

Sudan  
AFR 54/001/2008

Displaced in Darfur  
A generation of anger

## CONTENTS

1. Overview	1
2. The danger round the camps	5
3. Women: the ever-present danger of rape	8
4. Inside the camps, guns are cheap	12
5. Desperate youth – a disaffected generation	15
6. Danger of forced relocations and returns	19
7. Protection for the displaced: international standards	22
8. Recommendations	24
Endnotes	26

*I went to the mountains where I found my people under rocks  
I went to Fasher where I found my people under sacks  
I went to Nyala where I found my people under trees  
I went to Jeneina where I found my people in deserted ruins  
I went to Zalingei where I found my people in valleys  
I went to Kutum where I found my people under bushes  
I went to Kabkabiya where I found my people under sacks  
I went to Kass where I found my people under trees  
I went to Wadi Saleh where I found my people in valleys*

*[refrain after each line]  
Oh my mother what is happening?  
Oh youth come here and see  
Oh youth repair your shoes*

Maryam Ammo, Fur singer

## 1. Overview

*“I call upon all to think of the people in the camps, those in exile... the lives they live,*

*lives without a future, the suffering they have endured, the hunger, the youth without hope, the thousands who have died... Should we wait before providing them with answers? Do you think that the people in the camps can wait much longer? Do you think that the people in the camps can continue living in such conditions?"*

Professor Alpha Oumar Konare, Chair of the AU Peace and Security Council,  
October 2007

More than 90,000 people are believed to have been killed as a result of the conflict in Darfur since 2003. About 200,000 are thought to have died from conflict-related causes and over 2.3 million are internally displaced. Faced with a rebellion in 2003, the Sudanese government exploited existing tensions to arm local militias and used them, with government air and ground support, to forcibly displace hundreds of thousands of people.

Most of those driven from their homes and communities are now living in more than 65 camps for internally displaced people (IDPs) dotted around Darfur.

Others are not living in camps but sheltering in towns in Darfur, squatting in shacks or living with relatives or others who have offered them a corner of their house. In addition, hundreds of others, mostly newly displaced, are sheltering in the bush, where they survive precariously on wild fruits and cereals or with help from local people whose villages have been spared.

Thousands more Darfuris escaped to towns elsewhere in Sudan, mostly in neighbouring Kordofan State. Some reached eastern Sudan, where many people from Darfur have lived for years working on economic projects, and some fled to Khartoum.

About 240,000 people from Darfur are known to be living in 12 refugee camps in eastern Chad.

Vast areas of Darfur lie desolate and almost empty except for some nomads, although there are still a few areas where a fragile balance is preserved and villages remain. In some parts of Darfur, wild millet and sorghum growing among tall grass and trees are the only signs left of old villages. In other areas, former villages are marked by burnt mud-brick walls and deserted houses.

Many families have been forcibly displaced several times, and newly displaced people continue to arrive at IDP camps. According to UN figures, another 30,000 people were displaced in October 2007 as a result of attacks on Muhageria in South Darfur, and Bir Dagig and Umm Dukhum in West Darfur.<sup>1</sup> This brought the number of people displaced between January 2007 and the end of November to approximately 280,000.

Since 2004 a massive humanitarian operation has provided food and water, primary education and health care to more than four million displaced people and people who, though not displaced, have been drawn into poverty by conflict and attacks.<sup>2</sup> But, as one former displaced person from Mershing camp put it, "The NGOs give us food and water, they cannot give us security".

[Picture caption]

A Sudanese government soldier rests at a checkpoint near the abandoned village of Um Ashab. All the villagers fled to the displaced people's camp of Zamzam, south of the town of Al-Fasher, in June 2006.

© Nasser Nasser/AP/PA

[End caption]

## **Security is hard to come by in Darfur**

The government of Sudan continues to carry out aerial and ground attacks with complete disregard for the protection of civilians. In 2006 the Darfur Peace Agreement was signed between the government of Sudan and one of the armed groups fighting in Darfur – the Sudan Liberation Army /Minni Minawi (SLA/MM). Only a few other armed factions have signed the peace agreement since. Though most of the peace agreement has not been implemented, some government posts and areas of Darfur were handed over to the SLA/MM and to other factions (collectively known as “the signatories”) which accepted the Darfur Peace Agreement.

Instead of disarming the Janjawid, as it agreed to do in many accords including under the Darfur Peace Agreement, the government of Sudan distributed more and better arms to them and incorporated them into paramilitary organizations: the Popular Defence Forces (PDF), the Popular Police, the Nomadic Police, and the Border Intelligence Guards.

Conflict between ethnic groups (including between Arab and Arab) continues. Some of the Janjawid militia wear the uniforms of the government paramilitary force, travel in government vehicles and are armed with rocket-propelled grenades. More than 400 people were killed between January and August 2007 in armed clashes when Northern Rizeigat men, mostly dressed in Border Intelligence uniforms, attacked Tarjem villages. Most of the dead were armed Tarjem villagers fighting back, but old men and those too weak to run also died.

The two armed groups which opposed the government in 2003 and attended the 2006 peace talks fragmented before the end of 2006. Various estimates put the number of armed opposition groups at more than 50, some larger and better equipped than others. Some of the armed opposition groups have no presence beyond the peace conferences taking place in Libya, and no apparent policy except the extortion of money and looting of vehicles. The non-Arab armed groups have now been joined by armed groups of Arabs, some with a political programme and links with the SLA, others made up of former Janjawid who feel that the government has cheated them. Different factions of the armed Arab groups have allied with the government, cooperated with armed opposition groups, or have remained independent, using their weaponry for looting.

Road travel throughout Darfur is dangerous – vehicles are hijacked and humanitarian workers killed, seven during October 2007 alone. From January 2007 to the end of November, 128 vehicles belonging to the UN and NGOs were hijacked and 74 humanitarian convoys were attacked. A human rights defender who travelled from Nyala to al-Fasher in October 2007 described passing through 14 checkpoints during

the 200 kilometre journey: checkpoints of the government, the Janjawid, and a multitude of different armed groups from the former SLA and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), some siding with the government and some against it.

