

SUDAN

Time is running out Protect the people of Darfur

"The troops that are here are not enough on the ground, they don't have enough equipment and that's why they're not operating effectively – we have to try and protect civilians but we don't have enough personnel for that,"

Brigadier General Ephraim Rurangwa, African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) deputy force commander, April 2007

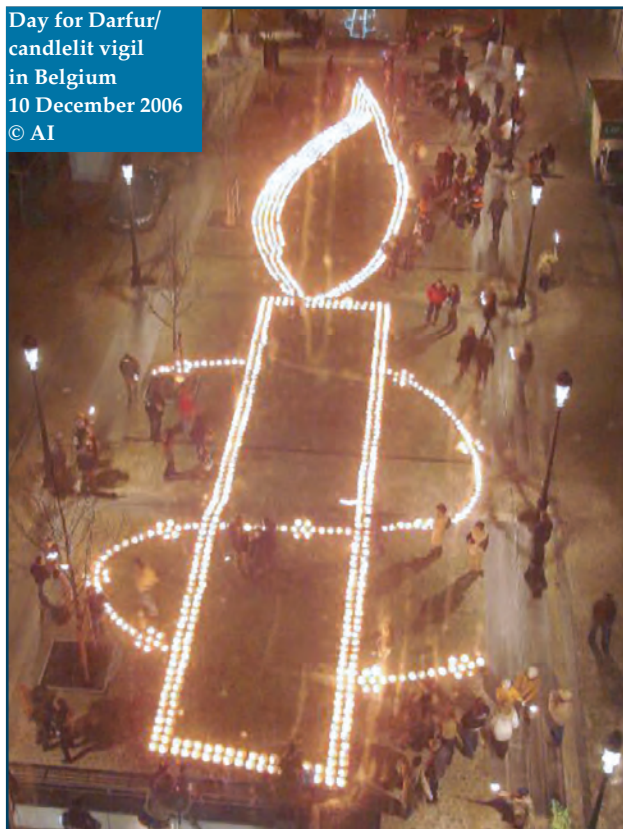
More than 200,000 people have died in the four-year conflict in Darfur, Sudan, and more than 2.5 million have been displaced from their homes. In 2007, this terrible situation has become even worse. Murder, rape, pillage and mass forced displacement continue to be used as weapons of war by Janjawid militias, supported by the Sudanese government, along with Sudanese armed forces. Armed opposition groups have also been responsible for grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

The conflict in Darfur has spread beyond Sudan's borders. Civilians in eastern Chad are now also being attacked by Sudanese Janjawid militias and their local Chadian allies, who plunder and kill with impunity. More than 140,000 internally displaced Chadian civilians are sheltering in settlements in eastern Chad as well as 230,000 refugees from Sudan.

On 29 April, Amnesty International and partner organizations will be co-ordinating global event to highlight the plight of the people of Darfur.

Anti-government armed groups operate from within Chad and Sudan and both governments accuse each other of supporting their armed opponents. In recent months relations between Chad and Sudan have deteriorated further. On 9 April 2007, Chadian and Sudanese forces clashed in Khour Baranga zone, West Darfur, with reported fatalities on both sides. Chadian soldiers had pursued Chadian opposition combatants across the border into Darfur.

Day for Darfur/
candlelit vigil
in Belgium
10 December 2006
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The Darfur Peace Agreement is faltering and is in danger of collapse. There have been clashes in Khartoum between one faction of the former Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (the faction led by Minni Minawi, Senior Assistant to the President of Sudan), and Sudanese armed forces.

Some positive steps have been taken to bring justice for the people of Darfur. On 27 February the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court presented evidence on war crimes committed in Darfur. The State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Ahmed Haroun, and the Janjawid leader, Ali Koshelb, were named. However, Sudan is refusing to co-operate with the Court so the responsibility lies with the African Union and the rest of the international community to enforce any arrest warrants issued.

Violations against civilians

Civilians in Darfur and eastern Chad remain vulnerable to attack. Insecurity has also spread to larger towns in Darfur, notably Al Genina and Al Fashir.

Fifteen civilians were killed in attacks in Kalajoh, South Darfur, from 1 to 3 December 2006: five older women, five young women and three children who were trapped in a burning house, and two men. Humanitarian aid and food stocks were also burnt.

At least 37 people were killed and 10 injured on 9 December 2006 during a Janjawid attack on a truck carrying passengers and medical supplies from Al Geneina to the village of Sirba. A group of Janjawid militia on horseback ambushed the truck, shot the driver dead, and fired a grenade into it.

