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(By Public Information Office)

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IN THE NEWS TODAY:

➤ **UN/ Agencies**

- Darfur peacekeepers will fail without more troops, equipment -UN (ST)
- UNDP launches Global Human Development Report 2007/2008 in Khartoum (SUNA)

➤ **GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)**

- Al Bashir, Kiir to meet to end conflict over elections law (AlKhartoum)
- SPLA releases seven Miseriya detainees (AlRai AlAam)
- Minawi to visit Chad end of week to defuse Khartoum-N' djamena tensions (AlSudani)
- Sudan to participate in mini-summit on tension with Chad (ST)
- American administration uses conflict in Darfur for vested interests, Ismail (Sudan Vision)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs summons American Charge d'Affaires, conveys to him protest of government over his statements on situations in the country (SUNA)
- Demining of El-Renk- Malakal-Bur - Juba road to be begin this week (SUNA)

➤ **GoSS**

- Unity State MPs in South Sudan parliament slash back at Governor Deng (ST)
- Suth Sudan's Bor-Mudari communities end peace conference (ST)
- Unity governor lashes out at S. Sudan's Machar attempts to destabilise him (ST) (see attachment)

➤ **Darfur**

- SOFA Constitutes Legal Framework for Hybrid Operation, Dr. Mitrif (Sudan Vision)
- Hybrid force command explains Darfur mission to Sudanese army (ST)
- Armed men kill 22 in Sudan's Darfur region (BBC)

- Darfur women should take part in peace process – African meeting (ST)
- China, Saudi Arabia and Qatar can bring peace to Darfur – ex- US envoy (ST)
- Distrust main obstacle to Darfur talks - US diplomat (ST)

➤ Miscellaneous

- Sudan tells US diplomat to stop meddling in internal affairs (ST)
- ICC D. Prosecutor speaks on need for justice in Darfur in women meeting (ST)

Highlights

UN/ Agencies

Darfur peacekeepers will fail without more troops, equipment -UN (ST)

January 25, 2008 (EL FASHER, North Darfur) — Darfur's peacekeeping force has resumed some patrols and returned to refugee camps since the U.N. took over this year, but the mission will ultimately fail without more troops and equipment, a top U.N. official said.

The force has less than half the planned 26,000 troops and police, and lacks crucial gear to pacify a region nearly the size of France, said Jean-Marie Guehenno, the U.N. undersecretary general for peacekeeping.

Guehenno was on a tour of Darfur, where more than 200,000 people have died in five years of fighting between ethnic African tribes and Sudanese government forces.

Despite its shortcomings, the U.N. mission, known as UNAMID, has made some progress, Guehenno said in an Associated Press interview in Darfur late Thursday. Police were returning to refugee camps during the day and troops have resume some patrols.

A contingent of Chinese engineers — the first members of the U.N. mission to deploy — has finally received its equipment and has made considerable progress in building new bases, he said. Lack of infrastructure, water and equipment is a major obstacle for peacekeepers in the arid and underdeveloped region.

Peacekeepers are "regaining ground mile by mile," UNAMID commander Gen. Martin Agwai said in a separate interview with the AP. He said the troops were becoming "more visible, more mobile" in a region whose battered population has long clamored for U.N. help.

But Guehenno expressed concern about "the gap between expectations and what we'll be capable of immediately achieving."

The U.N. mission urgently needs 18 transport and six combat helicopters, but no country has offered them despite repeated requests, he said.

"I hope the international community will match its deeds to its words," Guehenno said.

Each potential contributing nation has given "its own reasons" not to offer helicopters, Guehenno said. "But, cumulated, this response is difficult to understand, given the obvious needs in Darfur."

The government is still negotiating the legal framework for the force, and even objects to the color of their helmets, which it wants to keep green in the case of African troops. Guehenno said there was "no question" all peacekeepers would retain traditional U.N. blue helmets.

The U.N. accepted the apology. But Guehenno said Sudanese authorities had been informed about the convoy's whereabouts and warned peacekeepers could shoot back if they come under another such attack.

"What we're saying loud and clear is that we have total freedom of movement and that no one can ... intimidate us," he said.