In 2007, the conflict situation has, if anything, worsened. Since 2004 an African Union force, the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), has been in Darfur, at first solely to monitor a ceasefire agreement but later with a mandate to protect civilians. However, AMIS, with its personnel fully stretched and without adequate means of transport, has proved unable to defend itself, let alone the local population.

*“In May 2006, the humanitarian community had access to almost everybody; now we do not have access to about half a million people. We are under attack every day, we have hijacks every day, we have aid workers attacked every day. Very many humanitarian staff were held at gunpoint [and] in many cases, were detained for hours and sometimes overnight and very often they were dumped in the desert. There are large areas to which we don't have any access; areas where we have what we call sporadic access. We are starting to see the effect of the lack of access - an increase in malnutrition, more diseases that prey on children, diarrhoea.”*

Mike McDonagh, North Sudan manager for the UN Office for the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), speaking in August 2007

In September 2007, 12 AMIS peacekeepers were killed in Haskanita, apparently by forces from armed opposition groups.

Darfur is severely affected by small arms proliferation. The government flooded the area with arms, mostly given to the Janjawid militia. The myriad armed opposition groups have also imported arms into Darfur and IDP camps. Most of these arms are transported through South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Chad and Libya. Almost all IDP camps are awash with weapons. The presence of weapons and a generation of young people sitting in camps doing nothing, frustrated and angry, has led to an increase in recruitment by armed opposition groups.

*“There is a lot of anger among them and they don't know how to cope with it. This younger generation, with little education, no future or work, the only thing they can think of is to take a weapon.”*

Seifeldin Nimer, former NGO worker from Jeneina

The people forced from their homes, whether internally displaced or refugees, have suffered most during the Darfur crisis, and have generally been ignored while the armed groups and government bicker. No peace can be durable without ensuring that the human rights of the displaced are respected and protected. These rights include: the right to return home voluntarily, in safety and dignity, voluntary resettlement or local integration; the right to life and personal integrity; the right to an effective remedy including compensation, restitution and reparations; the right to freedom of expression; and an end to impunity of perpetrators. It is also essential that the economic, social and cultural rights of the people of Darfur, such as rights to adequate food, water and sanitation, housing and education, are upheld.

This report focuses on the situation of displaced people in Darfur. It makes recommendations to the Sudanese government, the armed opposition groups, the

international community, and to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), which took over from AMIS at the end of 2007. <sup>4</sup>

## 2. The danger round the camps

Internally displaced people live in a protection vacuum. The AMIS force was supposed to protect the internally displaced in Darfur, but they were plagued by shortages of personnel and were outgunned by Janjawid and armed opposition groups who often attack civilians. Sometimes AMIS only mounted one patrol a day in the whole of Darfur.

At the same time, the Sudanese Armed Forces and police, who are supposed to protect civilians, are distrusted by the IDPs. Both the army and police are seen as antagonistic rather than protective by the IDPs. There are many reports of internally displaced people being arbitrarily arrested outside IDP camps because the police or army considered them to be members of armed opposition groups. The antipathy between the internally displaced and the police has led to violent outbreaks in IDP camps. Internally displaced people have burned police posts and, as at Kalma camp in 2005, offices of the government's Humanitarian Affairs Commission (HAC).<sup>5</sup>

Most displaced people live in camps. Some are vast, such as those at Gereida (120,000), Kalma (90,000) and Abu Shouk (more than 50,000). Some, like the camps round al-Jeneina, are close enough to town to have easy access to them. Kalma is close to Nyala, a major town, but the road is usually closed or dangerous. Sudanese Armed Forces surround the camp, forcing IDPs and visitors to pass through a checkpoint.

Gereida, the largest camp in Darfur, is in an area controlled by the soldiers of SLA/MM, the SLA group which signed the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement. In September 2006, after an attack on their camp, the SLA/MM detained Masalit men who then "disappeared"; the bodies of eight were found in January 2007 in a mass grave. Internally displaced people in the camps say that SLA/MM soldiers have raped local women

Some camps, like Mosai and Hamadiya, are camps of displaced Arabs, and Arabs also live with non-Arabs in other IDP camps. Other camps, such as Kidingir and Rokoro, are remote, in areas controlled by armed groups. Humanitarian organizations often struggle to reach these areas and access the camps only intermittently.

IDP camps contain a whole cross-section of society. Although most of the internally displaced are farmers, camps also include doctors, teachers, engineers, and at least one former member of parliament who prefers to stay close to the people he represented. Most camps have an internal government system of shaikhs elected by different sectors. Women are notably absent from the highest positions, but most camps have a parallel leadership of women shaikhas. The largest camps, like Kalma, have instituted a form of community police and a justice system. Here, the local shaikhs of each sector ensure that the offender appears and, if a fine is levied, the

camp sector is responsible for paying it.

[Picture caption]

Janjawid militiamen on horseback close to the border with Chad.

© Espen Rasmussen/Panos

[end caption]

While most internally displaced people live in camps, many others shelter in towns near to their destroyed villages. In some towns, such as Kabkabiya, there is no camp. There the displaced live among the people of the town, which has led to an almost fourfold increase in the population. Other internally displaced people shelter in the bush where, inevitably, they have least access to aid and protection. After the AMIS peacekeepers were killed in Haskanita in September 2007, the Sudanese Armed Forces occupied and burned the town and the population fled to the bush. The government blocked the roads to the area and, according to the UN, it was one month before aid reached the displaced people.

Internally displaced people in the Labado area suffered in the same way. Although many villagers were displaced and their crops destroyed as a result of fighting during the month of Ramadan (September-October 2007), by December the UN still had no access to the area. Government checkpoints block the roads to the region and NGOs were prevented from assisting the population. These displaced people lived in shelters under trees and, in the harvest season, they were helped by neighbouring villages whose crops had not been destroyed.

In many areas of Darfur roads are under the control of roaming Janjawid militias or factions of armed opposition groups, equally ready to attack passers-by. Government armed forces, police paramilitaries, Janjawid and other armed groups establish checkpoints where they often extort money from travellers. Convoys are hijacked and buses are stopped.

