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(By Public Information Office)

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UN/ Agencies

Peacekeeping grows yet international support uneven – UN officials

11 March 2008 – The international community’s often faltering support for United Nations peacekeeping operations was making it difficult to maintain gains in key conflict areas, even though the UN has greatly boosted its operations in this field, top officials of the Organization have warned.

“A serious failure in one of our missions would be enough to put at risk the credibility of the whole of peacekeeping, which we have worked so hard to restore over the past few years,” Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, told the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations yesterday.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is now managing 20 operations, comprising nearly 130,000 authorized military, police and civilian personnel. In Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d’Ivoire, Timor-Leste and elsewhere, great strides were being made, Mr. Guéhenno said.

In some countries, however, “at the very moment when international assistance is most needed, the attention of the world is waning.”

He said the extension of State authority and political dialogue in Afghanistan, as well as security gains in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), will suffer without coherent, strategic engagement.

In Sudan, a lack of key support for the hybrid African Union-United Nations operation in Darfur (UNAMID) – including critical air and ground transport, diplomatic and political engagement with the parties – was exacerbating the operational difficulties the mission already faced due to the region’s remote and inhospitable terrain.

In addition, the recent temporary relocation of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) from the latter country was seriously challenging the Security Council’s authority.

The UN had set up a new Office of Military Affairs and upgraded the Military Adviser’s post, and will soon appoint an Under-Secretary-General for the newly created Department of Field Support, among many structural changes. It required the support and unified vision of Member States to meet the challenges ahead, however.

“It is clear to me that peacekeeping works best when the Membership shares a common vision, remains engaged with national actors and views the peace operation as a common endeavour of the international community,” he said.

Also addressing the Special Committee, Jane Holl Lute, Assistant Secretary-General for Field Support, echoed Mr. Guéhenno’s concerns.

Given the growing scope and complexity of the Organization's peacekeeping operations, as well as the huge challenges faced across the board, it was more important than ever that Member States support peacekeeping mandates, she said.

In addition to higher expectations from Member States and expanding mandates, there were enormous increases in logistical expenses, including those for aircraft fleets, engineering system contracts, satellite links and other technological advances that would make it possible to meet more peacekeeping challenges.

[Top UN official urges pressure on Darfur combatants to lay down arms](#)

11 March 2008 – Recent fierce fighting in Sudan's devastated Darfur region makes it clear that the international effort to protect the population is at dire risk unless the parties are pressured to negotiate a peace, at top United Nations peacekeeping official said today.

“With the Government intent on military action and the rebels either fighting or fragmenting, it is difficult to see an opening for political negotiations,” Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, said as he briefed the Security Council on UNAMID, the hybrid African Union-UN force in Darfur.

“A peacekeeping operation alone cannot bring security to Darfur,” Mr. Mulet said of UNAMID, which took over from an AU-only mission on 1 January in a bid to stop the fighting that has killed more than 200,000 people and uprooted over 2.2 million others since 2003.

In a little more than the past month alone, a rebel offensive in West Darfur, followed by Government and Janjaweed militia ground and air attacks against towns and rebel strongholds, resulted in at least 70 civilians being killed and tens of thousands displaced or pinned down, with some 13,000 fleeing to Chad, he said.

In addition, he said that tensions between Chad and Sudan and the fighting carried out by proxy rebel forces had the potential to regionalize the crisis and derail international peace efforts on both sides of the border.

Meanwhile, he said, UNAMID was pressing forward with deployment, doing “all we can to improve the situation,” though it still faced force shortfalls, inconsistent cooperation from the Government, insecurity and logistical difficulties.

As of 10 March, he reported, the mission's total strength was 9,178 uniformed personnel (out of an authorized strength of 26,000), with the majority inherited from the AU mission, AMIS.

During the coming weeks, he said looked forward to the strengthening of the mission through enabling units from Egypt and Nigeria, along with troops from Egypt, Ethiopia, Thailand and Nepal and formed police units (FPUs) from Egypt, Nepal and Indonesia.