(AP)

UNDP launches Global Human Development Report 2007/2008 in Khartoum (SUNA)

Khartoum, Jan. 26 (SUNA) - The United Nations Development Programme launched Tuesday the Global Human Development Report 2007/2008, under the theme: "Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world." The Report generally outlines a framework for climate change negotiations and stresses that a narrow 10-year window of opportunity remains to put it into practice. Ms. Tereza Ciricio, State Minister of Environment and Physical Development said "it is abundantly clear that the accelerated changing climate represents the most preoccupying challenge worldwide." The State Minister said "The Ministry of Environment and Physical Development will play a key role to cooperate and coordinate efforts with all stakeholders at all levels, to address the global environment challenges". Emphasizing the inevitability of climate change, Ms. Ameerah Haq, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Sudan said "the world lacks neither the financial resources, nor the ability to develop the technology to act. What is missing is a sense of urgency, of human solidarity and collective interest." Ms. Haq concluded by saying "While we do still live in a world where people are separated by vast gaps in wealth and opportunity, let us seize the chance that exists to safeguard the one thing we all share in common: planet Earth. For in the end our destinies are inextricably tied to each other" Mr. Jerzy Skuratowicz, UNDP Sudan Country Director, stressed the importance of the Human Development Report which annually deals with issues facing the international community as a whole. "This year, the report deals with climate change reminding us that if action is not taken by the international community, civil society, governments and communities as a whole, this will impair progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and turn back many

achievements that this nation and the world have made in the past years." Mr. Skuratowicz also encouraged the involvement of leading politicians and expressed his gratitude for the strong government and media presence in the event. Mr. Clive Bates, UNEP, Programme Manager spoke of the impact of climate change pointing out that UNEP has recently established an office in Sudan and looking forward to working closely with the Ministry of Environment and Physical Development. Sudanese experts and academia, representatives of the private sector, local and international NGOs engaged in environmental work, representatives of the United Nations, international development partners and key government officials attended the launch. BT/BT

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Al Bashir, Kiir to meet to end conflict over elections law (AIKhartoum)

Member of the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC), Dr. Ismail al Haj Musa, said President al Bashir and FVP and GoSS President Salva Kiir will hold a meeting during the coming days to bring an end to the controversy over the elections law.

SPLA releases seven Miseriya detainees (AIRai AIAam)

The SPLA has released yesterday seven Miseriya tribesmen who have been arrested in Wau by the southern Sudan Army (SPLA) for more than five days. The seven Miseriya, who were accompanied by JIUs soldiers, arrived yesterday in Abyei on their way to Muglad.

Minawi to visit Chad end of week to defuse Khartoum-N'djamena tensions (AISudani)

The Senior Presidential Assistant, Mini Minawi, will be visiting Chad end of this week. While in Chad, Minawi will meet with senior officials in the Chadian government, including President Idris Deby. The visit is part of the efforts aiming at ending tensions between Sudan and Chad.

Sudan to participate in mini-summit on tension with Chad (ST)

January 26, 2008 (KHARTOUM) – Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir will fly to Libya Sunday to participate in a mini-summit on Sudan-Chad tension.

The five-state summit will discuss ways to ease the recent tension between the neighboring countries following the repeated incursions of the Chadian army inside Sudanese territories in December and January.

The meeting will include Libya, Eritrea and Egypt which are the sponsors of Tripoli deal.

Sudanese State Minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Al-Samani Al-Wasila said that the summit would discuss developments of the situation between Sudan and Chad.

He pointed out that Sudan is committed to the signed agreements and adheres to self-restraint policy by not escalating the situations that will lead to instability in the area and the African continent.

He stated that Sudan has closed its border before the Chadian rebels in implementation of Tripoli agreement. But Chadian president Idris Deby said he driven rebels out of the country and they are now based inside the Sudanese territory.

(ST)

American administration uses conflict in Darfur for vested interests, Ismail (Sudan Vision)

By: Al-Sammani Awadalla, The Presidential Advisor, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail has warned US against its policies in conflict regions practiced under the pretense of combating terrorism. Ismail said these US practices will lead peaceful nationals to launch counter that threaten American interests in these countries.