*“On Sunday we left Mokjar to Foro Baranga. First there was a routine search by the police and we got out at the police point. After we left we found an Arab checkpoint. They made us get down from the car. They put us in a row to search us. We told them that we had already been searched by the police. The Arabs said: ‘We don't recognize that searching’. They looked at our IDs and mine was OK, but some of us hadn't got IDs. Then they took them to a control and told them to pay a fine of SDP10,000 (US\$5) and said if they did not pay they could not go. Some paid, but three had no money. The driver paid for them. There were some Arabs in the car but they did not have to pay.”*

“Yaqoub”, a local government official

Often it is not clear if those who attack vehicles are from the Janjawid or armed groups, or are simply roadside robbers. In many parts of Darfur there is a pattern of armed militias extorting money from local people through road blocks, seizing belongings or demanding blood money.<sup>6</sup>

In August 2007, 17 men and boys from camps round Kidingir (a camp in an SLA-held part of Jebel Marra) were kidnapped on the road from Nyala by Janjawid. In a telephone interview, the leader of the Arab group who had kidnapped the men and

boys gave various reasons for his ransom demands. He said that the money was a fine for entering an area regarded as Arab territory, and that it was blood money, diya, for four Arabs he alleged had been killed by the IDPs. The 17 were released when half the money was paid, and the internally displaced people now live in fear as they have not paid the remainder of the ransom.

[Box]

A group of 17 internally displaced people from camps in the region of Kidingir in Jebel Marra were kidnapped by Janjawid in August 2007.

“We were coming back from Nyala to go to Kidingir Camp, mostly merchants and some students, some coming from Khartoum. We were travelling by lorry, and when we got to Jabra we were stopped by the Janjawid. It was on 2 August 2007. They were Arabs, 54 altogether, some in uniform and some in jallabiyas, riding on horses and camels. They came from the Jallul Nawa’iba [a nomad group]. They released five women who were with us and told us that we shouldn’t have come through Jabra, it was their land and we would have to pay SDP 210,000,000 [about US\$105,000].

“There were 17 of us; the oldest was 55 and the youngest was eight. They tied us up in threes with ropes and started to walk us to the north. The boy of eight was not tied. We walked for three days. When we arrived there was a camp of Arabs but we were outside, tied to trees. On the way and from time to time while we were under the trees, they would whip us or beat us with gun butts or with their hands. They didn’t beat the child. We were given insufficient food, just one meal a day... Two of us fell sick. After 65 days tied up we were released, but it took us three days to walk back.

“We arrived back on 12 October. We had been away for 71 days. We heard that people had contributed to pay half the ransom money, and the other half should be paid after a month. But there is no money around here. We did not complain to the government – where would we complain to? The police are part of it”.

Adam Abdallah, an internally displaced person at Kidingir  
[end box]

### **3. Women: the ever-present danger of rape**

*“Women have always been the sources of our culture, the repositories of history, poetry, story-telling. It is because of this that Fur culture has not died in the camps.”*  
Mohammed Baraka, former MP for Kabkabiya, 2007

As one woman in al-Da’ein camp in South Darfur told John Holmes, Emergency Relief Coordinator on 30 November 2007, women are the main victims of the conflict. “We have lost husbands, villages and families, and we are still not safe even to go to town, collect firewood, and this has been the situation for the last four years”.

There are more women in the IDP camps than men. Sometimes men of the family have been killed or travelled elsewhere. Although the main positions of authority in every camp are held by men, there are many households headed by women and, as so often in crisis and war, it is women who hold families together.

In Darfur the attacks which drove people to flee their lands were accompanied not only by killing but also by rape. Women were raped on an unprecedented scale during the campaign of massive forced displacement after 2003. Janjawid militias used rape as a weapon to humiliate and punish those they attacked, often carrying out these assaults in public and carrying off some women to militia camps to live for months in sexual slavery. 8

As the displaced fled the countryside seeking refuge in camps or villages, the Janjawid continued to attack and rape women who ventured outside in search of firewood or to go to the market. These rapes have a dual purpose: each rape or attack warns those who have fled that only inside the camps are they safe -- their land belongs to the Janjawid.

*“All around the camp there is not enough wood. But the Arab Jammala<sup>9</sup> dominate the area and we daren’t go far out. If you are a man you will be beaten, if you are a woman you will be raped. They don’t usually kill you. If you submit to being beaten they will just beat you, but if you struggle they will kill you. The women they will rape”.*

“Ahmad”, internally displaced man from Durti Camp, November 2007

[Picture caption]

Women carrying bundles of firewood at the Kalma refugee camp for internally displaced people. Women who leave the camp to collect wood or go to market are at risk of violent attack. Many have been raped.

© Sven Torfinn/Panos

[end caption]

Soon after AMIS forces arrived in Darfur in 2004, some units started carrying out “firewood patrols” to protect women from harassment while they were outside the camp gathering firewood or fetching water. But these patrols never covered more than a few camps. Recently, such firewood patrols have all but ceased.

*“The women are afraid to go out for firewood, they are afraid of the Janjawid and others. In the past the AU used to protect them, but for the past year they have stopped”.*

“Fatima”, an internally displaced woman from Zalingei, November 2007

In every camp where Amnesty International contacted the displaced, the same story was repeated. The camps are surrounded nowadays by an ever-widening belt of devastated land with hardly a tree standing. NGOs try to provide substitutes for firewood and more efficient cooking stoves, but when women leave the camp the pattern of rape continues.

*“Women are still going out to collect firewood which is a danger to them as they may be raped. But we men are still letting them go out because the men who collect firewood may be killed”.*

“Mahmud”, an internally displaced person in al-Jeneina, November 2007

In Zalingei, in West Darfur, an area of instability and conflict, both killings of men and rapes of women are frequent. The perpetrators commit these abuses with



impunity. Although most victims accuse Janjawid militia, there have also been reports of rape committed by members of the Sudanese army, the police and other armed opposition groups, including SLA/MM soldiers. Women also report that they are not safe from rape by displaced men inside IDP camps.

