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UNSG Special Envoy Jan Eliasson and AU Special Envoy Salim Ahmed Salim hold series of meetings with Sudanese officials and signatories of the Declaration of Commitment to the DPA

Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the Special Envoy of the African Union for Darfur, and Mr. Jan Eliasson, the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for Darfur, have been holding a series of meetings in Khartoum, since their arrival to Khartoum, with Sudanese Government officials and signatories of the Declaration of Commitment (DoC) to the DPA.

The two Envoys met yesterday with Mr. Lam Akol, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Nafie Ali Nafie, Assistant to the President.

The two Envoys met today with other Government officials including Mr. Minni Minawi, Senior Assistant to the President and Chairman of the SLM/A faction signatory to the DPA, and Mr. Majzoub al Khalifa, Presidential Advisor. They also met with representatives of the movements signatories to the DoC.

The two officials are scheduled to leave tomorrow to Darfur where they will hold meetings mainly with DPA non-signatories on 14 and 15 February.

Mr. Salim and Mr. Eliasson will hold a joint press conference on their joint mission on Thursday 15 February at the UNMIS Office located in Garden City, Burri.

Acting SRSG for Sudan Tayé-Brook Zerihoun addresses the meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council on the relations between Chad and Sudan

Acting SRSG for Sudan Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, who represented the UN in the AU Peace and Security Council meeting on the relations between Chad and Sudan, held yesterday in Addis Ababa, presented an update on recent political, security and humanitarian developments in Chad and the Central African Republic, particularly in the border areas between Sudan, Chad, and the Central African Republic. He also briefed the AU PSC on activities by the United Nations to both contribute to the search for a negotiated settlement of the conflicts in the region, and to respond to the grave humanitarian situation in the border areas between the three countries.

ASRSG Zerihoun indicated that the situation in Chad remains volatile and unpredictable. Fighting between Chadian Armed Forces and rebel groups and attacks by militia on civilians have continued to destabilize eastern Chad, leading to widespread insecurity and continued

displacement of civilian populations. Militia attacks have targeted civilians. As a result, the number of internally displaced persons in eastern Chad has risen from an estimated 92,000 in December last year to approximately 120,000 by the beginning of this month. On the other hand, the refugee population in eastern Chad has stabilized at around 232,000, almost all of them hosted in 12 camps supported by UNHCR, and the remainder living with local communities.

Regarding the situation in the Central African Republic, ASRSG Zerihoun said that there has been noteworthy progress on the political front in recent weeks. The government agreed to engage in an inclusive dialogue with opposition parties and representatives of the armed rebellion. He added that civilian populations have started to return to the towns in the northeast of the country which had been occupied by rebels and subsequently recaptured by the forces of the Central African Army, supported by the sub-regional multinational force of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), and the French forces in the Central African Republic. He indicated that the security situation in the north-western part of the country remains volatile and of great humanitarian concern as more than 70,000 internally displaced persons are living under threat of violence.

On United Nations' activities, ASRSG Zerihoun informed the AU PSC that the UN concluded a second assessment mission to Chad and the Central African Republic. The Secretary-General has initiated the necessary steps to deploy an advance mission to Chad and the Central African Republic. The advance mission would prepare for the possible multi-dimensional presence foreshadowed in the 16 January 2007 Presidential Statement by the United Nations Security Council. ASRSG Zerihoun informed the AU PSC that the final report of the assessment mission, including detailed proposals on the size, scope and mandate of a possible multi-dimensional presence will be submitted to the Security Council in the coming days and it is expected that the Council will consider the report shortly thereafter.

The Ceasefire Joint Military Committee holds its 45th meeting in Juba

The Ceasefire Joint Military Committee, Chaired by UNMIS Force Commander, held yesterday its 45th meeting in Juba.

The Chairman shared with the CJMC members the latest Secretary General's quarterly report to the Security Council issued on January 2007 on CPA and UNMIS mandate implementation, which had lauded the role of the CJMC in diffusing the Malakal crisis. The Chairman commended the Committee members for the enormous efforts they exerted and the cooperation they've shown in implementing CPA provisions that fall under the CJMC mandate.

During the meeting, the SPLA confirmed that a committee has been formed to investigate the killing of the UNMIS Indian soldier in Magwi on 26 January 2007, and the results would be presented to the CJMC at the earliest. The soldier was killed during an attack by unidentified armed elements on a three-vehicle convoy of a de-mining team and UNMIS Force Protection, along Torit-Magwi-Operi road in Southern Sudan.

Security and Humanitarian Developments in Darfur

North Darfur

Two men attempted on 12 February to stop an INGO vehicle East of As Salam camp in the outskirts of Al Fasher town. The INGO staff managed to drive away safely.

On 12 February, three individuals, one of them armed, attempted to hijack an AMIS vehicle in Al Fasher town but failed.

South Darfur

A group of Rezeigat Maharia tribe armed militia attacked on 12 February 2 villages predominantly inhabited by Targem tribe in Kass locality. Reports indicate that around 17 people from Targem tribe were killed and 16 seriously injured. No information is available on Maharia tribe casualties. Reports also indicate that a large number of the population of the attacked villages moved to Kass

West Darfur

On 11 February, four armed men looted food items from a UN Agency's storage room in Um Tajok (80 km East of El Geneina). The attackers shot the storage guard who is undergoing medical treatment.

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