Sexual violence continues unabated. On 6 April 2007, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released a report detailing widespread sexual violence during attacks by government forces and Janjawid militias in South Darfur. Between mid and late December 2006, 15

cases of sexual assault including rape were reported following attacks on villages along the road from Kutur to Deribat, South Darfur.

“K was raped when she was seven months pregnant during an attack on her village. She was raped by three men. Her baby was born and is now one year old now but has never been healthy and doesn’t cry. Both mother and baby are living the physical and psychological pain of humiliation”.

Aid worker in South Darfur, 2006

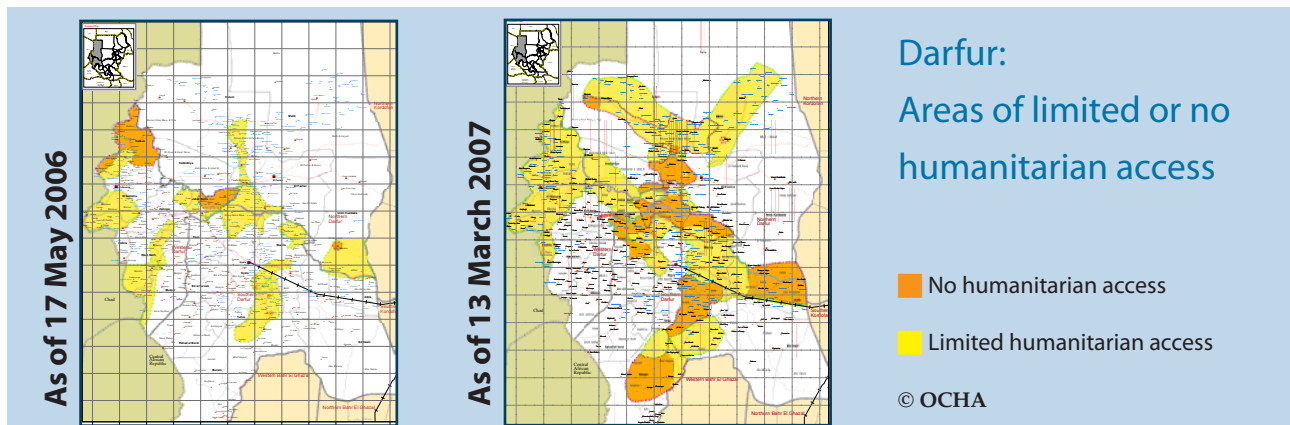
According to reports, on 22 March 2007, Sudanese Antonov bombed areas north and south of the Chadian town of Bahai. The air strikes included the area around Lake Cariari, several kilometres from the Oure Cassoni refugee camp. Oure Cassoni hosts nearly 27,000 Sudanese refugees. Several people were injured in the attack.

Insecurity for humanitarian agencies

Attacks on aid workers and humanitarian convoys continue, particularly in key towns such as Al Fashir. Between June 2006 and January 2007, 12 aid workers were killed, more than in the previous two years combined.

On 18 December 2006, a group of over 20 armed assailants raided several humanitarian agency compounds, including Action Contre la Faim and Oxfam, in Gereida, South Darfur. During the attack some staff were raped, beaten and subjected to mock executions. Gereida is host to more than 130,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), the largest IDP camp in the region.

On 16 April 2007, a group of unknown armed men hijacked two UN vehicles in an ambush on the road near Zam Zam, south of Al Fashir. They drove the vehicles away before dropping off the staff at a nearby village.





Chronology of events since November 2006

November 2006	AU Peace and Security Council endorses a three-phase plan to deploy a joint UN-AU hybrid force
December 2006	UN Human Rights Council establishes High-Level Mission to Sudan
January 2007	Phase I (Light Support Package) starts
February 2007	Prosecutor of International Criminal Court presents evidence on war crimes committed in Darfur
March 2007	High-Level Mission delivers its report to the Human Rights Council
April 2007	Sudan accepts Phase II (Heavy Support Package)

“Staff have been physically and verbally abused, offices and residences raided and personal belongings stolen. Vehicles are routinely hijacked at gunpoint, often in broad daylight, even on occasion in state capitals themselves.”

