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# KEEPING OUR WORD

## Fulfilling the Mandate to Protect Civilians in Darfur

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**A**lmost a year has passed since the United Nations Security Council approved a civilian protection force for Darfur. But the United Nations-African Union mission in Darfur, known as UNAMID, is stunted. Only one-third of the troops are deployed, critical gaps exist in equipment and logistical support and the force has been repeatedly attacked. The Sudanese government systematically obstructs full deployment with total impunity.

The inability to deploy UNAMID is but one of a number of interrelated challenges that threaten to set the entire nation of Sudan on fire. These include the recent attack by Darfuri rebels on Khartoum and the worsening violence in Darfur; the destruction of the politically important and oil-rich town of Abyei by Sudanese government troops and allied militias; the faltering Comprehensive Peace Agreement which ended the decades long war between the north and south; and an ongoing proxy war between Chad and Sudan.

This report examines UNAMID's status and the challenges it faces. It offers recommendations to overcome logistical and political hurdles to achieve full, effective deployment. If fully deployed and fully capable, UNAMID can save lives and protect civilians. For UNAMID to effectively provide protection and stability for the people of Darfur, however, it must be coupled with an inclusive peace process that is mindful of the interconnected crises in Sudan.<sup>2</sup>

The world promised Darfur protection, but has failed to deliver it. The Security Council risks signaling that it is more serious about protecting the interests of repressive governments than in promoting global peace and security. To reverse this, the Security Council must lead in ensuring that UNAMID has all of the equipment and personnel it needs, and create real costs for those officials—

government, rebel or militia—that would undermine peace, protection and justice in Sudan.

To date, the international community has not demonstrated the political will for UNAMID to succeed. It has not mounted an effective peace process to create the space for the force to achieve its ultimate goal of a stable Darfur. There are concrete steps world leaders must take in the short term to overcome UNAMID's logistical and political obstacles and secure the lives and livelihoods of Darfur's people.

## UNAMID IN THE FIELD

The United Nations-African Union hybrid command assumed official control of international peacekeeping operations in Darfur on December 31, 2007. It replaced a poorly equipped and ineffective A.U. force command structure but retained the A.U. troops. By June 5, 2008, the United Nations had added only a few hundred additional troops of the seventeen-thousand troops authorized to deploy. The Sudanese government and critical shortfalls in equipment hamper the force at every turn.

Despite these challenges, UNAMID has improved the breadth and quality of civilian protection. According to the most recent report to the Security Council from U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, "[b]oth the military and ... police components have expanded confidence-building patrols, which now cover more than 80 per cent of ... camps in Darfur. In addition, patrols times have been extended."<sup>3</sup>

By maintaining a visible presence, these patrols play an essential role in making people feel more secure. During patrols, UNAMID troops and police engage with community leaders on security concerns and pay visits to essential service points.

2 For detailed information on the peace process, see the joint report by the Enough Project and the Save Darfur Coalition entitled "Creating a Peace to Keep in Darfur" by Jerry Fowler and John Prendergast at <http://enoughproject.org/files/reports/SudanPeaceReRelease.pdf>. There must also be robust efforts towards justice and accountability, which will be the subject of a future SDC-ENOUGH joint report.

3 Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, U.N. Doc. S/2008/249 (2008)

These improvements raise the hope that when fully deployed, UNAMID may significantly increase protection for Darfuri civilians.

UNAMID's gains, however, are dangerously modest. Luis Moreno Ocampo, chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, recently reported to the Security Council that "civilians are being killed, houses burned and looted, markets and schools bombed, mosques destroyed," underscoring the perilous situation in Darfur. Moreno Ocampo further stated that the "crimes are conducted in a systematic and identical manner throughout Darfur." Violence and insecurity displaced between 130,000 and 140,000 Darfuris since the beginning of 2008, some for the second and third time.<sup>4</sup>

UNAMID still has no presence in some camps, and minimal presence in some of the remote villages that need it most. Although UNAMID has expanded confidence-building patrols, the force is not conducting extended, multi-day patrols. Daily patrols start after breakfast and end before dinner because the troops do not have the ability to sustain themselves with food and water for long periods of time. Around Nyala in South Darfur, UNAMID has enough resources only to patrol the ten internally displaced persons camps closest to the city center.