The remaining five infantry battalions are not expected to deploy before mid-2008, when they will have completed their major equipment procurement and initial training programmes.

“The timely deployment of these battalions will be linked to donor countries’ efforts to support them with equipment, training and self-sustaining capability,” he said, expressing gratitude to the United States and Canada for their “Friends of UNAMID” initiative.

While warning that there is little prospect for beginning substantive negotiations with the parties any time soon, he said that UN and AU Special Envoys Jan Eliasson and Salim Ahmed Salim are convening informal consultations with regional and international partners in Geneva on 17 and 18 March to take stock of the situation.

Following Mr. Mulet’s briefing, Ambassador Vitaly Churkin of the Russian Federation, which holds the Council Presidency for March, told correspondents that Council members underlined the vital importance of the peace process in Darfur.

Council members also urged all parties there to refrain from hostilities, to respect the norms of international humanitarian law and to cooperate with the speediest possible deployment of UNAMID, Mr. Churkin said in a press statement.

Meanwhile tomorrow, in Dakar, Senegal, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will attend a mini-summit on the relationship between Sudan and Chad on the margins of the 11th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference, according to a UN spokesperson.

The meeting, hosted by President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal will include President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan, President Idriss Deby of Chad, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, President Omar Bongo of Gabon, President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania – Chair of the AU – and Alpha Oumar Konaré, Chair of the AU Commission.

The Secretary General will address the summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Thursday and will hold bilaterals with some of the heads of states attending the meeting.

[On the occasion of events related to International Women's Day 2008, statement by UNICEF representative in Sudan, Ted Chaiban](#)

As Sudan commemorates International Women's Day in a series of events around the country this week, I would like to draw particular focus to efforts to eliminate female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C).

There have been important steps taken in recent years to reduce the prevalence of FGM/C in Sudan, including vital leadership from the government in highlighting how FGM/C is physically and psychologically harmful, and in some cases, fatal and that it has direct and indirect repercussions on increasing maternal mortality, infertility and the risk of transmitting HIV and AIDS.

Religious scholars have actively emphasised that FGM/C is not an Islamic obligation or duty. There is a growing public debate about the practice, and its implications on the health and wellbeing of girls and women.

However, today the prevalence of FGM/C remains at nearly 70 per cent in Sudan. Faced by this statistic, we must do more to get the message across to families that FGM/C is never in the best interests of their daughters, sisters and wives.

Today, I call upon all Sudanese to support the concept of 'Saleema'. This beautiful Arabic word - signifying whole, undamaged, unharmed, or complete - is of course also a girl's

name. What better word could we choose around which to promote the idea that being complete is also to be beautiful?

As we commemorate International Women's Day this year, The National Council for Child Welfare and UNICEF and other partners will begin rolling out a new public awareness campaign based upon this concept of 'Saleema', to end the perception that failure to perform FGM/C brings shame and exclusion for women. To the contrary, leaving a girl complete is something to be proud of.

This awareness campaign is being undertaken with the support of the DAL Group and represents an important contribution of the private sector in Sudan to the protection concerns of women and children.

Female genital mutilation and cutting is not just a harmful practice. It is a violation of the rights of girls and women. Sudanese leaders have affirmed that there is no defence or justification - whether religious, society or cultural - for this practice.

Let us join together today on this International Women's Day to share the joy of the uncut girl, and celebrate the pride that she brings to her family and society.

Let us reaffirm our determination to bring the joy and pride of 'Saleema' to every girl and woman in Sudan.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

[Misseriya slam Abyei joint administration](#)

(Khartoum Monitor) Misseriya leaders agreed that the formation of joint administration in Abyei is not a radical solution but only a temporary solution to defuse tension in Abyei.

Misseriya leader, Alasdiq Babu Nimir, said the government has failed to intervene to solve the problem therefore the problem should be solved within tribal institutions.

He added that they had opened up all roads previously blocked by the Misseriya.