Rape is under-reported and most rape victims try to hide what has happened. Because they know that no one will be arrested for the crime, there is little point in a woman harming her own reputation and damaging her prospects of marriage. If a raped woman needs medical treatment, she prefers to seek it at a clinic run by an NGO rather than a government hospital. Formerly, women had to fill in a form (Form 8) to report the rape before they were entitled to receive treatment. While this is no longer necessary, the deep-rooted unwillingness to go to the police persists.

Most victims that Amnesty International spoke to said that the police rarely investigate cases of rape reported to them. When they do investigate, perpetrators are rarely found and arrested, and if a suspect is detained the case rarely comes to court. If the alleged rapists are members of the Sudanese Armed Forces, justice appears to be impossible. Even when the victim is able to give names of those who raped her, the armed forces refuse to investigate such cases and the police, even when willing, feel powerless to make arrests.

Only too often, it is the person who makes the complaint who is arrested. In the past some women who complained about rape were arrested for adultery. However, possibly helped by the fact that UN human rights monitors follow up all reported cases of rape, no such case has been recorded in Darfur over the past two years.

A report by the UN Group of Experts documents 57 reported cases of rape, mostly in the second half of 2007. About 20 of them were carried out by members of the Sudan Armed Forces, some were by police and most of the others were by unknown armed men. In one case an armed man raped a woman who was gathering firewood with a group of nine other women two kilometres from Niyertiti North IDP camp. She was eight months pregnant, so had not been able to escape like her companions. She received injuries to her back and hands but did not report the case to the police, convinced that they would take no action.<sup>11</sup>

[Box]

“It was in May last summer (2007) when we left the camp. We were five girls, all friends aged about 13-16, to collect firewood.

“We didn’t want to go far because there had been lots of attacks against women and our parents told us to be careful and look out for anything. So we decided that it would be safer for us to get the firewood in the area close to the military camp.

“We started collecting the wood, when suddenly three armed men in khaki uniforms appeared, coming toward us. We thought they were soldiers because the Janjawid are usually on horse and camel back. When they came closer they said ‘al-salam ‘aleikum’ (peace be on you) and we responded ‘wa ‘aleikum salam’ (and on you be peace). Then one of them asked me for water, but I told him that we were here to collect wood and we hadn't any water. I added that he could find water in the nearby

café.

“They went away and we decided to finish and bundle up what we had already collected without delay. While we were doing this three men came, not in uniform, and they came straight up to us. I recognized the one who had been talking to me and I shouted that they were the same men, and we should go even without the wood. Then the man came closer. He said ‘You Fur women, you live now in camps like chickens, because the Fur youths are leading the rebellion against the government’ ... I shouted to the rest of the girls to escape. When we started to run, we heard a gunshot and they shouted: ‘Stop or we will shoot you all!’ He told us to sit down and everyone sat down where she was.

“They tried to lead us to a nearby khor (dried-up watercourse). We whispered to each other to run in different directions. When we started running another bullet was fired and in panic I tripped over a rock and fell down. Three of the girls succeeded in escaping. The same man came to me directly. He said: ‘You talk too much, you are the one who told the rest to run, you are arrogant as the rebels, and impolite like them’. I said ‘You are afraid of them and show bravery against women’. He slapped me on the right cheek and I fell down. One of the others said to him: ‘Don't hit the slave (khadim) your hands will never be cleaned from her dirt’. The man started pulling away my tawb (cloth) while I was on the ground, I pushed him away and he fell down. I stood up and took a big stone to pound him but one of them caught me strongly from behind and brought me to the ground again. Both of them started to strip me, then started raping me till I fell unconscious. When I was conscious I found myself naked and my body was covered in urine. Seeing this, I started shouting and crying madly.

“My elder brother had rushed to the area after he had heard the story from the girls who fled. He heard me and came and found me. Seeing me he fell down, he couldn't bear to look at me in that situation and he threw his jallabiya over me to put on. He himself started weeping bitterly. Then he took me to another place to hide until sunset, after that we came to the camp. I went to our tent, and my brother went directly to the camp sheikh to report the case.

“The sheikh, who is a nice person, came to see me. He told my family that was a real crime but the security personnel do not allow him to report such cases, so we have to go to the police. So the sheikh came with us to the police of Zalingei. The duty policeman was an Arab and when my brother and the sheikh began the story he interrupted them saying, ‘The girl looks very clean, who can believe that she has been raped?’ My brother told him that my body was covered with urine so I had to wash it. But the policeman didn't agree to report the case and didn't give a Form 8, telling us that these cases should be reported during the morning working hours. My mother was crying, the policeman told her to stop or she would be detained. My brother told him that my mother could do nothing but cry as procedures are too rigid to help the victims. The policeman jumped off his chair and called another policeman to detain my brother claiming that he had insulted the police and caused public disorder. My brother stayed detained there for four weeks without trial.

“Now I am OK and now married, but I will never forget what happened.... I have a feeling that one day I will join the movements to take revenge for what happened to me. I know the men who raped me. I always keep a knife with me; if ever I meet them

or one of them I will not hesitate to stab...

“The images of that day occupied my mind. I can’t say I have completely recovered. The shock is still terrible. I don’t trust the police and will never trust them.”

“Amina” (This displaced girl asked for not only her name but also the name of her camp to be kept confidential.)

[End box]

## 4. Inside the camps, guns are cheap

*“The movements and supporters of the governments have weapons in the camps, in general they are J-3s and Kalashnikovs. The government gives the security forces some weapons and we think it’s to murder some people, but I don’t know any names. Also the movements may kill people who they believe are security spies”.*

“Mahmud”, an activist from Jeneina

The political colour of the camps constantly changes. In some IDP camps the people are hostile to all the armed groups, in others they maintain a passionate and militant allegiance to one armed opposition group, or are split between different armed opposition groups.

Many camps have experienced internal tensions, especially those with a minority supporting the SLA/MM which signed the peace agreement with the government. In some camps supporters of one of the armed groups, often SLA/Abdel Wahed, use the camp structure to dominate the camp. However, notwithstanding the frustrations and tensions of four years with no solution in sight, most camps have managed to ensure that divisions along either ethnic or political lines are minimized. In Abu Shouq camp there were days of angry demonstrations targeted at those who failed to support Abdel Wahed Mohammed Nur, the leader of the SLA, and now the most bitter opponent of the Darfur Peace Agreement. For days the camp was too tense for humanitarian workers to enter, but eventually, according to the camp administration, they persuaded all sides that those who differed in their political allegiances should live peacefully together.