The Presidential Advisor who yesterday addressed an International Conference organized by World Civil Aid Organization on Guantanamo prison under the slogan “The Law of force and not Force of Law” said Washington has no respect for the International Law and Legitimacy. He further accused it as looking at nation’s sovereignty and human rights as meaning nothing if they conflict with its interests. He said the American Administration has continued to use conflict in Darfur, Iraq and Afghanistan to achieve vested interests. “If Washington is keen on playing a vital role in world peace and security, it has to close down all the detention centres that humiliate human dignity” said Ismail. The Presidential Advisor has given the go-ahead signal to the Sudanese civil society organizations to work for the release of the Guantanamo detainees, describing Guantanamo as a shame on the American Administration which will remain as a lasting stigma whatever the Administration do to remove it. For his part, the Deputy Speaker of the Sudanese Parliament, Mohammad Al-Hassan Al-Amin said the American Administration seeks to impose its hegemony on nations in addition to misrepresenting their concept of terrorism combating to serve its own ends.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs summons American Charge d'Affaires, conveys to him protest of government over his statements on situations in the country (SUNA)

Khartoum, Jan. 26 (SUNA)- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned Saturday the American Charge d'Affaires in Khartoum, Alberto Fernandez, and conveyed to him the protest of the Sudanese government over statements attributed to him by Reuters news agency and published by some Sudanese newspapers on the internal situations in the country. Director of America Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Abdel-Basit Al-Sanousi said in a statement to the Sudan News Agency

following summoning of the American Charge d'Affaires that he was notified that such statements are considered as flagrant intervention in the internal affairs of Sudan and impede progress of implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the ongoing efforts for settlement in Darfur besides that such statements would not help in the continuation of dialogue between the two countries. Ambassador Al-Sanousi added that the American Charge d'Affaires was told that the policy of his country towards Sudan was based on stances that did not help in improving the relations between the two countries for continuing imposition of sanctions on Sudan and appointing envoys to Sudan who had backgrounds and stances biased against Sudan. He went on to say that the American Charge d'Affaires was told that the Sudanese Presidency had the full sovereign right to appoint any one it choose to assume any constitutional post in accordance with the supreme interests of the country, and that this issue concerned Sudan and that US or any other foreign circle had no right to object against it, in reference to appointment of Musa Hilal as an adviser and the objection made by the press office of the US State Department over the appointment. Ambassador Al-Sanousi pointed out that he affirmed to the American Charge d'Affaires the necessity of release of the Sudanese nationals detained in Guantanamo prison soonest. The American Charge d'Affaires, on his part, said during the meeting that the statements he made did not go out of the framework of his country's policy towards Sudan, describing some parts of what had been attributed to him as inaccurate, as the question directed to him by Reuters had been about the biggest obstacle before realization of peace in Sudan and that he replied it was the lack of confidence among all parties in Sudan and gave no further details. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement in which it declared its rejection to the statements of the American Charge d'Affaires on the progress of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the peace-keeping operation in Darfur, pointing out that what he did contradicted his diplomatic role for developing the relations between the two countries. BT/BT

Demining of El-Renk- Malakal-Bur - Juba road to be begin this week (SUNA)

Khartoum, Jan. 26 (SUNA) - The National Anti-mines Centre this week is due to make survey operations along El-Renk-Malakal-Bur - Juba Road, 987-km, in order to remove mines, said Director of the Centre, Col. Eng. Al-Awad Al-Bashir. He highlighted the socio-economic importance of the road as a major road linking the North and South besides its considerable contribution in re-building of trust and confidence among the compatriots of the Sudan. The Director of the National Anti-mines Centre revealed that early February will witness beginning of the demining operations along the road. Depending on skilful Sudanese labours, the centre started the implementation of its national anti-mining plan early 2007 by removing mines from Babanosa-Wau railway line. The centre also declared 3 major roads linking Sudan and the sisterly Eritrea as free of mines, including Kassala-Hamashkoreib (107 Km), Kassala- Galassa (57 Km) and Kassala - Al-Laffa (14 Km). MF/ MF

GoSS

Unity State MPs in South Sudan parliament slash back at Governor Deng (ST)

By Isaac Vuni and James Gatdet Dak, January 26, 2008 (JUBA) – The Caucus of the Unity State's members of the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly in Juba today called on the Government of Southern Sudan to audit accounts of the state, accusing its governor of corruption.

In a press conference held on Sunday, the Unity State MPs headed by Benjamin Majak, Chairman of the Caucus in the Assembly said the Unity State Governor Taban Deng Gai is responsible for the corruption in the state. They also demanded for removal of Governor Taban Gai Deng for failing to deliver services and development in the state.