UN humanitarian chief, John Holmes, told the UN Security Council that violence against aid workers threatens the biggest humanitarian operation in the world, 4 April 2007

Urgent need for effective protection

The government of Sudan

The Sudanese government has persistently committed grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. It has failed in its responsibility to protect civilians and continues to support the Janjawid militias, which along with the Sudanese armed forces are responsible for the grave human rights violations occurring in Darfur and eastern Chad.

In addition, the government has failed to abide by most decisions and resolutions of the AU and UN, notably UN Security Council resolution 1706 (2006), has refused to co-operate with the International Criminal Court and is yet to disarm the Janjawid militias.

The African Union

The presence, since 2004, of AMIS soldiers in Darfur has provided some protection to civilians in Darfur. However, it has failed to stop the mass killings, rapes and forcible displacement of civilians in Darfur. AMIS efforts continue to be hampered by limited logistical and financial support.

Recently, AMIS has experienced a sharp increase in attacks on its personnel; a dangerous trend which is undermining and

weakening its capacity to effectively protect civilians. The worst attack to date was on 1 April 2007, when five AMIS soldiers guarding a water point in Um Baru were killed by unknown armed assailants.

On 30 November 2006, the AU Peace and Security Council agreed to extend the AMIS mandate until the end of June 2007 and endorsed a three-phase plan that would include the establishment of a hybrid UN-AU operation. Despite the reported acceptance by Sudan of this joint force, no timetable for its deployment has been agreed.

The UN

On 30 March 2007, following a report by a High-Level Mission on the human rights situation in Darfur, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution expressing deep concern about ongoing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Darfur. The Human Rights Council decided to assess the government of Sudan's willingness to improve the human rights situation in Darfur by establishing a group of independent experts (UN rapporteurs) to follow up the many resolutions and recommendations on Darfur made by UN human rights bodies.

On 16 April 2007, Sudan expressed its agreement to phase two of the three-phase support package of measures aimed at strengthening peacekeeping in Darfur. Phase one (the Light Support Package) is almost complete. Phase two (the Heavy Support Package) which is now underway will bolster current AMIS forces. For a sustainable improvement in the security situation for civilians, phase two needs to be followed speedily by phase three: the deployment of a joint UN-AU peacekeeping force. Unfortunately, the Sudanese government is currently stalling on the implementation of phase three of the support package.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Under international law, parties to an armed conflict have a responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of civilians. Deliberately targeting civilians in a situation of armed conflict is a violation of international law. It is a war crime. In some circumstances it could constitute a crime against humanity.

Time is running out for the people of Darfur and urgent action is needed now.

Amnesty International calls on the government of Sudan to:

- ▶ halt all violations of international human rights and humanitarian law
- ▶ take all effective measures to disarm the Janjawid militias in accordance with its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions and previous agreements, including the Darfur Peace Agreement
- ▶ co-operate fully with the peacekeeping forces of the African Union Mission to Sudan (AMIS)
- ▶ co-operate fully with the implementation of the Heavy Support Package to AMIS, as agreed on 16 April 2007
- ▶ extend full agreement and co-operation with the deployment of the UN-AU hybrid operation
- ▶ allow unhindered access to humanitarian agencies and human rights organizations
- ▶ co-operate with the investigation being carried out by the International Criminal Court in Darfur, to ensure that those suspected of involvement in war crimes and crimes against humanity can be brought to justice.

Send your appeals to:

Lieutenant-General Omer Hassan al-Bashir
President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces
President's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum
Sudan
Fax: + 249 183 776603 / 777583
Salutation: Your Excellency
and to the Sudan Embassy in your country.

Amnesty International calls on the United Nations to:

- ▶ proceed swiftly with the implementation of the Heavy Support Package – Phase II to ensure that AMIS is able to protect the civilian population effectively and proactively
- ▶ take all steps necessary to implement the UN-AU hybrid operation, in particular by ensuring the government of Sudan's agreement and co-operation with the operation, and by generating the necessary military, police and civilian personnel, as well as all essential financial and material resources

Send your appeals to:

Embassies of the permanent members of the UN Security Council:

China; France; Russia; UK; USA

Amnesty International calls on the African Union to:

- ▶ work expeditiously with the UN to reinforce AMIS so as to ensure that the civilian population in Darfur is effectively protected
- ▶ take all steps necessary to speedily implement the UN-AU hybrid operation needed to effectively protect the civilian population in Darfur

Send your appeals to:

Embassies of key members of the African Union:

Algeria; Egypt; Ghana; Nigeria; Rwanda; Senegal; South Africa