Fadlalla Burma Nasser, a Misseriya leader said the administration might pave the way for provision of services and creating a conducive environment for settlement. He added that the recent meeting of the Misseriya aimed to prepare for reconciliation conference between the Misseriya and the Nuba and Daju tribes in the coming month, he added.

On his part, Ahmed Alahmar member of Misseriya youth said the situation in Al-Mujlad is tragic and the Misseriya have retreated to the north of 56 degrees north to avoid attacks by SPLA. The joint administration for Abyei is not acceptable to us because it is serving SPLMM and NCP political aims, both parties kept Misseriya out of Abyei Protocol, he said. The SPLM defends Dinka Ngok and the NCP does not bother about the Misseriya, he added.

[SPLM and NCP agree on electoral law](#)

(Khartoum Monitor) The National Congress party, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the other political parties have agreed on a new electoral law, which will allow for proportional representation.

Judge Peter Samuel Mogga, the head of the SPLM team in the NCRC told Khartoum Monitor that the law as agreed on unanimously.

55% of the seats in the parliament to be contested for would be done so based on proportional representation. 25% percent will be reserved for women while 20% would be contested by individual political parties in geographical constituencies.

The proportional representation means the voters will vote for the political parties which would chose their representatives. The voting will be done at the State level not the national level. In other words, each State will for example reserve 25% of its seats to women.

Judge Mogga said the feeling in the National Constitutional Review Commission is that too much time has been devoted to the electoral law.

“There are many other pressing problems facing the country such as the situation in Darfur, we need to turn to these issues,” Mogga said.

[Sudan UN envoy says military campaign in Darfur “will continue”](#)

(ST) March 11, 2008 (UNITED NATIONS) — A senior Sudanese official said that military operations will continue in Darfur “as long as rebels continue to threaten civilians”.

Sudan’s U.N. ambassador Abdel-Mahmood Mohamad told reporters today that “it is our responsibility to protect our own people. We will continue to do that”.

Mohamad also condemned statements by the US envoy in which he criticized the “foot dragging” by Sudanese president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir.

“This is not a decent way of addressing heads of states” he said.

The assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Edmond Mulet addressed the UN Security Council on the progress of the deployment of the joint African Union-United Nations force as well as political negotiations.

“With the Government intent on military action and the rebels either fighting or fragmenting, it is difficult to see an opening for political negotiations” Mule said.

The Sudanese diplomat said that this portion of Mule’s report was “disappointing”.

“This is not a reality, it is an exaggeration if not a lie. If there any blame it should be pointed towards the mediators Mr. Salem and Mr. Eliasson who are now stagnated as well as stalemated” Mohamad said.

The UN peacekeeping official disclosed for the first time that Sudan has agreed to the deployment of troops from Thailand and Nepal in the coming months.

But Mohamad said that his government will only accept non-African troops after all other options from Africa has been exhausted.

“When we come to a point when no African troops are possible then we will look into other options. That is position of the government” he said.

UN Security Council adopted resolution 1769 on July 31st which authorized a hybrid UN-AU force (UNAMID) consisting of 26,000 troops and police but so far it only has only 9,000 personnel.

The UN have accused Khartoum of placing impossible deployment conditions and said that they will make the force unable to operate efficiently. Also few nations have come forward to provide air support for the hybrid force.

The Sudanese envoy said his government will accept choppers from non-African countries including Russia.

Earlier this month the former US special envoy to Sudan accused certain countries of intentionally slowing down the deployment of a peacekeeping force.

“There are some in the international system who don’t want to send forces before the peace negotiations because they have concerns for the safety of their troops” Andrew Natsios told Sudan Tribune by phone from Washington.

Natsios said the parties impeding the force deployment included countries and international organizations but declined to name them.

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.

[Sudan doubts the value of new peace deal with Chad](#)

(ST) March 11, 2008 (DAKAR) — Sudan wants peace with its neighbour Chad but doubts the value of signing a fresh reconciliation pact after a string of previous accords failed, Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir said on Tuesday.