The MPs also called on the President of the Government of Southern Sudan to reveal the report of the Ministerial Committee he formed last year to investigate the Governor on the alleged corruption charges. They expressed their disappointments over the delay of the report in the Presidency's office.

(ST)

South Sudan's Bor-Mudari communities end peace conference (ST)

By Philip Thon Aleu, January 24, 2008 (BOR, Jonglei) – Representatives from Bor and Mudari communities ended a conference on peaceful coexistence and sharing of grazing land. The parties agreed to form a committee to resolve litigious issues. But, the outcome of the meeting is considered by one side as half full and the other as half empty.

The commissioner of Terekeka county, Juma Ali Malou described the peace conference held in his county as successful. Giving his closing speech on Tuesday, the last day of the two day long conference at Gameiza, a town in the north of South Sudan capital Juba (100 miles), Mr. Ali said the event is a remarkable one.

"Today is a remarkable day in Mudari and Bor history. It is a day of peace," said Mr. Ali adding that all the necessary steps should be followed to realise peace coexistence.

The conference, attended by Bor county commissioner, Abraham Jok Aring also attracted many religious leaders, Members of the respective states Assemblies, Payam leaders, among others, started on Monday 21 and end Tuesday 22.

Both side resolved that a sixteen members committee be formed to work on the burning issues. The committee should be comprised of either sides members. Movement of people will not be restricted but any agenda concerning cattle movement is a later case, read the resolution from Mudari community. Bor had wanted their cattle be allowed to graze in Toch (land between rivers). A request Mudari refused.

Bor commissioner, Abraham Jok Aring told reporters that the conference can't be called a success or failure. "We have agreed on principles. It is a long way to see total peace but as far now, I am hopeful that peace is returning," said Mr. Aring adding that his counter part Mr. Ali is a man of peace.

However, the likely failures includes the refusal of Mudari community to allow Bor cattle to the grazing land in their territory, demarcation of border that extends to Pariak in Bor territory, quitting of their land by Bor citizens now, and the interfering of Bor cattle with Mudari's gardens in summer.

(ST)

Unity governor lashes out at S. Sudan's Machar attempts to destabilise him (ST)
(see attachment)

Darfur

SOFA Constitutes Legal Framework for Hybrid Operation, Dr. Mitrif (Sudan Vision)

By: Mona Al Bashir, Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Mitrif Siddig, has revealed that deliberations are ongoing between the government and the other parties on the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), which is now in its last stages.

He reiterated that SOFA regulates the hybrid operation and constitutes its legal framework, adding that without finalizing SOFA the hybrid operation will be rendered legally incomplete. He revealed that SOFA will be signed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on behalf of the government and , consequently, does not have to be submitted before the National Assembly. He enumerated the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice, Defence, Interior, Humanitarian Affairs and Federal Bureau as well as the National Intelligence and Security Service as being the governmental organs concerned with the Status of Forces Agreement.

Dr. Mitrif said the government had previously inked an agreement for the establishment of a communications office for the hybrid operation in Addis Ababa, though, he added, this office has not been established to date. He explained that the government has banned night fights for the hybrid operation due to various considerations, primarily the border problems and the limited capacities of airports.

"Airports will be opened for night flights when their capacities have been scaled up," he said, pointing out that even some international airports prohibit night flights for environmental and security reasons.

Meanwhile, the consultative meeting consisting Sudan, UN and AU will be held today in Addis Ababa prior the meeting between President Al-Bashir and UNSG, Ban Ki-Moon on the sidelines of AU summit. Sudan's delegation will be chaired Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Dr. Mutrif Siddiq. Foreign Ministry Peace Administration Director, Ambassador El-Tayeb Ali Ahmed told SUNA that the meeting will discuss several issues relating to facilitation of hybrid troops deployment in Darfur pointing that the meeting was preceded by visits to Sudan from each of UNSG Undersecretary for peacekeeping operations and UNSG assistant for Peace Affairs, Mrs. Jean Loun

who met with Sudanese officials besides visiting Darfur. El-Tayeb expressed hope that the meeting could solve all issues which will lead to the hybrid troops deployment especially in the logistic fields.