Kalma is an exceptional camp. It is the second largest, with at least 90,000 inhabitants (local camp officials say the actual number is twice that) and 29 different ethnic groups. It is overcrowded and conditions are often squalid. Here, as in some other camps, relations between ethnic groups which were once allies have deteriorated since the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement by Minni Minawi, a Zaghawa, and the refusal to sign by Abdel Wahed Mohamed Nur, a Fur. The camp is guarded by security with checkpoints at the entrance to the camp, and police often stop people from entering or leaving.

[Picture caption]

A small boy looks through the window of a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) vehicle with a 'No Arms' sticker near the Kalma camp for internally displaced people.

© Sven Torfinn/Panos

[end caption]

All the ethnic groups in Kalma camp have arms. At one time there was a strong and united youth organization; but recently, according to UN and other sources who have visited the camps, youth have formed vigilante groups, divided by their ethnic origin: Fur, Masalit, Zaghawa and Dajo. The UN recorded more than 10 incidents involving arms between 16 and 22 October 2007, commenting that "Much of the violence has been attributed to armed Fur, including children, against other tribes in the camp". For instance, on 16-17 October there were gunfights between Zaghawa and Masalit, supporting SLA/MM, and Fur and Dajo, supporting SLA/AW. On 18 October, there were clashes in which at least four women and children were wounded. Shopkeepers were ordered to close, destroying shop displays and firing in the air. The next day they returned and beat civilians.<sup>12</sup>

The presence of weapons in IDP camps has led to a deterioration in security. Weapons are cheap. Sources said that in some IDP camps a revolver could be bought for only \$25. This proliferation of weapons exacerbates incidents of theft and assault. In the charged atmosphere, with political disagreements and suspicions that some are government informers, quarrels have led to shooting incidents.

*"In Krindig camp in Jeneina there are guns, everyone has a weapon, but they are normally buried. The government may come to raid the camp early in the morning with their guns. You don't feel any authority in Krindig camp".*

"Abdel Rahman", an NGO activist from Jeneina

Although the government has an obligation to preserve the civilian and humanitarian nature of IDP camps, it has largely failed to do so. The situation is compounded by the fact that internally displaced people are suspicious of initiatives put forward by the government. Internally displaced people that Amnesty International spoke to blamed the government for their predicament and stated that until they felt more secure, they were unwilling to give up their arms.

In addition, people housed in IDP camps fear raids by government security forces searching for arms, which are invariably accompanied by arrests and random beatings. On 20 November 2007 police announced that residents of Kalma camp should surrender all arms within three days and that police would "seize all unsubmitted weapons by force after the expiration of the date given". In response residents built roadblocks within the camp. NGO observers described panic within the camp at the impending raid. Members of the camp leadership admitted to Amnesty International that there were arms within the camp, and said that they would be willing to surrender arms, but only to a force of AMIS and the UN. Eventually, through the intervention of the UN and AMIS, no raid took place – but neither did any operation to disarm the camp.

In the camps round Zalingei, there was a spate of attacks in June 2007 in which arms were used, resulting in the killing of at least five camp residents, often by unidentified gunmen. One activist and camp leader, Adam Adam, an employee of a humanitarian NGO who worked as a guard and pump operator at a water point in Khamsa Degaig Camp, was shot at point-blank range by three gunmen.

## 5. Desperate youth – a disaffected generation

*“How many are dead and who will look after the families? Look at the camps - there is no security and no secondary schools. This generation will be the generation of anger, boys and girls.”*

“Mohammed”, a Darfur political activist

Of the four million people affected by the conflict in Darfur, 1.8 million are children under 18. About one million are children who have been displaced. Since April 2006 there are 120,000 newly displaced children.<sup>13</sup>

Thanks to a massive mobilization by UNICEF and NGOs, there are primary schools in every camp. A total of 28 per cent of primary age children go to school, 46 per cent of them girls. Although the overall figure is low, it is higher than it was before the Darfur crisis.

But before the crisis young people would have access to farming and other work. Now they do not. Some boys who live close to towns in relatively safe areas find work carrying loads, herding animals and working in the market. However, for the most part, the young sit in the camps doing nothing.

*“The boys have nothing to do, they have no work, they just play football or our traditional games. You see more than 100 sitting under a tree. In the past they would perhaps make little things out of what they could find, metal toys and carts, but now there are not even the materials for that and they can’t go outside the camp to look for materials”.*

“Ibrahim”, a Masalit from Gereida

*“The boys of 18, they are lost, they have no work, especially the graduates, they live on relief”.*

“Ali”, an internally displaced person from Abu Shouk Camp

Displaced girls who live in or near towns may find low-paid work washing clothes or as cleaners. They are highly vulnerable to abuse.

[Picture caption]

Members of the armed group, the Sudan Liberation Army, in a truck on the outskirts of Gereida town.

© Sven Torfinn/Panos

[end caption]

*“The girls who go to town and work have to work very hard as payments are very low, they are washing clothes all the day. One girl was not given food the whole day and just given biscuits, she was totally exhausted. They are working very hard to get independence from their parents, but the money they earn they often spend it just on cosmetics. ...Sometimes they are abused and get pregnant; .... Then they may have an abortion, they put their lives in danger, it is done in the dark...”*

“Abdel Rahman”, an NGO activist from al-Jeneina

Sometimes, as in Kalma camp, youths have formed vigilante groups. The young live in a situation where there appears to be no hope for the present, and whatever they do, they may be accused of belonging to an armed group. Angry and frustrated, some join armed groups, although camp leaders deny this.