Bandits, rebel groups and the Sudanese army have attacked UNAMID at least four times. On January 8, 2008 the Sudanese Armed Forces shot at a UNAMID convoy, killing a driver. Force personnel have never returned fire during an attack. In one instance they were unarmed. In the most recent attack, a UNAMID police officer was killed in his vehicle while on duty. Each unanswered attack on UNAMID reinforces the perception that it cannot even protect itself, let alone the civilians in its care, harming its credibility with the civilian population it was sent to protect.<sup>5</sup>

UNAMID in its present form cannot fulfill its mandate.

## SUDANESE GOVERNMENT OBSTRUCTIONS

The Sudanese government is the biggest threat to UNAMID. Khartoum has obstructed every attempt to deploy peacekeepers to Darfur, starting with the original A.U. mission. The government refused to accept the U.N. mission authorized under Security Council Resolution 1706 in 2006. They consented to the weaker UNAMID hybrid force in 2007, authorized by the new resolution 1769. But while the government accepted UNAMID in word, it persistently obstructs its deployment in deed.

Khartoum has erected a labyrinth of bureaucratic hurdles that block UNAMID's progress even while it feigns cooperation. Together, these obstructions delayed the force for over ten months. Among these obstructions are:

1. **Troops.** The Sudanese government has not approved the list of troop contributing countries submitted by the African Union and the United Nations last October. Khartoum made ambiguous statements about allowing additional African battalions, a Thai battalion and two Nepalese companies, but no firm commitments. Responding to Sudanese government pressure, UNAMID expelled a British general who was a senior UNAMID official in late May. The general's expulsion was reportedly because of his nationality and assertive work to implement UNAMID's mandate.
2. **Land.** There is not sufficient land allocated to construct bases, barracks and other vital facilities. The force needs land in numerous locations with sufficient access to water for new bases and to expand existing bases. The government must provide land before UNAMID can begin the long process to plan and construct the facilities.
3. **Flights.** Despite signing a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) to allow for unrestricted UNAMID

4 Report of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to the U.N. Security Council Pursuant to UNSCR 1593 (2005). Available at [http://www.icc-cpi.int/library/organs/otp/UNSC\\_2008\\_En.pdf](http://www.icc-cpi.int/library/organs/otp/UNSC_2008_En.pdf) Last accessed on June 10, 2008.

5 In the other two attacks which took place in South and West Darfur, respectively, a patrol was ambushed and robbed by members of a militia near al-Geneina, and a vehicle convoy was ambushed and shot at. There have also been numerous hijackings of UNAMID vehicles.

flight privileges, the United Nations reported in April that the government refuses its flights at night, effectively limiting UNAMID's ability to move freely to fulfill its mandate. After the rebel Justice and Equality Movement attacked Khartoum on May 10, 2008, the government closed airports in Darfur for at least three days, cancelling all UNAMID flights.

On two separate occasions in April and May, the force was left with no choice but to evacuate injured civilians by road after government forces conducted aerial bombardments on several villages. The process was not only slow and inefficient, but unnecessarily dangerous. The recent bombardment of the village of Shigeg Karo, which killed up to 13 people, including 6 children, illustrates the detrimental effects of flight restrictions to the effectiveness of the force. Due to government restrictions and its unwillingness or inability to provide safe passage for UNAMID, responders did not reach the village for three days. As a result injured civilians with treatable wounds died, and others reportedly drove themselves to distant hospitals.

UNAMID's rapid response capability is as crucial as the proactive patrols it undertakes, especially because it is currently understaffed and simply cannot be in all places at all times. It is vital that UNAMID be able to rapidly move assets, evacuate personnel and civilians and to monitor government and militia movement and violations through aerial surveillance.

**4. Equipment.** Before making a seven week journey to Darfur, equipment arrives at Port Sudan in eastern Sudan. It takes four weeks on average for the government to release equipment from Port Sudan and critical equipment has been repeatedly held up in customs. Troops can not deploy until specific pieces of equipment are in place and certain facilities are up and running. The government has refused to provide sufficient security for equipment travelling through territories it controls, slowing its movement and leaving convoys open to banditry and attacks.

