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Sudan: The UN Security Council should stop arms transfers to Sudan and the Janjawid militia

The United Nations (UN) Security Council should stop the transfer of arms being used to commit mass human rights violations in Darfur Amnesty International urged today while releasing a report based on satellite images showing large-scale destruction of villages in Darfur over the past year.

"The Security Council draft resolution proposed by the US calling for the Sudan government to immediately fulfil all the commitments it has publicly made to cease military attacks in Darfur and to protect civilians, is welcome and long overdue," Amnesty International said.

"However, the arms embargo imposed, according to the resolution, solely against the *Janjawid* militias is not enough. We have seen ample evidence that the *Janjawid* are armed, funded and supported by the Sudanese government. Therefore any UN Security Council resolution for the suspension of transfers of arms used to commit human rights violations must be directed not only against militias, but also against the Sudan government. This suspension should be imposed immediately and should continue until human rights are secured."

The satellite photos of a small area in western Darfur, taken in March 2003 and May 2004, vividly demonstrate the pattern of destruction of villages in Darfur by the *Janjawid*. At least 155 villages bore signs of being burnt between March 2003 and May 2004 -- 44% of the villages in the satellite image.

Over the past 15 months, Amnesty International has interviewed hundreds of victims who fled from the area shown in the satellite images. Their experiences of death, destruction, rape and flight illustrate the stark picture of the satellite images.

"It was early in the morning, people were sleeping. About 400 armed people cordoned the village, with military uniforms, the same ones worn by the army, with vehicles and guns. A plane came later, to see if the operation was successful. At least 82 people were killed during the first attack. Some were shot and others, such as children and elderly, were burnt alive in their houses," a villager told Amnesty International delegates about an attack on Murli, near al-Jeneina, in August 2003.

Those who fled their villages said that Sudanese soldiers accompanied the *Janjawid* who destroyed the villages. The *Janjawid* are reported to operate out of former armed forces camps. Sudan air force planes and helicopters indiscriminately and deliberately bombed civilians and sometimes appeared to have carried out reconnaissance before and after the attacks. Members of the *Janjawid* reportedly told victims that they were attacking on government orders.

A refugee from Jafal interviewed in Chad in November 2003 said the *Janjawid* told him: *You are opponents to the regime, we must crush you. Then all the Darfur region will be in our hands. The*

government is on our side. The government plane is on our side to give us ammunition and food."

Over the past year most of the *Janjawid* have been integrated into the Sudanese Popular Defence Forces (PDF), part of the Sudanese armed forces. Those who have been displaced say that most of the *Janjawid* who accompanied the attacks were wearing army uniform.

The UN Security Council should adopt a resolution that:

immediately orders the suspension of arms transfers and related materiel used by *Janjawid* and government forces to commit human rights violations in Darfur. The resolution must include a strong monitoring mechanism which could *inter alia* investigate possible violations of the arms embargo and report periodically on its findings;

deploys human rights monitors in sufficient quantity and adequately resourced, with a clear mandate to investigate ongoing human rights violations in Darfur and the protection of civilians in particular in the IDP camps, and to make its findings and recommendations public;

creates an international commission of inquiry to examine evidence of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other violations of international humanitarian law as well as allegations of genocide and to make its findings and recommendations public.

The European Union has imposed an embargo on arms, munitions and military equipment on Sudan since 1994. In January 2004 the Council of the European Union decided to maintain the embargo in view of the ongoing civil war in the country. The United Nations (UN) should impose an arms embargo on the government of Sudan and its *Janjawid* allied militias until full respect for human rights can be ensured. Amnesty International urged today while releasing a report based on satellite images showing destruction of villages in Darfur over the past year.

**To view the satellite images showing destruction of villages in Darfur, go to:
<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAFR540722004>**

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