His remarks, at a news conference at the end of an official visit to Dubai, raised questions over Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade’s invitation to Bashir and Chadian President Idriss Deby to initial a new accord in Dakar on Wednesday.

Wade hopes the agreement will end the hostility that has often brought the two nations close to all-out war.

Their common border has become a battleground for Sudanese and Chadian rebel groups fighting both in Sudan’s war-torn Darfur region and over the border in eastern Chad. Khartoum and N’Djamena accuse each other of supporting hostile insurgents.

"We want to confirm that we want peace. We have no claims in Chad," Bashir said in Dubai. "Our country is big and we do not need an extra country because any addition will mean additional problems before additional territories or resources," he added.

Bashir said he and Deby made a solemn peace commitment last year during a pilgrimage to Mecca, Islam's holiest shrine, under the auspices of Saudi King Abdullah. They shook hands on the deal inside the Kaaba, an ancient stone shrine in Mecca.

"If that agreement happened inside the Kaaba and the Chadian president did not implement it, can we expect him to implement an agreement in Dakar?" Bashir said.

Wade has announced the signing of a Chad-Sudan peace pact for Wednesday in Dakar on the eve of a summit of the 57-nation Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which groups the world's Muslim community. Both Chad and Sudan are members.

Sudanese Minister of State for Foreign Relations Al-Samani al-Wasiyla told Reuters in Dakar that Bashir was coming "with an open mind". But neither he nor a foreign ministry spokesman in Khartoum would confirm that Bashir would sign a deal with Deby.

FIVE AGREEMENTS FAILED

Bashir said five previous agreements had been signed with Chad, brokered either by Libya or Saudi Arabia, but they had all failed to reconcile the two sides.

The hostility between the two neighbours flared again in early February when Deby said that rebels who attacked his capital N'Djamena were backed by Sudan which wanted to topple him. Khartoum denies this.

Senegal's Wade had said the peace deal would be signed on Wednesday morning in Dakar, but Sudanese officials said Bashir was expected to arrive much later in the day. Deby was expected to arrive in Dakar on Tuesday.

Sudan's al-Wasiyla said his country wanted to see the full implementation of a bilateral peace agreement signed in Libya in 2006, in which the neighbours agreed to joint patrols on their common border.

"What we expect is to agree on a vision over guarantees and a commitment to implement past agreements," he added.

Chadian Foreign Minister Ahmat Allam-Mi said after meeting Wade that Chad would respect any engagements made in Dakar. "We hope that after Dakar we'll reach a definitive accord to solve the Chad-Sudan conflict," he said.

Wade has said that establishing a lasting peace between Chad and Sudan is an essential first step towards disentangling the interlocking conflicts enveloping Darfur, where 200,000 people have been killed in political and ethnic fighting since 2003.

More than 2.5 million people have been forced from their homes by the violence, which has spilled over into both Chad and Central African Republic.

[President Bashir: Jewish lobbies hamper peace process in Sudan](#)

(Sudan Vision) President Al-Bashir has stated that peace is stumbling in Sudan because of strong Zionist pressure groups in the United States and some other western countries.

"These groups influence the decision-makers and dominate the media in the west. They are dedicated to Zionist-Christian project hostile to Sudan,"

the President Al-Bashir said, pointing out the western media's inflation of Darfur crisis, listing it in the category of genocide, and affirming that to the present date deaths in Darfur have not exceeded 9,000 persons.

At the press conference he held yesterday in Dubai at the conclusion of his visit to the United Arab Emirates, President Al-Bashir reiterated that Darfur rebel factions are receiving aid and support from the International community.

"If we stand accused of supporting the Chadian opposition, who is then supporting the Sudanese opposition with four-drive vehicles and advanced weapons inaccessible to the Sudanese armed forces," he asked. He refuted any ethnic background to the conflict in Darfur and attributed the strife in Darfur to conventional reasons such as disputes over pasture, added to the drought and other climatic causes.

President Al Bashir told journalists that his meetings in Dubai, which he described as successful, discussed issues related to conditions in Sudan such as progress made so far towards implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and unity between the North and South.

