

**Jewish World Watch**  
**Quarterly Update on the Situation in Darfur**  
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**January 4, 2007**

**Escalating Violence Threatens Humanitarian Aid to Darfur**

Nearly four million people have been affected by conflict in Sudan and most of the two million internally displaced persons in Darfur are dependent on direct food aid. Meanwhile, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) warned that the recent upsurge in fighting in Darfur had scattered thousands of people into remote areas and distant villages and left hundreds of thousands without desperately needed humanitarian assistance.<sup>1</sup> Close to half a million people have less access to humanitarian assistance as a result of increasing military activity, looting, and direct violence against aid workers in early December 2006. 250 humanitarian aid workers were temporarily evacuated from key locations across Darfur serving 480,000 people.<sup>2</sup>

Since December 1, 2006, violence has spread across the region. In South Darfur, staff had been assaulted by armed men, vehicles were stolen and one agency evacuated operations supporting 130,000 people as rebels and government troops scaled up offensives. In North Darfur, violence prevented aid workers from accessing camps that shelter 100,000 people, and non-essential staff have been evacuated from Kutum, where 140,000 are being assisted. The surrounding area has seen some of the heaviest fighting and attacks on civilians in recent months. In West Darfur, escalating violence forced evacuations of aid workers along the Chad border, aid vehicles have been hijacked, and staff violently beaten.<sup>3</sup> An additional 150 humanitarian aid workers were evacuated from South Sudan following a December 18, 2006 armed attack in Gereida. Two agencies, including Oxfam, have stopped operations completely after losing 12 vehicles and urgently needed supplies of water and food to looters.<sup>4</sup>

The main warehouses of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the World Food Programme in the eastern Chad town of Abeche were looted in late November 2006. Abeche is the hub for relief efforts for 218,000 refugees from Darfur and 90,000 internally displaced Chadians. \$500,000 worth of food, about 483 metric tons, had been looted from the World Food Programme warehouse and \$1.3 million worth of essential relief items were stolen from the UNHCR warehouse.<sup>5</sup>

Thirty civilians were killed when armed men on horseback ambushed a refugee convoy truck carrying medicine and relief items between two towns in Darfur on December 9, 2006. Rioters, angry because of the deaths, held eight African Union peacekeeping investigators hostage at the site of the deaths.<sup>6</sup> The following day, AU peacekeepers killed three Darfur rioters threatening to break into their

base. This is the first time peacekeepers have killed Darfur civilians. The rioters were relatives of the 30 civilians killed by Janjaweed fighters, protesting against the AU for the force's failure to protect them.<sup>7</sup>

Since 2003, the UNHCR has operated a dozen remote camps along a 600-kilometer stretch of the Chad-Sudan border. Recently, the task of supplying aid to these camps has been made more difficult because of growing inter-ethnic violence and armed rebellion. The upsurge in violence and deadly attacks in November and December of 2006 have left only skeleton crews in half of the 12 camps. The High Commissioner is debating a proposal by Chadian authorities to move the refugee camps 500-600km inland, away from the volatile border. This could visibly improve security for both the refugees and the humanitarian aid workers, but such a move also requires a suitable environment and infrastructure for hosting more than 200,000 people.<sup>8</sup>

### **International Criminal Court Close to Filing Darfur War Crimes Charges**

The Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) informed the U.N. Security Council on December 14, 2006 that he was almost ready to prosecute war crimes committed in Darfur during the past four years. The Council referred the Darfur issue to the ICC in March 2005, after a U.N. inquiry into whether genocide occurred in Darfur found the Government responsible for crimes under international law. The ICC, established by the Rome Statute of 1998, is designed to be a court of last resort, used when a nation's own justice system is unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute war crimes, and can try cases involving individuals charged with war crimes committed since July 2002. The prosecutor said he has enough evidence to charge a number of individuals with war crimes by February 2007.<sup>9</sup>

### **United Nations – African Union Hybrid Peacekeeping Force Accepted**

The African Union (AU) said on December 18, 2006 that the security situation in Darfur is fast deteriorating, mainly because of the re-emergence of the Janjaweed militias who they say seem to have been re-supplied and rearmed. The AU expressed deep concern at a Commission session over harassment, attacks and killings of innocent civilians. The Commission also reports 15 cease fire violation in the region.<sup>10</sup> The existing African Union peacekeeping force remains understaffed and under funded, and in late December 2006 the Sudanese government agreed with to a three-phase reform, culminating in an eventual hybrid U.N.-AU force taking over peacekeeping duties. The hybrid force is expected to have about 17,000 troops and 3,000 police officers, compared to the current AU force of about 7,000 total forces.<sup>11</sup>

President Omar el-Bashir of Sudan accepted the three-phase approach leading to the deployment of a hybrid U.N.-AU force on December 27, 2006. This response followed intensive diplomatic activity

involving outgoing U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan and his envoy, Mr. el-Bashir and other senior Sudanese government ministers on how to end the widespread suffering in Darfur. The U.N. is in the process of carrying out the first phase, which involves deploying U.N. police advisors and military officers to Darfur.<sup>12</sup> This initial group of 25 uniformed U.N. personnel arrived on December 28, 2006, and was comprised of 13 military staff officers and 12 police officers. This phase of the approach will eventually provide 105 military advisors, 33 police advisors and 48 civilian staff, as well as equipment.<sup>13</sup>

### **New U.N. Secretary-General Pledges to Give Darfur Highest Attention**

Describing the Darfur crisis as one of his top priorities in office, new Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced plans on January 2, 2007 to enter immediately into diplomatic efforts to end the bloodshed in the Sudanese region. He will attend an African Union summit at the end of January, where he is planning to meet with Sudanese President Omar el-Bashir and other African leaders. The U.N. is working with the AU to submit proposals to the Sudanese Government for plans for the second phase of the hybrid U.N.-AU force, which includes the deployment of several hundreds U.N. military, police and civilian staff to help the AU forces.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.N. Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Agencies Seek \$1.8 Billions for Projects," December 19, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Joint statement from International Rescue Committee, Concern Worldwide, Goal, World Vision, Norwegian Refugee Council, and Oxfam International, "Aid Agencies Say New Violence Threatens Humanitarian Response in Darfur," December 15, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> U.N. Integrated Regional Information Networks, "Largest Monthly Relocation of Aid Workers," December 20, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> UNHCR Press Release, "UNHCR, WFP Chiefs Alarmed Over Threats to Aid Flow in Chad," November 27, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> CNN.com, "30 Civilians Killed in Darfur," December 10, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> CNN.com, "African Union Peacekeepers Kill 3 in Darfur," December 11, 2006.

<sup>8</sup> UNHCR Briefing Notes, "HC in Chad: Emphasises UNHCR's Commitment, Urges Stronger International Presence to Improve Security," December 22, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Judy Aita, *United States Department of State, News*, "International Court Close to Filing Darfur War Crimes Charges," December 15, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Dagnachew Teklu, *The Daily Monitor, Addis Ababa*, "AU Reports Janjaweed Come-Back, Identifies Cease Fire Breaches," December 18, 2006.

<sup>11</sup> U.N. News Service, "Actors, Olympians Tell Annan the Fight to End Darfur Killings Has Reached Critical Stage," December 15, 2006.

<sup>12</sup> U.N. News Service, "Plan Leading to Hybrid UN-African Union Mission in Darfur Accepted – Annan," December 27, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> U.N. News Service, "UN Personnel Arrive in Ravaged Darfur Region to Support African Union Force," December 28, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> U.N. News Service, "Secretary-General Pledges to Give Resolution of Darfur His 'Highest Attention'," January 2, 2007.