

**Office of the Spokesperson****UNMIS NEWS BULLETIN****8 May 2007****UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomes Sudan-/Chad Agreement***

In a statement attributable to his Spokesperson issued yesterday 7 May, the Secretary-General welcomed the bilateral agreement between Chad and Sudan signed in Riyadh on 3 May 2007 by Presidents Idriss Déby and Omar al-Bashir, under the auspices of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia. The Secretary-General said that the agreement was a positive step towards normalizing the relations between Chad and Sudan, which is a very important factor in resolving the tragic conflicts in both Darfur and Eastern Chad. He added that “it is now crucial for the parties to honor their agreements and, in close collaboration with the United Nations and the African Union, to work together to achieve lasting peace and stability.” The Secretary-General warmly welcomed the efforts of the King of Saudi Arabia to facilitate the conclusion of this agreement, and commended his constructive role in addressing the overall situation in the region.

Special Envoys for Darfur Jan Eliasson and Salim Ahmed Salim in a joint visit to Sudan

The UN Secretary-General and the AU Special Envoys for Darfur, Jan Eliasson and Salim Ahmed Salim, will arrive in Khartoum today, 8 May 2007, for a two-day visit to Sudan. This is the third visit to be jointly conducted by the two Envoys to Sudan in order to assist in re-energizing the Darfur political process. The two Envoys are scheduled to arrive to Khartoum from Cairo where they met with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The two Envoys will be holding a joint press conference on 10 May at UNMIS Headquarters. The press conference is tentatively scheduled to take place at 2 p.m.

UN Light Support Package medical item delivered to AMIS

In a formal ceremony held today in Al Fasher, the United Nations handed over to AMIS the Medical support items stipulated in the Light Support Package. These items consist of pharmaceutical products, including drugs and vaccines, and a fully equipped Ambulance. The hand-over ceremony took place at AMIS Forward Headquarters and was attended by Senior AMIS Officials, including AMIS Deputy Head of Mission, the Force Commander, as well as UNMIS senior officials.

UNHCR warps up Sudanese refugees' repatriation programme from Ethiopian camps before the rainy season

A 17-truck convoy carrying over 600 Sudanese refugees, completed a three-day journey to Blue Nile state from Bonga refugee camp in Ethiopia, marking the end of the United Nations refugee agency's repatriation programme from Ethiopian camps before the rainy season begins.

The trip was organized jointly by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Gindi and another village, Chali, are the two main return areas in southern Blue Nile state, and both have grown rapidly since repatriation picked up steam in the past year.

According to the UNHCR, the refugee agency has repatriated 13,200 refugees to Blue Nile over the past year. However, development projects in the region are impeded since the state is considered a transitional one whose borders have yet to be formally established.

UNHCR distributed supplies including plastic sheets, buckets, mats, kitchen sets and mosquito nets to the repatriated refugees, while the UN World Food Programme (WFP) provided food rations to last three months.

UNHCR will monitor the situation of the repatriated during the rainy season and focus on reintegration efforts, including schools, health clinics and sanitation plants.

While approximately 300,000 Sudanese still live outside their country's borders, as of the end of last month, the UNHCR has repatriated almost 59,000 refugees to southern Sudan and the Transitional Areas from neighboring countries.

Security and Humanitarian Developments in southern Sudan and the Transitional Areas

On 4 May, unidentified armed men attacked Okulu village (32 km Southwest of Torit). SPLA soldiers present in the area engaged the attackers, killing one of them and capturing another.

On 5 May, SPLA forces reportedly clashed with LRA elements in Palokata (25 km south of Magwi). No information is available on the circumstances on the incident. No casualties were reported.

Three incidents of cattle raiding were reported on 5 and 6 May in the area of Torit, including the theft of 24 cows belonging to a local NGO in Lonkonda village (approximately 4 km from Torit).

Security and Humanitarian Developments in Darfur

On 4 May, the Omda of Birkat Seira (120 km East of El Geneina) was attacked by unknown armed men. The Omda was reportedly critically injured and his body guard killed by the attackers.

The security situation in Kassab IDP camp (100 km Northwest of El Fasher) is reported to be deteriorating due to the presence of various groups around the camp, as well as alcohol produced inside the camp. Women can not leave the camp during the day due to harassment by Arab militia.

Unknown armed men hijacked a Government vehicle after shooting its driver on 7 May in El Geneina. National Security and local police pursued the hijackers and arrested them. they also recovered the vehicle.

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