He added that Sudan enjoys excellent relations with Emirates in the various political, economic, commercial and cultural fields, noting that the Emirates comes in second rank, after China, in terms of the volume of its investments in Sudan. He further indicated that the outcome of the visit was positive and that visions at those meetings converged over regional issues and the developments in the Arab region, particularly in Palestine. He then stressed the need for making a success of the coming Arab summit and reaching solutions for pending Arab issues, affirming Sudan's participation in the summit with a high-level delegation.

President Al Bashir had on Sunday started a 3-day visit to the United Arab Emirates during which he sat with the Governor of Dubai and other officials.

[Lual: US linking normalization of relations to resolution of the Darfur issue is a shock](#)

(Sudan Vision) State Minister at the Ministry of Finance and National Economy stated that the American Administration linking its normalizing relations with Khartoum to Sudan's resolving Darfur problem was a shock.

Commenting on a working paper presented by the Economic/political researcher, Dr. Abdul Muniem Al-Asam, Dr. Lual said that he visited Washington where the American Administration promised to lift sanctions imposed against Sudan besides investing in Sudan, but nothing happened.

He disclosed that all that Sudan wants is opening investments and partnerships to achieve a development boom.

On his part, ex-Minister of Finance, Dr. Abdul Rahim Hamdi who commented on the paper said that the relations with Europe were almost frozen expecting that the

European boycott will continue affirming that Europe is the biggest loser added to Europe's continued reluctance in establishing partnerships with Sudan. American Diplomat, Peter Pank stated that most of the Americans reject their Administration's policy concerning imposing sanctions. The South Sudan diplomat and politician, Dr. David Dechand criticized SPLM leaders who called for lifting the American sanctions from the South only. The Italian Economist Koratu called for supporting the private sector in Europe to invest in Sudan.

[French aid worker ordered to leave Sudanese region](#)

KHARTOUM, March 11 (Reuters) - A French aid worker said on Tuesday he had been ordered to leave a volatile region of Sudan after a misunderstanding with officials over security arrangements.

Jean-Jacques Franc de Ferriere, a project director with US-based Mercy Corps, said he was given one day's notice to leave the contested oil-producing area of Abyei, close to the border separating north and south Sudan.

He said state officials from the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC), which monitors aid groups in the area, had falsely accused him of warning the country's health minister not to visit Abyei for security reasons.

They also said he had put local lives at risk by driving along a road closed down after recent clashes, he added. De Ferriere said he drove on the road to show it was secure enough for the minister to use on his trip.

No one was immediately available for comment from the SSRRC's Abyei office.

"I am really outraged by the way they have done this," de Ferriere told Reuters. "They were frustrated that the minister wasn't coming and they wanted to put the blame on me.

Tensions have worsened in the border region over the failure of the northern government and southern rebels to reach a deal to demarcate Abyei's borders, which were left undecided in the 2005 peace deal ending Sudan's 21-year north-south civil war.

Sudan's relations with France were strained earlier this month when a French soldier was killed in a clash with Sudanese troops near the border with Chad.

France condemned the killing as "deliberate and disproportionate". Sudan later sought compensation from the European Union after four nomads were killed by one of the soldier's grenades when they tried to retrieve his body. (Editing by Dominic Evans)

[Dr. Nafie Describes his Visit to Japan as Successful](#)

(Sudan Vision) Assistant of the President of the Republic, Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie, and Monday afternoon returned home after a several-day visit to Japan in response to invitation from the Japanese Foreign Minister. At a press conference he held upon return at Khartoum Airport, Dr. Nafie described his visit to Japan as successful and realized its objectives.

He was received at the airport by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Mutrif Siddiq. Dr. Nafie hoped that his visit to Japan will pave the way for consolidation of the relations between Sudan and Japan in all fields, besides consultation and coordination between them in all domains, especially in the economic issues and regional and international affairs. Dr. Nafie has met during the visit with the Japanese Prime Minister, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance as well as leaders of the economic sector, the trade chamber and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JAICA). He said that his talks with the Japanese officials were focused on ways to consolidate the relations between Sudan and Japan, adding that he acquainted the Japanese officials with about the situation in Sudan, especially in Darfur and the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Dr. Nafie said that he was interviewed by Japanese media, press, TV and the national News Agency, adding that he also held a press conference and gave an open lecture in Japan and informed on the situation in Sudan.