Some previously resolved problems also continue to delay the force. The Sudanese government did not sign the SOFA governing the operation of UNAMID for six months after the U.N. authorized the force. The six-month refusal created hesitation for countries to provide troops, police and equipment, creating critical gaps that continue to plague the mission today. Worse yet, government approval of the SOFA has yet to translate into actual enforcement. SOFA authorizes UNAMID to move freely by land or air, but in practice government obstructions have prevented it from effectively exercising this authority. So far, the United Nations has not presented measures that hold the government accountable for violations of the letter and spirit of the SOFA.

The U.N. Security Council must demand Khartoum's unconditional cooperation with UNAMID and create real consequences for any further obstruction. Individuals in the Sudanese government responsible for any future obstruction should be sanctioned immediately. Sanctions should be removed only when clear benchmarks are met and the force is clearly viable and has deployed.

The Security Council has a clear choice. It can demand Khartoum's cooperation and impose real costs for intransigence. Or, it can continue to stand idly by and tolerate Khartoum's obstruction.

## MISSING RESOURCES

Government obstruction is UNAMID's primary obstacle, but the force also lacks critical resources and capabilities. Even fully deployed, UNAMID can not improve security in Darfur unless troops can travel from their bases, communicate throughout the region, quickly gather intelligence, and rapidly respond to security incidents. To meet these needs, UNAMID urgently requires assets including:

1. Eighteen medium transport helicopters and at least four more tactical helicopters. Without them, UNAMID will have limited rapid-response capability and will be unable to reach many areas.

2. Aerial reconnaissance so the force can monitor and verify events and respond accordingly.
3. Medium and heavy transport trucks to move personnel and materials throughout the rugged terrain.
4. Additional engineers to build and expand installations necessary for troop deployment.
5. Multi-role logistical support units critical to the deployment and sustainability of infantry battalions.

Once these assets are identified and committed, it will still take months for the equipment to reach Darfur. Contributions must be made now for UNAMID to fulfill its mandate by the end of 2008.

If the force does not receive the necessary equipment and logistical resources, there is a real danger that the force will fail. U.N. member states must supply the mission they authorized right away. If they do not, UNAMID's failure will be their responsibility.

It is also imperative that training for UNAMID's African infantry battalions continue in tandem with the procurement effort. The U.S., France, and the UK are training and equipping African forces from Ethiopia, Rwanda, Malawi, Senegal, Ghana, Tanzania, Nigeria, and Burkina Faso in preparation for their duty in Darfur. The train-and-equip effort should prepare police units and additional troops as well.

Gender sensitivity and sexual violence prevention and response training should also be included. Systematic sexual violence is a major part of Darfur's insecurity. While the United Nations Development Programme is currently training soldiers and police in programs on gender-sensitivity and sexual violence, these programs need to be expanded. Police units must receive special training in these areas because they will interact with civilians most closely on a daily basis.

## **BUREAUCRATIC HURDLES AT THE U.N.**

The U.N.'s Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is working daily to organize and deploy UNAMID. It is the largest U.N. peacekeeping mission in history and it will work in one of the least hospitable places on the planet. It's a Herculean task. U.N. member states must provide the force's resources, but DPKO also needs to act with more determination.

When the U.N. took over Darfur peacekeeping operations, it cancelled most of the African Union's multi-role logistics contract with a private U.S. company for services such as meals, water and vehicle maintenance. In June, the Sudanese government announced that they were seeking to terminate the full contract. More recently, the Government of Sudan banned U.S. companies from doing business with the peacekeeping force in Sudan. The United Nations has been planning for a peacekeeping mission in Darfur since 2006, but reports indicate that a new contract may not be in place before the end of 2008. This is simply unacceptable.

The United Nations must accelerate a contract for sustainment services and logistical support, and must not accept government interference with its implementation. The majority of battalions from African countries do not have the capacity to sustain themselves in the field. Some new, otherwise ready UNAMID battalions are unable to deploy because of this incapability. Most currently deployed battalions can not venture far from their bases. The United Nations has both the ability and the funding available to award such a contract sooner than the end of 2008.

