said he was ready to step down as the President of the Republic so that peace will prevail in the country.

He said any one of those who have co-signed a peace agreement have the right to take over the post.

On the DPA, the president said the DPA will not be re-opened for negotiations but any other outstanding issue can be resolved through the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue.

He expressed confidence that the signatories to the peace deal can implement the agreement and called on holdout groups in Darfur to join in.

On the east, the President of the Republic said that the Declaration of Principles signed by the parties to the talks in Asmara is a sure sign of commitment to achieve peace.

United Nations accuses the Sudan government of obstructing relief efforts in eastern Sudan

(*AlRai AIAam* – 20th June. **Khartoum**) The United Nations has accused the Sudan government of obstructing relief operations in eastern Sudan and has blamed it for the deterioration of the humanitarian situation there.

United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, DSRSG Manuel Aranda da Silva, strongly criticised the government’s handling of the situation and described it as a violation of the agreements reached between the United Nations agencies and the government especially concerning unhindered access for relief workers.

“The government says something and does something quite different on the ground”, complained da Silva.

The Humanitarian Coordinator further disclosed that the United Nations will seek an explanation from the relevant parties in the government on why United Nations teams have been barred out of five areas in eastern Sudan.

He expressed disappointment on the restrictions imposed on humanitarian aid to camps in the east and added that the restrictions are due to a lack of government understanding.

“We have been denied access to visit refugee camps and if we cannot have access then we cannot provide assistance,” da Silva said.

“We will not be able to continue in the east if we do not have freedom of movement,” he added.

Da Silva warned government that such a trend may invite serious consequences if left to continue.

Kalunga Lutato of the UNHCR said that there are seven camps in Kassala which they cannot reach because of the restrictions that started on Sunday.

“We were prevented from going to provide aid, especially to the camps in Kassala,” he said.

He reminded all present that they had access to those areas three weeks ago (a clear reference to the SPLM’s handing over control of the region to the government”).

On Darfur, the DSRSG/HC expressed concern over the numerous obstacles on access to relief.

“Despite the renewals of commitments by the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs to support and facilitate humanitarian work, we were surprised by these constraints in Darfur and eastern Sudan,” added the Humanitarian Coordinator.

Da Silva explained that some provisions of the SOFA were earlier not being observed but then the government had promised to honour its obligations to allow access to humanitarian operations as stipulated but then the government in eastern Sudan has violated those pledges and has, from last year, hindered access to the needy in Kassala and Port Sudan.

The Humanitarian Coordinator said they have documented evidence to prove that the government has obstructed access.

But the governor in Kassala said that the SOFA is only applicable to the UNMIS.

He pointed out that article 65 of the SOFA underlines the need for the agencies to sign separate agreements with the government in order to benefit from the facilities stated in the SOFA.

The governor said that his state does not obstruct relief work but has been cooperating with these agencies for years. He pointed out that a number of humanitarian agencies have been allowed into Hamishkoreib since the SPLA withdrew two days ago.

It is worth noting that representatives of the UNICEF and the WFP had complained at the same press statement at UNMIS of their inability to go to Kilo 128 in Kassala and the surrounding camps and that checkpoints were set up to block access.

The WFP representative had warned that they may suspend their activities in those areas should the situation continue like that.

DSRSG/HC da Silva described the humanitarian situation in Darfur as relatively calm but complained there are security constraints that he said bar access to areas in North and South Darfur that are close to the Chadian border and said that these constraints will reflect negatively on the IDPs in their camps.

He said that the worsening security in Darfur has cut off more than 250,000 people.

“There are at least 250,000 we can not reach ... mainly due to the impact on the situation o security conditions in specific areas,’ he said

Da Silva pointed out that although the parties that had signed the peace deal were no longer fighting, other factions were.

He added that many people in Darfur don’t trust the DPA.

On the humanitarian situation in southern Sudan, da Silva said it is stable despite some logistic problems and some minor incidents in Western Equatoria.

He said however that Jonglei has become inaccessible as a result of clashes by the SPLA and some militia.

He commended the GoSS for the unlimited support granted for humanitarian operations.

ICC commends Sudan government for cooperation

(*AlRai AlAam* – 20th June. **Khartoum**) An ICC delegation that has just concluded a visit to Khartoum has called for more cooperation from Khartoum on the issues of Darfur and the Lord's Resistance Army.

The delegation’s main tasks were focussed on Darfur and collecting more information on the Lord's Resistance Army.

A source reports that the ICC delegation commended the Sudan government for the reception and cooperation it received but has called for more cooperation on the two issues.