Hybrid force command explains Darfur mission to Sudanese army (ST)

January 25, 2008 (KHARTOUM) – Within its efforts to build confidence with the different Sudanese stakeholders, on January 20 the Darfur hybrid force command explained the military and police components of the UNAMID to the Sudan Armed Forces, Police and State Security Services.

General Martin Luther Agwai, force commander of the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) briefed the Sudanese regular forces about the hybrid mission and its mandate as peacekeeping force in Darfur.

He gave a detailed explanation on UNAMID's equipment, force structure, personnel, concept of operations and deployment. He emphasized that UNAMID's equipment is for defensive and not offensive use, and outlined the four stages of the Darfur joint peacekeeping operation: transition, stabilization, consolidation and drawdown.

On his part, the Police Commissioner, Major General Mike Fryer, explained the structure, strength, mandate and core duties of UNAMID Civilian Police (CIVPOL), as well as the structure and duties of Formed Police Units (FPUs).

Fryer announced that new police stations are being constructed while old ones are being rehabilitated. He emphasized the need to intensify community policing, fight against gender-based violence and improve co-operation between UNAMID Police, Government Police and Movements' Police in Darfur.

The General Agwai disclosed during the meeting that as of 31 December 2007, 47 peacekeepers from the African Union Mission in Sudan had been killed during the past three years.

(ST)

Armed men kill 22 in Sudan's Darfur region (BBC)

Excerpt from report by liberal Sudanese newspaper Al-Ayyam on 26 January

Twenty two people were killed and 1940 houses burnt in an armed attack on an area located 30 kilometers north-west of Al-Junaynah. Meanwhile, two MPs have called upon the government and [humanitarian] organizations to provide quick support to the area and to contain the humanitarian crisis which was looming in the area in north of Al-Junaynah, Western Darfur State.

The two MPs of Western Darfur unit, Bashir Ibrahim and Yunis al-Haj, told Al-Ayyam the details of the incident which took place in Sharaf Jidad administrative unit. They affirmed that the attack took place last Thursday [24 January] at 6a m [local time] by groups of people riding horses, camels and Land Cruiser vehicles.

They added that the armed people looted the unit and killed 22 people including the mayor of the area, Umar Arabi, three teachers, four aged women and two children in addition to a number of others. They went on saying that the attackers also burnt 1940 houses. [Passage omitted]

Darfur women should take part in peace process – African meeting (ST)

January 25, 2008 (ADDIS ABABA) – African women agreed that Darfur women should take part in the peace process in order to ensure their rights and recognise their role in the reconstruction of Darfur society.

Organised by Femmes Africa Solidarité in the margins of the 10th African Union Summit with the support of the UNECA, the African Women's consultation on Darfur gathered African women and Darfur women to debate in a two-day meeting on the role of the women in the peace process.

"The women leaders assembled in Addis this week agreed that Darfuri women cannot be considered only as symbols of victimization, but rather must have an active role in all aspects of the peace process, said a statement issued at the end of the consultation on Friday January 25.

A Sudanese activist, Ms Sidiga W. Babiker Badri said stakeholders should understand that women are not only victims of violence but also they are "strong community leaders" who are ready to contribute in the conflict settlement and "without whom the structures of Darfuri society cannot be rebuilt."

The meeting also agreed that Darfur women participation cannot be token. Those chosen to represent Darfuri women's interests in the peace process must be given the resources, advice, and support to sustain dialogue with their constituencies as well as to navigate the peace process mechanisms.

The African Women's Consultation on Darfur is one part of a larger initiative facilitated by Femmes Africa Solidarité to ensure women actively participate in resolving the conflict in Darfur, following a September 2007 fact-finding mission led by Nobel peace prize winner Mary Robinson.

(ST)

China, Saudi Arabia and Qatar can bring peace to Darfur – ex- US envoy (ST)

January 25, 2008 (DOHA) --- Former US envoy for Darfur has urged China, Saudi Arabia and Qatar to push Darfur rebels and the Sudanese government to hold peace talks to end the five year conflict, the Gulf Times reported today.

Natsios, who led the efforts of US to resolve ‘one of the worst humanitarian crises’ from 2006 to December 2007, was the keynote speaker at the opening session of the third annual Model United Nations Conference (MUN) in Doha, Qatar yesterday.

The former envoy said only the countries with considerable influence, such as China, Saudi Arabia and Qatar could effectively bring all parties in Darfur to get to talk. “The pre-requisite though is the willingness of the involved parties though, since in a civil war, you got to have parties ready to negotiate first,” he underlined.