DPKO must also work more quickly to build camps and barracks for additional troops, and must demonstrate flexibility in considering technical specifications for helicopters. The Concept of Operations breaks Darfur into three very large sectors of operation, with central basing for helicopters. The distances from the central hub to the edges of

the sectors are too great for many helicopters to cover. As a result, it prevents possible contributors from providing helicopters and leaves only Russian-designed helicopters as suitable. If non-Russian design helicopters become available for the mission, DPKO should be willing to revise their plans to accommodate other helicopters.

## **BREAKING THE DEADLOCK**

The primary impediment to full deployment of a capable UNAMID force is the Sudanese government. But the international community's failure to provide necessary resources and bureaucratic hurdles at the United Nations are also to blame. Ultimately, the fate of UNAMID now falls on the shoulders of the U.N. Security Council member states that authorized it, especially its permanent five members. They must now demand compliance from Khartoum, contribute the necessary resources, and ensure swift implementation by the United Nations.

Tolerance in the face of clear obstruction of a U.N. Security Council resolution is unacceptable. It leaves the people of Darfur in peril and risks the credibility of the United Nations and of peacekeeping operations as a whole. Patience in the face of U.N. bureaucratic obstacles slows deployment and undermines the mission's effectiveness.

The U.N. Security Council can and must summon the political will to act on behalf of Darfur and on behalf of the global peace it is mandated to protect. There are several urgent steps that can be taken:

1. The United States should use its Security Council presidency in June to convene a special session of the council, the Friends of UNAMID working group of nations, and the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations to overcome logistical and resource issues. The conference should be open to the public to hold member states accountable.

2. The Security Council should pass a second resolution on UNAMID setting clear benchmarks and targets for deployment.
3. The Security Council should impose sanctions on individuals, in or out of the Sudanese government, who obstruct deployment.
4. The Security Council should exercise stronger oversight of the DPKO to ensure that bureaucratic hurdles are swiftly resolved.
5. UNAMID should assign a military attorney to actively monitor implementation of the SOFA, as well other obstructions or violations by the government, its proxy militias, rebels and common criminals.

## **CONCLUSION**

In May, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon offered a plan to deploy 80 percent of UNAMID by the end of 2008. Even this underwhelming goal will require urgent and steadfast action to accomplish.

Humanitarian conditions are deteriorating, violence is escalating, and security throughout Sudan is uncertain. The fate of millions of people in Darfur is at stake. By unanimously authorizing UNAMID, the U.N. Security Council tied itself and its credibility to the future of that mission. Almost a year of rhetoric from world leaders since that date has not resulted in substantial improvements on the ground in Darfur, leaving UNAMID's success in doubt.

The greatest tests of U.N.-A.U. cooperation for years to come will be the effective deployment of the hybrid force in Darfur and the conclusion of a sustainable peace agreement. A failure to fully deploy UNAMID right away will undermine any future U.N.-A.U. initiatives and threatens the credibility of both institutions. Civilians in other African conflict zones will feel the effects of this joint model's success or failure for years to come.



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ENOUGH is a project of the Center for American Progress to end genocide and crimes against humanity. With a focus on the crises in Darfur, eastern Congo, and northern Uganda, ENOUGH's strategy papers and briefings provide sharp field analysis and targeted policy recommendations based on a "3P" crisis response strategy: promoting durable peace, providing civilian protection, and punishing perpetrators of atrocities. ENOUGH works with concerned citizens, advocates, and policy makers to prevent, mitigate, and resolve these crises. To learn more about ENOUGH and what you can do to help, go to [www.enoughproject.org](http://www.enoughproject.org).

The Save Darfur Coalition—an alliance of more than 180 faith-based, advocacy, and human rights organizations—raises public awareness about the ongoing genocide in Darfur and mobilizes a unified response to the atrocities that threaten the lives of people throughout the Darfur region. The coalition's member organizations represent 130 million people of all ages, races, religions and political affiliations united together to help the people of Darfur. For more information on the coalition, please visit [www.SaveDarfur.org](http://www.SaveDarfur.org). To obtain footage from the Darfur border region, coalition events, various interviews, and more, please visit the Save Darfur Coalition media gallery at <http://media.savedarfur.org>. All footage may be previewed in non-broadcast quality and may be purchased in broadcast quality by filling out the purchase request form provided on the site.

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