*“Teenage boys can’t leave the camps, if they move the government will investigate them, they may beat them or arrest them with the accusation that they support the Tora Bora and call them outlaws. As for the boys, if they find despair they may join the movements but their parents don’t want them to and if they are young, the movements won’t accept them.”* 14

“Ibrahim”, a member of the administrative committee of Kalma Camp

*“In the camps round Jeneina, the youth are a very angry group who have not seen any life but that in the camps, war and camp life, and they question why they are living on the outskirts of a town where people are living a decent life just a few metres away. It would not be easy for them to go back to their villages. There is no secondary education, no vocational training, nothing but to join a fighting group”.*

Seifeldin Nimer, former NGO worker from Jeneina

Adults talk of their despair at the “disconnection” in society where “the young do not listen to us, as we have no work”.

*“All sorts of things are happening which did not happen before. In Kabkabiya there is begging by IDPs in markets, and government offices and organizations. There was nothing like that in the past. They even go to restaurants and eat the remains of the food which is thrown away. Now smoking bhangu [marijuana] is spreading and smelling petrol. There is indiscriminate shooting at night and no one is secure. Some of the youth go to join the movements, due to these pressures.”*

“Adam”, a worker in Kabkabiya

It is extremely difficult to estimate the scale of child recruitment into armed groups, the Janjawid and paramilitary groups. Talking to the leadership of two different factions of the SLA in the Jebel Marra area, each individually agreed that child recruitment had happened in the past “but then the Red Cross organized a workshop and told us that we weren’t to go on recruiting children, so we stopped recruiting them and sent them back”.

[Picture caption]

Displaced families inspect the charred remains of their homes after a fire at the Kalma refugee camp for internally displaced people. Kalma camp is home to tens of thousands of people who fled their homes in Darfur following violent attacks by government-backed militias.

© Sven Torfinn/Panos

[end caption]

## **6. Danger of forced relocations and returns**

*“I am alarmed about the reports of forced relocation last night from Otash camp in Nyala, South Darfur, both about the manner in which the relocations were apparently carried out and the possibility that such action could contribute to more violence. We*

*have had many meetings with the Government of Sudan, stressing that any relocation should be voluntary and should adhere to the guiding principles of internal displacement.”*

John Holmes, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, 29 October 2007

From the beginning of the Darfur crisis local administrators in Darfur put pressure on the displaced to leave the camps and return to their villages, but the displaced have consistently refused, saying that they do not feel safe.

On 22 August 2004 the government of Sudan signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) providing guarantees that returns would be voluntary and carried out under conditions of security and that IOM would have full access to internally displaced persons. This Memorandum of Understanding has been consistently breached.

According to international law, internally displaced people must be enabled to participate fully and freely in any decision as to whether they should remain where they are, return to their homes, or settle elsewhere in the country. To do this they need information: information about the situation in their area of origin or resettlement; information about the procedures for return or resettlement; and information about future conditions, including access to housing, land and livelihoods.<sup>15</sup>

While most displaced people do not feel safe enough to leave the camps and return to their villages, a few areas over the past year have seen agreements emerge between armed opposition groups and local Arab groups which have created safe enclaves where people have been able to return and farm. Such agreements and returns give hope for the future, but they are very much the exception. Mostly, although the government may be involved in registering such reconciliation agreements, farmers live under the control of Arab groups or the protection of armed groups. In both cases they may pay taxes, but living under the control of Arab groups they are virtually prisoners.<sup>16</sup>

[Box]

“I come from Durso village, in Shataya in Kass Province, South Darfur. In March 2004 there were attacks on the villages and we fled. I was a student at Nyala University but I couldn’t finish because of the war conditions. In Durso we had a farm of 4 feddan, [16,800m<sup>2</sup>] with 40 lemon and guava trees. We grew tomatoes and shatta [hot red pepper]. I had 72 cattle, 27 of them belonging to my grandfather, 15 sheep, 33 goats and seven horses. In April 2006 the government told us that security conditions were good, though I did not feel it was safe to go back. However they put pressure on me because earlier I had been detained by them. So they said ‘We don’t want to see you any more in the camp’. I was frightened so I took public transport to Nyala and then to my village. I took my mother and my 18-year-old brother Osman with me, and I left my wife in Kalma Camp.

“Durso formerly had 680 families living there but when I arrived there were about 15 people in the village, three of them Arabs. The Arabs were dressed as though they were in the Sudanese army and they were carrying weapons and had two Thuraya satellite phones. They said there was no problem and they were encouraging people to

farm. Otherwise the village was deserted. All of us there went out to farm during the day and at night we all slept together under the guard of the Arabs. Four among us were women. I grew tomatoes and shatta and my brother planted beans and millet. The others grew the same crops.

“We stayed for more than four months in the village and we saw that there was going to be a good harvest. Then, before we had begun to harvest but after they knew that the crop was good, seven armed Arabs came at 9 on a Friday evening from the west of the village. They untied my two goats and they shot my brother Osman and killed him. That was in September 2006. We also heard shooting clearly in the east of the village and the news was that Idris and Mubarak and Gubba were killed and Osman Abaker was killed in Silba village 30 minutes walk from ours. The Arabs rode onto the land and ruined the crops and we were not able to harvest anything. I took my mother to Kass Camp, where my father was, and I went back to Kalma Camp. So now I know that what the government told me was lies and not true”.

Omar Ali, aged 32, living in Kalma Camp  
[End box]

Land and agriculture is of such importance to the displaced that some will make great sacrifices in order to farm. Around the huts in Ardamata camp, displaced people have planted seeds to grow limited quantities of crops on even the smallest plots of land. In many camps, during the rainy season, displaced people try to plant on land on the outskirts of the camps. In other places, such as Tawila, displaced people risk Janjawid attacks by going for two or three days to Jebel Marra, where they prepare land and sow crops while hiding from the Janjawid, then return to the camp for safety.

Most of those who have returned home face difficulties and insecurity. In many areas groups of Arabs are occupying land deserted between 2003 and 2005 by sedentary farmers. In some instances they are farming these lands; often they are simply using the land for grazing. Among those settled on land of the displaced in parts of West Darfur including Wadi Saleh and Wadi Azoum are more than 30,000 people who crossed the border from Chad, mostly from Arab groups; they were recognized by UNHCR as refugees. The UNHCR report called for the original owners of the land to be able to return to their villages when it is safe; nevertheless the decision is considered by those displaced as ratifying a land seizure.<sup>17</sup>

According to government statistics, which cannot be confirmed, tens of thousands of displaced people have returned to their lands. Without access to Darfur, Amnesty International has documented few cases of people who have succeeded in returning to farm in their villages. On the other hand, accounts of insecurity and difficulties in returning home are very frequent.

