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**Office of the Spokesperson****UNMIS NEWS BULLETIN\****8 February 2007****DPA Joint Commission holds its fifth meeting in Al Fasher, North Darfur***

In a Communiqué issued yesterday, the DPA Joint Commission (JC) announced that it held its fifth meeting on 07 February 2007 in El Fasher, North Darfur. This is the first time that the JC meets in Al Fasher. The meeting was chaired by the Acting Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Mrs. Monique Mukaruliza, and was attended by the signatories of the DPA and the Declaration of Commitment (DoC), the UN, the EU and the US as members, and Canada, France, the League of Arab States, the Netherlands, Egypt and the UK as observers.

The meeting considered the report of the Chairperson of the Ceasefire Commission (CFC), Maj. Gen. LK Aprezi, on ceasefire violations, which also contained a review of the current security situation in Darfur, and presented 12 investigated cases of violation for consideration from 3 October 2006 – 11 January 2007.

On the prevailing security situation in Darfur, the Commission noted that since the last JC meeting on 15 December 2006, there has been a decrease in the activities of the Janjaweed, however attacks and counter-attacks involving all the parties in Darfur continued, with adverse effect on civilian population and humanitarian access. The Commission welcomed the start of the verification process in areas controlled by the DPA/DoC signatories, and urged the parties to give their optimum cooperation, particularly with regard to the cessation of hostilities.

The Commission deplored and strongly condemned the increase in assaults and attacks on AMIS, as well as aid agencies and organizations' personnel and properties, including killings, abduction, stealing and snatching of vehicles. The JC, however, welcomed the commitment of the parties in the Commission to respect AMIS, UN, NGOs and humanitarian workers, properties and installations but regretted the lack of sufficient cooperation and support by the parties in curbing this trend and the tracking down of the culprits. In this regard, the meeting welcomed the contribution of the SLA Non-Signatory Faction (SLA-NSF) and JEM in finding two of the hijacked vehicles and the arrest of a suspect. The Joint Commission noted an increase in the intra and inter-tribal conflicts and commended the initiatives of the GoS to address the situation.

On the operation of the Second Chamber of the Ceasefire Commission (CFC), the Commission welcomed the successful commencement of the Second Chamber in El Fasher, and took note of the problems preventing its operation at the Sub-Sector CFC level. In this

regard, the Commission encouraged AMIS Force Commander to work out practical ways and means for dealing with the problems and called upon the Parties, the AU, and the International Community to support these efforts including a fully functional second chamber.

The Commission reiterated the need for a total and immediate cessation of hostilities and recalled the need to have a strengthened Ceasefire, and emphasized in this regard the necessity to have a strong, effective and well funded CFC. The Commission encouraged the AU and its partners to intensify their efforts to broaden the support base for the DPA and in this regard, reiterated its strong appeal to the non-signatories to respond positively to the efforts aiming at ensuring their participation to the peace process.

The Commission took note of the GoS inalienable rights to protect the territorial sovereignty of Sudan including its borders.

On Ceasefire violations, the Commission was not able to reach consensus on the conclusions of the CFC on the 12 cases of violations submitted by the CFC Chairperson, and decided that a report shall be issued with each party's view, in accordance with article 25 paragraph 254 of the DPA . The Commission, however, noted that there was consensus that violations were indeed carried out by both signatories and non-signatories. The Commission condemned this trend and urged the parties to exercise restraint as well as abide by the Ceasefire Agreements.

The Commission was briefed on the Janjaweed Disarmament Plan, submitted by the GoS and reviewed by the CFC and endorsed the GoS proposal for a Joint CFC/GoS Military Experts, to meet as soon as possible to deliberate and finalize the Plan for implementation.

On the implementation of the Final Security Arrangements' provisions of the DPA, the Commission noted that it was lagging behind and underscored the need to move speedily to address issues such as non-military logistical support to the movements and appealed to the International Community to extend support to the AU in this respect. The Commission commended, in this regard, the steps taken by the GoS, particularly in facilitating the work of the DPA and DoC signatories and in extending non-military logistical support to the movements. The Commission stressed the need to expedite the full operationalisation of the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA) and all security-related Commissions. The Commission called on AMIS Force Commander and the CFC to move speedily to implement the DPA provisions on the verification of the locations and areas of control of the Parties in Darfur. The Commission noted that the proliferation of DoC signatories is impacting on the effective functioning of the DPA Ceasefire mechanisms, and recommended to the AU to undertake a review and a rationalization in this regard.

The Commission decided that the next regular meeting should take place in the second week of March 2007 in El Fasher.

## ***Security and Humanitarian Developments in Darfur***

### **South Darfur**

On 7 February, a fire broke out in El Sereif IDP camp, near Nyala. The cause of the fire is not known yet. No information is available of the extent of damages caused by the fire.

On 7 February, during a demonstration by the host community in Kass, some demonstrators broke into an INGO office and looted it. One security guard was slightly injured. The reason for the demonstration is not known.

On 6 February, a group of female IDPs from Kalma Camp on their way to collect fire wood were assaulted by armed Arab nomads 4 km north of Kalma. The assailants attempted to abduct one of the women but failed.

On 5 February, a UN security and humanitarian assessment mission was not allowed by the Muhajeriya SLA/MM sector commander to conduct its work in the area alleging that no prior notification on the mission was made. The UN team did however notify SLA/MM focal point on the assessment mission 72 hours prior to the mission's date, in accordance with agreed working arrangements between the UN and the movement.

### **West Darfur**

On 7 February, armed men attempted to hijack a rented INGO vehicle at Kuma IDP camp near Abu Suroug (45Km North of El Geneina), but failed as a tire of the vehicle was shot by armed community guards. The armed men ran away and the vehicle was recovered.

### ***Security and Humanitarian Developments in Southern Sudan***

On 7 February, OCHA received reports on an outbreak of watery diarrhea in Guelguk payam in Longuchuk County, Upper Nile State. So far, eight cases and two deaths were reported.

UNICEF sent 16,000 doses of meningitis vaccine to Wau at the request of the Ministry of Health in Western Bahr El Ghazal State. Separately, about 95,000 doses of meningitis vaccines were sent to Kajo Keji County, Central Equatoria State. So far over 37,000 people have been vaccinated against meningitis in the state.

UNMIS in Malakal learned that a fire incident in Nasser town (190 Km South East of Malakal) on 4 February, in which the market place was destroyed, had a significant negative impact on the local economy and on food security in the area. UNMIS was informed that according to initial Trade Union reports, over 350 local merchants are believed to have directly suffered losses.

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