GoSS

[Social Affairs Ministry and UNICEF provide children with protection](#)

(Sudan Tribune) Khartoum State Social Affairs Minister, Samia Habani, addressed the day before yesterday a workshop entitled “policies and procedures for protecting family care deprived children”, organized by the Ministry. Dr. Samia asserted the State’s concern with all child segments, pointing out that the State along with the society and its organizations, was seeking to provide the needs of children and that children had every rights to lead decent lives within safe families.

UNICEF Representative, Othman Sieba, pointed out “the workshop discusses a proposal for the policies and procedures for protecting children based on normal family as an essential value and an indispensable pivot.

Hope Organization Director, Fared Idris, in turn, underlined the necessity for the discussing the document of policies and procedures in an open way that considers the local context.

Darfur

[Ethiopia finalizes logistical preparations for Darfur peacekeepers](#)

(ST) March 11,2008(ADDIS ABABA) — Ethiopia today said it has finalized and made ready the necessary logistics necessary for its peacekeeping force to be deployed in the Sudanese Darfur region.

Since September 2007, following the visit of the Sudanese president Omer al-Bashir to Addis Ababa, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zinawi agreed to send 5000 peacekeeping troops to participate in the Hybrid Operation for the five-year war-torn Darfur region.

"Ethiopia has been giving high attention for the logistical preparations to the Ethiopian peace keeping force to be deployed in Darfur" Logistics and Transport head under the ministry of Defence Brigadier General Nugusse lemma said on Tuesday.

According to the official, the necessary logistics are handed over to the Ethiopian peace force.

"Necessary transport, medical, food and sheltering logistics, which enable the mission to successfully accomplished are handed over to the peace force" he said.

The African Union Peace and Security Council (AU-PSC) reiterated in a meeting held early this month that Egyptian and Ethiopian troops would be deployed in Sudan's Darfur region during the current March.

Egypt and Ethiopia will send a battalion, numbering 850 troops each, as the first batch of their contribution to the UN-AU Joint African Peacekeeping force in Darfur.

The U.N. Security Council last month unanimously approved the 26,000-strong mission, which, if fully deployed, would be the world's largest operation of its kind, to help end four years of rape and slaughter in the vast Sudanese desert region.

The force is expected to be made up mostly of peacekeepers from Africa with backup from Asian troops.

[UNAMID: talks continuing with GoS and armed movements to open routes for delivery of assistances to civilians in Jebel Moon](#)

(Al-Ayyam) UNAMID announced ongoing talks with GoS and armed movements to open routes for delivery of humanitarian assistances to civilians in Jebel Moon.

UNAMID Public Information Officer, Mr. Ali Hamati, said an Egyptian military delegation was currently visiting the region to explore the situation for deployment of a company of 158 Egyptian soldiers in Darfur.

Hamati told Al-Ayyam that situations in west Darfur were tense, impeding delivery of humanitarian assistances. He said consultations were continuing with all Darfur parties to ensure opening of corridors for delivery of relief.

He said some areas are inaccessible such as the areas in and around Jebel Moon.

Miscellaneous

[Syrian businessman robbed of 110 million pounds in broad daylight in Khartoum yesterday](#)

(Al-Watan) A Syrian businessman, Mr. Adnan Saeed Al-Dhabi, was robbed yesterday in the broad daylight, when he walked out of Omdurman National Bank in Khartoum.

He told the police that a person driving Mercedes vehicle (225555) blocked his way and punctured the tire of his car and while he was resisting the robber another accomplice broke the car glass and they got away with 110,000 pounds.

The complainant recognized the photos of the culprits at the police, which launched a hunt for robbers.