For example, a small number of displaced people from villages near Zalingei returned to their villages, Margouba and Talga Shab’an.<sup>18</sup> When they arrived there they were attacked, reportedly by Janjawid, and they fled back the same day to Zalingei. In 2007 the government revived its push to encourage or force internally displaced people out of some camps. The government targeted Kalma, apparently with the aim of moving the displaced to other camps where it has more control, or encouraging them to return to villages near their homes. After the disturbances by armed factions within the camp



described above (see pages 14-15), about 10,000 internally displaced people, mostly Zaghawa, fled to other camps in the area (Direig, Otash, al-Salam, al-Serif, Sakali) or to Nyala town. On 19 October the government of Sudan entered Kalma camp. In the operation that followed one internally displaced person was reportedly killed, at least 17 were wounded and approximately 175 IDP shelters were burnt. On 20 October the HAC representative told a meeting of UN agencies and NGOs in the presence of the Governor of South Darfur that they intended to relocate IDPs as of 22 October, and gave a list of “locations they were promoting as areas of resettlement”.<sup>19</sup>

During the afternoon of 29 October 2007, the Sudanese army and police entered Otash Camp, where many of those who had fled the internal fighting in Kalma had taken refuge. The security forces forcibly evicted the recent arrivals in order to relocate them to a village named Amakisara, 23km from Nyala. Members of AMIS, including military personnel, observers and AMIS police, went to the camp, but were ordered to leave by the army colonel conducting the operation. They saw camp residents fleeing while tents were destroyed and property was carried away in trucks. Some 36 people were arrested and hundreds were thrown on to trucks and taken away. Apparently a number were taken to Amakisara. Reports indicate that the residents of Amasikara were neither prepared nor happy to receive displaced people. Most of those deposited at the site eventually made their way back to Kalma Camp.

In other camps the government has used a mixture of persuasion (paying money to poor families) and pressure to persuade internally displaced people to move. Dozens of internally displaced people told Amnesty International that they would only accept government resettlement villages which were built at the site of their old village; they wanted to return to their villages but it was not safe.

The government frequently tries to move the displaced to villages rather than to camps. Often these villages are near their original homes, and the government’s actions may constitute forcible return.

While it is important to ensure that individual camps do not grow too overcrowded and militarization of camps must be prevented, the authorities should not in any circumstances forcibly displace people from IDP camps and return them to their places of origin. Darfur is still engulfed by conflict. Forcible returns will only serve to expose the people to more danger, and put them beyond the reach of humanitarian organizations. Amnesty International also calls on the government of Sudan not to breach the agreements that it reached with the UN and IOM not to forcibly return IDPs. Moving internally displaced people should always be done on the basis of full and informed consent and in a manner which ensures their safety and dignity.

## **7. Protection for the displaced: international standards**

*“Internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border”.*<sup>20</sup>

People who are forcibly displaced and cross an international border may come under the protection of the 1951 Refugee Convention, its 1967 Protocol, or the 1969 Organization of African Union Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. Internally displaced people do not have the same protection under international law as refugees and do not have a specific international treaty to protect them. Unlike refugees, the internally displaced remain within the country of their habitual residence. IDPs should enjoy the same rights and freedoms under international and domestic law as other people in their country. They should be protected under international human rights and humanitarian law,<sup>21</sup> domestic and regional law. The tragedy of the internally displaced is that often, as in the case of Sudan, the entity charged with protecting them is also the one that has caused them to flee.

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (the Guiding Principles) “identify rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of persons from forced displacement and to their protection and assistance during displacement as well as during return or resettlement and reintegration.”<sup>22</sup> The Guiding Principles reflect international human rights law and international humanitarian law and Amnesty International believes that these principles should be an integral part of a state’s response to situations of internal displacement.

The Guiding Principles reaffirm the following internationally guaranteed human rights, among others:

- The right not to be arbitrarily displaced (Principle 6)
- The right to enjoy the same rights as all and not to be discriminated against because of their displacement (Principle 1)
- The right to food, water, shelter, dignity and safety. If national authorities cannot provide these they should accept the assistance of the international community (Principles 8 and 18)
- Protection from direct or indirect attacks, torture, rape and sexual exploitation (Principles 10 and 11)
- The right to freedom of movement and freedom to choose one’s place of residence. “In particular, internally displaced persons have the right to move freely in and out of camps or other settlements” (Principle 14); Art 12 (3) of the ICCPR, to which Sudan is a party, also guarantees the right to liberty of movement and freedom of everyone to choose his/her residence.
- The right to seek safety in another part of the country. (Principle 15)

The government of Sudan has stated its acceptance of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement in a number of declarations. In particular, the Khartoum Principles of 2003<sup>23</sup> reaffirm points of the Guiding Principles and state that:

*“the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement [are] a useful tool for developing and evaluating appropriate national policies and legislation on internal displacement and... compile the existing international law related to internal displacement;”*

Nevertheless the government of Sudan has shown that it is unwilling to protect civilians in Darfur, whether displaced or not.

The government of Sudan is a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the African Charter for Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) which enshrine rights to life, physical integrity, and protection from torture and rape among others. Article 12(1) of the ACHPR guarantees every individual’s “right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of a state provided he abides by the law”. The UN Human Rights Committee has also stated that Article 12(3) of the ICCPR, which guarantees the right to liberty of movement and freedom of everyone to choose his/her residence, “includes protection against all forms of forced internal displacement”.