Natsios stated that international actors can only encourage the actors to end the conflict.

(ST)

Distrust main obstacle to Darfur talks - US diplomat (ST)

January 24, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Distrust of the Sudanese government due to a string of broken promises is the biggest obstacle to planned talks to end the five-year-old conflict, the top U.S. diplomat in Sudan said.

U.S. Charge D’Affaires Alberto Fernandez said a political crisis over stalled implementation of Sudan’s separate north-south peace deal and other unfulfilled commitments would directly affect Darfur peace talks due in the coming months.

"The biggest obstacle right now of course is ... the deep distrust that exists," Fernandez told Reuters, adding ongoing fighting, bombing and banditry in Darfur added to that distrust.

"Do you trust the government of Sudan if you are a rebel or if you are an IDP (internally displaced) or if you’re a member of an Arab tribe that was given all these promises by the government that were never met?" he said.

(Reuters)

Miscellaneous

Sudan tells US diplomat to stop meddling in internal affairs (ST)

January 26, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The Sudanese Foreign ministry has told on Saturday the U.S. Chargé d’affaires in Khartoum to stop meddling in Sudan’s internal

affairs in protest to statements he had made two days ago on Khartoum lack of creditability.

Abdel-Basit Al-Sanousi, director of the America Department in the foreign ministry, said that US top diplomat in Khartoum, Alberto Fernandez, was informed by the ministry that his remarks were considered as "flagrant intervention in Sudan's internal affairs"

He further said these remarks would impede progress of implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between northern and southern Sudan and the ongoing efforts to resolve the conflict in the western Sudanese region of Darfur.

The Sudanese Foreign Ministry yesterday rejected Fernandez's statements on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, ongoing efforts to settle Darfur crisis and deployment of Darfur hybrid peacekeeping operation. The ministry pointed out that Sudan does not need to "his unwise view and advices."

He added that Fernandez's remarks would not help in the continuation of dialogue between the two countries.

Al-Sanousi said that Fernandez was told that the U.S. policy towards Sudan was based on stances that did not help in improving bilateral ties for U.S. continuing imposition of sanctions on Sudan and appointing envoys to Sudan who had backgrounds and stances biased against Sudan.

The US diplomat was also informed that Washington has no right to meddle in Khartoum's affairs when it objected to the appointment of a Sudanese militia leader accused of murder, rape and other atrocities in Darfur to a senior government post.

Fernandez was also told that the Sudanese Presidency had the full sovereign right to appoint any one it chose to assume any constitutional post in accordance with the supreme interests of the country, Al-Sanousi said, referring to the appointment of Musa Hilal as a senior official and the objection made by the press office of the U.S. State Department over the appointment. Hilal was named earlier this month to be the adviser to Sudan's Ministry of Federal Affairs. The ministry manages the central government's relations with the outlying provinces in Africa's largest country.

(ST)

ICC D. Prosecutor speaks on need for justice in Darfur in women meeting (ST)

January 24, 2008 (THE HAGUE) — International Criminal Court (ICC) Deputy Prosecutor will join other African women for a consultation on Darfur in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to discuss women conditions in Sudan's Darfur region and the need for justice in the war-torn region.

Over sixty women from Darfur are in Addis Ababa to speak during two days — 24-25 January — about living conditions and the violence they face since the beginning of conflict and to discuss how to involve women in Darfur peace process. The

consultation is organised by Femmes Africa Solidarité, an international NGO working on issues of gender, peace and development in conflict zones.

ICC Deputy Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, will remind those gathered for the purpose of developing a Darfuri Women's plan for peace about the need for justice: "justice is an essential requirement to halt the cycle of repeated violations of women's rights." She said in a statement on Thursday.

The Deputy Prosecutor will cite the need to arrest ICC indictees, Sudanese Minister Ahmad Harun and Militia Janjaweed leader Ali Kushayb, as key. According to the Deputy Prosecutor, "as long as these alleged criminals remain at large, they threaten victims in Darfur".

The meeting comes few days ahead of 10th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government.

States Parties to the ICC, the United Nations, the African Union and other international organizations "should not lose any opportunity to send strong messages to the Sudanese authorities." Bensouda said..

(ST)