

PUBLIC

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UA 235/06 **Fear for safety/ fear of forcible displacement**

SUDAN **Mohamed Ahmed Kundidu (m), leader of the Um Dereisa village
Civilians in areas under rebel control in Darfur**

Amnesty International fears for the safety of all civilians living in areas under the control of armed rebel groups, as a new Sudanese government military offensive against such areas is underway in North Darfur state and is threatening in South Darfur state.

Amnesty International has documented how in its conduct of war, the Sudanese government has routinely used indiscriminate and disproportionate bombings on civilians by the Sudanese government and the Janjawid, government militias operating alongside the Sudanese army, target exclusively civilians. In such attacks, civilians are usually killed, injured, raped, abducted or forcibly displaced. These attacks seem to follow the same pattern.

On 28 August, the area of Kulkul, some 40 km northwest of North Darfur's capital al-Fasher, was heavily bombed by government Antonov aircraft, prompting civilians to flee the town and their villages. A few hours later, government troops moved in the town of Kulkul.

Alongside government attacks, government-supported Janjawid militias, reportedly coming from their base in Um Sayala, attacked the village of Um Dereisa, in Wadi Sikin, some 10km away from Kulkul. They arrested the village leader, Mohamed Ahmed Kundidu, who may be at risk of torture or "disappearance." The Janjawid also killed three men in Um Dereisa: Hamdu Issa, Abdallah Mohamed Ali and Suleiman Abdulrahman Bushara; and injured two others: Yusif Eirab and Ibrahim Hamdu Issa. The area of Sayah, north of Mellit in North Darfur, has also been under heavy bombardment since 28 August. Three people have reportedly been killed so far by the bombs in Sayah: Hawa Adam, a 25-year-old woman, Hassan Adam, her three-year-old daughter, and Adam Abaker, a 75-year-old man.

Eyewitnesses are also reporting that Sudanese government forces are moving troops towards Jebel Marra, another area under rebel control, apparently aiming to approach it from the east and the south side. They are building troops in Wana and Gardud, situated south of the Jebel Marra area, in South Darfur state, prompting fears of imminent attacks.

Peacekeepers from the African Union (AU) have been present in Darfur since 2004 with a mandate to "protect civilians under imminent threat and in the immediate vicinity". However, citing a lack of resources and a limited mandate, they rarely protect civilians under attack. On 31 August, the UN Security Council passed a resolution to send UN peacekeepers in Darfur to take over from the AU. The Sudanese government has previously stated that it would refuse to allow the UN to deploy troops in Darfur, and has instead proposed to send more of its troops to "restore security" in the region. It is now apparent that the government is massing troops in Darfur in order to attack areas under the control of armed groups which have not signed the Darfur Peace Agreement.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) took up arms against the Sudanese government in Darfur in 2003, the Sudanese government armed and supported local militia, known as the Janjawid, as a proxy force against the rebels. The Sudanese government and the Janjawid deliberately targeted civilians of the same ethnicity as the rebel groups as a counter-insurgency strategy. Some 85,000 people have been killed, around 200,000 have died as a result of conflict-related hunger or

disease, and more than two million people have been displaced. Rebel groups have also committed human rights abuses, including targeting humanitarian convoys and workers. Amnesty International and the UN have called the attacks committed in Darfur crimes against humanity and war crimes.

In May 2006, the Sudanese government and one rebel group, a faction of the Sudan Liberation Army led by Minni Minawi (known as the SLA/ MM), signed the Darfur Peace Agreement. The other SLA faction and the JEM refused to sign the agreement, saying it did not have enough guarantees on compensation, militia disarmament and political representation. Since the signing of the agreement, insecurity has worsened in Darfur, causing more killings of civilians, rapes and displacement.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to the Sudanese government, to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or Arabic or your own language:

- urging the Sudanese government to respect at all times their obligation to distinguish between combatants and civilians under international humanitarian law and not to indiscriminately or disproportionately bomb civilians; and to stop all attacks on civilians.

APPEALS TO:

Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan al-Bashir
President of the Republic of Sudan, People's Palace, PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Fax: + 249 183 779977
+ 249 183 780796 (Please mark, "FAO President")

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Dr Lam Akol Ajawin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, People's Palace, PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Fax: + 249 183 779977

Salutation: Your Excellency

and to diplomatic representatives of Sudan accredited to your country.

Please send appeals to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or Arabic or your own language:

- welcoming the efforts made by AMIS to protect civilians in Darfur;
- urging AMIS to act immediately to protect civilians under threat of attack in Darfur.

APPEALS TO:

Ambassador Baba Kingibe
African Union Special Representative for Sudan,
African Union Mission in the Sudan, P. O. Box 8372, Khartoum, Sudan

Fax: + 2491-83-582206

Email: hqamis@yahoo.com OR aucfc_khartoum@yahoo.com

Salutation: Dear Ambassador

Ambassador CRU Ihekire

Commander-in-Chief, African Union Headquarters Ceasefire Commission, El-Fasher, Sudan

Fax: + 249 731 831 457

Email: aucfc2005@yahoo.com

Salutation: Dear Ambassador

Please send appeals to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in your national government, to arrive as quickly as possible, in your own language:

- calling on them to support the protection of civilians by all necessary means, expressed in UN Security Council Resolution 1706 (passed on 31 August 2006); to immediately strengthen the African Union Mission in Sudan; to ensure there is no gap in the protection of civilians until UN peacekeepers are deployed; and to condemn the bombings by the Sudanese government immediately, which violate UN Security Council resolution 1591 (passed in 2005) which bans offensive military flights in and over Darfur.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 October 2006.