## **8. Recommendations**

*“The government puts pressure on us always to return home. But we say that we cannot go home until the reasons which made us leave are sorted out.”*

“Abdel Rahman”, a Masalit from Gereida

Amnesty International’s recommendations to the Sudanese Government:

- Cease obstructing the complete deployment of UNAMID.
- Facilitate, rather than impede, the operations of UNAMID, ensuring its swift deployment and providing it with all necessary facilities and full freedom of movement.
- Disarm the Janjawid militias and ensure strong command control of all governmental paramilitary forces, pending their disarmament as part of an integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration program.
- Ensure that there is a safety zone round all IDP camps. Janjawid militias, paramilitary forces, and armed groups should be barred from approaching IDP camps.
- End impunity for human rights abuses: ensure that anyone who attacks internally displaced people is brought to justice.
- End all forced displacement and forced returns of internally displaced people.
- Ensure that all IDPs, including those in camps, have access at the very least to minimum essential levels of food, water, shelter, health services.
- Ensure that all IDP camps are adequately located to ensure the safety of internally displaced people as well as their access to employment options, health-care services, schools, child-care centres and other social facilities.
- Ensure that internally displaced people’s right to freedom of movement is respected and that they are not relocated against their will.
- Ensure that all internally displaced children receive free and compulsory primary education until the minimum age of employment and take steps to ensure progressively equal access for internally displaced people to secondary schooling.
- Ensure that internally displaced people receive restitution of housing, land and

property, or reparation and compensation where this is not possible, for losses or damages sustained as a result of the conflict.

Amnesty International's recommendations to the armed opposition groups

- Stop attacking civilians, whether directly or indiscriminately.
- Stop bringing arms into IDP camps.
- Stop recruiting child soldiers.
- Cease obstructing the complete deployment of UNAMID and desist from attacking or threatening to attack UNAMID forces.
- Respect the civilian and humanitarian character of IDP camps.

Amnesty International's recommendation to the international community:

- Ensure that UNAMID has sufficient resources and personnel to protect civilians effectively.

Amnesty International's recommendations to UNAMID:

- Ensure protection for people in IDP camps by stationing units of the UN protection force near each camp, and by constant patrolling, including by accompanying IDPs collecting firewood or visiting the market.
- Protect humanitarian aid and vehicles by providing armed escorts if necessary and ensure the safety of roads by constant patrolling.
- Ensure that IDP camps are located in secure areas and that any relocation of camps is carried out with the agreement of the internally displaced people.
- Facilitate safe, dignified and voluntary return for internally displaced people. UNAMID should also facilitate local integration or resettlement elsewhere if that is the preferred choice of the people involved. Ensure that relocations and returns are voluntary by requiring the participation of internally displaced people in all decision-making and the provision of all necessary information.
- Ensure that an effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme is implemented for all armed groups operating in Darfur.
- Take measures to ensure the civilian character of camps by carrying out a screening programme to separate armed elements from other internally displaced people and carrying out a programme of disarmament in the camps. Internally displaced people will only accept such a programme if they are confident that an outside peacekeeping force is able to protect them.
- Ensure that political and civil officers of UNAMID enter into a close and sustained dialogue with internally displaced people both inside and outside camps so that UNAMID can be sensitive to their concerns and needs.
- Involve internally displaced people, including women, in all decisions related to camp security.
- Consult with women and women-led NGOs working on all issues concerning internally displaced people, and hold meetings with them on a regular basis.
- Ensure that civil and political officers of UNAMID engage in sensitive outreach to Arab groups, including those who are internally displaced as well as others, to ensure that UNAMID is equally aware of Arab concerns and needs.
- Ensure that UNAMID civilian police work closely with Sudanese police in

order to make sure that no impunity is allowed for those who attack, rape, loot or otherwise harm internally displaced people.

#### Endnotes

1. Jan Eliasson, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Darfur, briefing to the Security Council 27 November 2007, SC/9178.
2. Many people in towns have suffered because of the number of displaced people they have to support; others have lost work or possessions.
3. Quoted IRIN, the UN Office for the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs, SUDAN: Darfur force 'should boost humanitarian access', 1 August 2007, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=73532>.
4. See Amnesty International: Sudan - Obstruction and Delay (AI Index AFR 54/006/2007) for problems related to the deployment of UNAMID, set up by Security Council Resolution 1769 on 31 July 2007.
5. HAC is the government body which manages camps and NGOs working there, including giving authorization and visas for foreign NGOs. One section of HAC, the Procedures [ijra'at] section, is reportedly staffed by members of the national intelligence and security service.
6. There have also been kidnappings of members of humanitarian organizations by different armed groups and of oil workers by a faction of the JEM.
7. Long white garment worn by men.
8. Amnesty International, Sudan, Darfur: Rape as a weapon of war: sexual violence and its consequence (AI Index: AFR 54/076/2004).
9. Jammala: Abbala, camel herders.
10. Movements: the name generally given by sympathizers with the armed groups opposed to the government.
11. Final report of the UN Group of Experts, UN Human Rights Council, December 2007, p38.
12. Final report of the UN Group of Experts, UN Human Rights Council, December 2007, p28.
13. UNICEF figures: [http://www.unicef.org/har07/index\\_37569.htm](http://www.unicef.org/har07/index_37569.htm)
14. "Tora Bora" is a Janjawid nickname for the Darfur armed opposition groups, named after the mountains where Usama ben Laden's followers were believed to be hiding.
15. For a full discussion, see Benchmarks for Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons, Inter-Agency Standing Committee, Brookings Institute, University of Bern Project on Internal Displacement, email: [brookings-bern@brookings.edu](mailto:brookings-bern@brookings.edu).
16. For instance, in villages round Kabkabiya, described in Sudan: Living a restricted life in Darfur, IRIN 22 February 2006.
17. UNHCR, 7 August, Report recommends refugee status for Chadians arriving in Darfur, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/chad?page=news&id=46b889164>
18. Talga Shab'an is a very evocative name, meaning "You will find plenty to eat"
19. Final report of the UN Group of Experts, Human Rights Council, December 2007, p28.
20. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, Introduction (2).
21. They are protected by international humanitarian law when there is an armed conflict and by international human rights law in all circumstances.
22. The Guiding Principles were drawn up by the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Displaced Persons, Francis Deng, in 1998.

23. Issued after a ministerial conference of IGAD, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, including Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda.