

UNAMID's publication for the people of Darfur

VOICES

of Darfur

AUGUST 2012

Painting Darfur

**An Interview with
Artist Ahmed Adam**

Stopping the Silent Killer in Darfur

*Efforts to address the HIV/
AIDS problem*

Easing Pastoralist and Farmer Tensions

*A new strategy sidesteps
age-old conflict*

Darfur's Traditional Healing Practices

*An inside look at the
world of the Fakis*



AFRICAN UNION - UNITED NATIONS
MISSION IN DARFUR
(UNAMID)



A watercolour painting created by El Fasher artist Ahmed Adam. The painting shows part of a verse from the Koran, written in Arabic.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

I am pleased to introduce the August issue of *Voices of Darfur*, which contains news, viewpoints, features and interviews not only about unique aspects of life in Darfur but also about UNAMID's ongoing efforts to facilitate lasting peace in the region.

This issue includes two interviews, first an exclusive with Ibrahim Gambari conducted by Abdullahi Shuaibu at UNAMID headquarters in El Fasher, Darfur. Mr. Gambari talked with *Voices* on 10 July 2012 about a wide range of topics, including the issues he has faced as UNAMID's Joint Special Representative. Ala Mayyahi conducted the second interview, our cover feature, with El Fasher painter Ahmed Adam. In the interview, Mr. Adam discusses the challenges of Darfuri artists and talks about the aspects of life in the region that move him to paint.

In one of the two viewpoints in this issue, UNAMID Force Commander Patrick Nyamvumba, who is Chair of the Ceasefire Commission, presents the case that armed conflict creates a logic of its own that makes it difficult to address the issues that led to the conflict in the first place. On this basis, he argues in "The Backbone of Darfur's Peace Agreement" that the Doha Peace Document's sixth chapter is the most critical part of the document.

The other viewpoint, "Protection of Civilians: Lessons from Darfur," is by Oriano Micaletti, the head of UNAMID's Humanitarian Protection Strategy Coordination division. In this column, Mr. Micaletti identifies Darfur as one of the first scenarios in which the Protection of Civilians doctrine is evolving in media coverage and diplomatic language into a "responsibility to protect" concept that is having a direct impact on aspects of international law.

In "Stopping the Silent Killer: Efforts to Address HIV/AIDS in Darfur," Abdullahi Shuaibu outlines UNAMID's work with the Sudan National AIDS Programme to raise awareness about the disease and establish testing and treatment services. And in "Easing Tensions Between Pastoralists and Farmers," Emadeldin Rijal focuses on a new strategy, developed in West Darfur, that has been reducing the longstanding friction between two of the region's most identifiable groups.

Finally, in "Darfur's Traditional Healing Practices," Rania Abdulrahman and Sharon Lukunka detail the work of Darfur's healers who make *hijabs*, *bakhras*, *mabias* and other carefully crafted objects that might be considered emblematic of Darfur, as they are the physical manifestations of deeply held religious beliefs and long-established cultural traditions. For many Darfuris, these objects represent a way to avoid harm and live peaceful lives in a region of the world torn by conflict and suffering.

As *Voices of Darfur* continues to evolve as a news magazine, we welcome your feedback. To send comments by email, please put "Letters to the Editor / Voices of Darfur" in the subject line and send the email to unamid-publicinformation@un.org.

Kirk L. Kroeker
Head of Publications

ON THE COVER



Ahmed Adam is pictured in front of one of the paintings hung in his studio in El Fasher, North Darfur. Mr. Adam's work focuses mostly on women and children. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.



A disabled child sits in a wheelchair provided during a ceremony in which United Nations Volunteers gave many items to the disabled community in Abu Shouk camp. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

VOICES of Darfur

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UNAMID Chief Meets with Human Rights Independent Expert

BY GUIOMAR PAU SOLÉ



On 14 June 2012, United Nations Independent Expert for Human Rights Mashood Baderin addresses the media at Sudan's Ministry of Justice in Khartoum. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

On 13 June, UNAMID Joint Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari met in Khartoum with Mashood Baderin, the United Nations Independent Expert on the human rights situation in Sudan, to discuss the findings of the Independent Expert's five-day

mission and to assess developments related to the adoption of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD).

During the meeting, the JSR said that the issues of justice and human rights must be addressed in Darfur because they are the basis of

the conflict. He also said that the DDPD offers stronger provisions than the previous Darfur Peace Agreement and pointed out that UNAMID is partnering with the newly established Darfur Regional Authority, the Government of Sudan and key stakeholders for the implementation of the DDPD.

The Independent Expert, whose mandate is to assist Sudan in assessing its needs for technical support and capacity-building programmes to fulfil its human rights obligations, said he is looking to mobilise financial support not only from Sudan, but also from donor countries and international organizations. Mr. Baderin, who noted that the donor community has expressed concern about the lack of freedom of the press and the necessity for law re-

form in Sudan, called attention to the positive steps Sudan has taken to improve the human rights situation in the country.

Mr. Baderin replaces Justice Mohamed Chande Osman as Independent Expert. The five-day visit to Khartoum is his first since he was appointed on 21 March 2012 by the UN Human Rights Council. During the trip, he met with academics, government officials, members of the diplomatic community, representatives of the National Human Rights Commission and other organisations. On this occasion, he could not travel to Darfur.

Human Rights Council Resolution 18/16 requires UNAMID to provide the Independent Expert with the assistance necessary to fulfil his mandate. ■

Support to Darfur's Nomadic Communities Reviewed

BY SHARON LUKUNKA



On 16 March 2008, Arab nomads rest in the village of Regel El Kubri, 20 kilometres west of El Geneina, the capital of West Darfur, and 7 kilometres from the Chad border. Photo by Stuart Price, Albany Associates.

On 19 June, the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue and UNAMID met in Khartoum with representatives of the Nomad Networks in Darfur to follow up on the last meeting in El Fasher and discuss 13 quick-impact projects (QIPs) specially set up to help Darfur's nomadic communities.

UNAMID officials briefed participants on the current situation regarding QIPs and other humanitarian projects, including collaboration with the Darfur Regional Authority, community-based reconciliation efforts and support for the safe return and integration of displaced persons.

The 13 quick-impact projects discussed at the meeting include capacity-building training in administrative management, proposal writing and conflict prevention. The projects also include the provision of tents to be used as mobile schools for nomadic children and the construction of a Nomadic Women's Development Center.

The participants agreed on several action points to be implemented by the next meeting, scheduled to be held in September. Notable among the action points is the appointment of a focal point within the UN system to deal with nomad issues. ■

United Kingdom Delegation Assesses UNAMID Mandate

BY RANIA ABDULRAHMAN



On 11 June 2012, Gareth Bayley, head of the UK delegation to assess UNAMID's mandate, meets UNAMID's deputies, Mohamed Yonis and Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, at Mission headquarters in El Fasher. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

On 13 June, an official delegation of the United Kingdom (UK) concluded a three-day visit to Darfur, during which its members engaged with various UNAMID components on the work of

the Mission and its efforts to advance peace and prosperity in Darfur.

“As the Chair of the Security Council process on Darfur—and UNAMID specifically—it is important to come

to Darfur to ensure a thorough and correct review of the resolution and the mandate renewal,” Gareth Bayley, Deputy Head of the Conflict Department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, told UNAMID media.

Mr. Bayley pointed out that the delegation was especially interested in getting “ground truth” about the Mission and its mandate. When asked for his assessment of UNAMID's support to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, Mr. Bayley addressed UNAMID's evolving strategy. “The message that we have been hearing so far is that in order to support the Doha document, you need to have both protection tasks and also supportive tasks that support recovery in partnership with the UN Country Team,” he said.

The UK delegation's assessment comes amid repeated calls by the Mission's leadership for the international community to continue supporting development projects in Darfur.

Deputy Joint Special Representative (Political) Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane received the delegation and stated the need for the international community to support peacekeeping activities and peacebuilding initiatives in Darfur. “Stability and peace in Darfur can be realized only through development activities that introduce tangible and durable solutions, which, on a fundamental level, create lasting economic opportunities for the people,” said Ms. Souleymane. “We should not spare any effort in attempting to help improve the lives of Darfur's people.” ■

El Fasher, North Darfur



On 18 July 2012, members of the Kinnin tribe perform a traditional dance at the opening ceremony of the renovated Cultural Centre in El Fasher. UNAMID sponsored the renovation project through its quick-impact projects programme. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

El Fasher, North Darfur



On 18 July 2012, Xima Awada Yakub and her sister Zamai read in the newly renovated Cultural Centre. The project included general repairs, new doors and windows, computers, audio equipment, furniture and more than 20,000 new books. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

More Than 7,000 Reached as Doha Document Dissemination Concludes in North Darfur

BY RANIA ABDULRAHMAN



The final dissemination event for the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur was held at El Fasher University and attended by approximately 100 participants. Photo by Kirk L. Kroeker, UNAMID.

On 5 July 2012, North Darfur witnessed the conclusion of the dissemination of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) with the 57th and final work-

shop. In total, the exercises have brought the Document to the attention of more than 7,000 participants in 18 localities in North Darfur.

This final event, held at El Fasher University, was attended by approximately 100 participants drawn from native administrations, religious and community leaders, youth and women's groups, political parties, and academics.

"North Darfur was the first State to commence the dissemination of the DDPD and led the way when the exercise was launched on 18 January 2012," said Mr. Hassan Gibril, the head of UNAMID's office in North Darfur, who addressed the audience during the event.

Mr. Gibril said that the reports received have been "very encouraging" in terms of the large numbers of Darfuris coming to the dissemination

workshops and that the people "have expressed a strong wave of enthusiastic support for any constructive initiative that would assure decisive peace, stability and sustainable socioeconomic recovery."

Similar exercises, which have been held throughout Darfur's additional four states, will have reached more than 25,000 Darfuris by the time they are completed.

The forums, which are designed to provide participants with the opportunity to read and discuss the agreement, are organized by the Civil Society Follow-up Mechanism, an instrument supported logistically and technically by the Mission, and created to liaise with the civil society organizations on the Doha peace process. The DDPD dissemination exercises follow UNAMID's mandate in supporting the peace process in Darfur. ■

El Fasher, North Darfur



On 19 July 2012, a disabled person is accommodated in a wheelchair provided during a ceremony in which United Nations Volunteers gave many items to the disabled community in the Abu Shouk camp for displaced persons. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

UNAMID Launches Training Projects to Reduce Youth Violence

BY GUIOMAR PAU SOLÉ



On 26 July, in Nyala, South Darfur, UNAMID launched the renovation of Alwuhda Youth Centre. The project is part of a programme to benefit at-risk youths in Darfur. Photo by Saeed Abdalla, UNAMID.

UNAMID launched a series of projects designed to teach new skills to youths in areas affected by violence. The initiative, part of UNAMID's Community-based Labour Intensive Projects (CLIPs), is expected to result in six projects

in North Darfur, seven in West Darfur and five in South Darfur.

CLIPs, a programme of UNAMID's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) section, are designed to support the efforts of Sudan to address the needs

of at-risk youth and other vulnerable groups in violence-affected communities. The beneficiaries of the projects in Darfur, mainly people age 18-35, of whom 25 per cent are women, will learn several livelihood and life skills to improve their employability and social integration, while at the same time helping to rebuild their fragile communities.

In Tawilla, the youths will participate in the construction of a vocational training centre and a multipurpose community centre. A similar facility is scheduled to be built by the young people in Althoura Shamal, located on the outskirts of El Fasher. In Um Marahik and Lwabit, the CLIPs beneficiaries will be trained while constructing secondary and primary schools for boys and girls. In Madba, the youths will

construct a healthcare centre.

During the opening ceremony in Tawilla on 22 July 2012, UNAMID DDR Head Aderemi Adekoya delivered a message to the youths in the area, encouraging them to be part of the project from the beginning to the end, and, after the training, to use their acquired skills in other areas of the community. "The role of everyone, leaders, youth, women, is important to help bring peace," he said.

The Chief of the Umbdas (local leaders) in Tawilla, Adam Mohammed Mahmoud Khamis, expressed his gratitude for the project, and said that the youths, who are mostly unemployed, will benefit from it. After many years trying to build a community centre, he said, the village will finally have one. ■

Tripartite Meeting Focuses on Security, Returnees, Review of Personnel

BY RANIA ABDULRAHMAN AND GUIOMAR PAU SOLÉ



On 23 June 2012, in El Fasher, North Darfur, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Ramtane Lamamra talks with the UN Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous at the Tripartite Meeting at the UNAMID headquarters. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

The security situation, freedom of movement, the return of displaced people and the review of the Mission's uniformed personnel were the main topics of discussion at the 13th meeting of the Tripartite Coordination Mechanism held 23 June at UNAMID Headquarters in El

Fasher, North Darfur.

The Tripartite Mechanism, composed of representatives of the Government of the Sudan, the African Union and the United Nations, is an instrument set up to resolve issues and challenges related to UNAMID deployment and operations.

The Undersecretary of the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Rahmatalla Mohamed Osman, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Ramtane Lamamra, UN Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous, and UNAMID Joint Special Representative (JSR) Ibrahim Gambari headed the respective delegations.

The participants noted that the restrictions of UNAMID's movement continue in certain areas by armed movements and Government forces. In this regard, USG Ladsous pointed out that "the Mission has been deterred from accessing areas where there is an urgent need to verify reports on fighting [...] and to provide assistance and protection to the civilian population."

Representatives from the Government stated that Sudan doesn't impose restrictions on

UNAMID's movement and only provides security advisories, leaving it to the Mission to decide whether to proceed. JSR Gambari responded by saying that this position needs to be emphasized to the military, police and national security on the ground.

"The capacity and the resources of the United Nations are modest in comparison with the very substantial needs that exist here," Ladsous said, in line with the DRA Chairperson Eltijani Seisi's stated priorities on returnees, reconstruction and development. "We would urge the Government to do all that it can, even in light of the economic and security challenges, to support the DRA and its institutions."

The participants discussed a reduction of UNAMID uniformed personnel and other operational issues, such as radio licensing, flights, goods clearances and pending visas. ■

El Fasher, North Darfur



The All Darfur Conference for Peace and Development, organized by the Darfur Regional Authority, concluded on 12 July 2012. The two-day conference was set up to ensure the participation of all segments of society in the peace process. Photo by Sojoud Elgarrai, UNAMID.

A Conversation with Ibrahim Gambari

On 10 July 2012, in a lengthy conversation at UNAMID headquarters in El Fasher, Ibrahim Gambari talked with *Voices of Darfur* about his role as Joint Special Representative, the challenges he has faced and the prospects of a renewed Darfur peace process.

BY ABDULLAHI SHUAIBU



UNAMID Joint Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari interviewed in El Fasher, North Darfur. Photo by Sojoud Elgarrai, UNAMID.

Brokering a comprehensive peace solution to the conflict in Darfur has been the job of UNAMID Joint Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari, a former Foreign Minister from Nigeria.

Appointed to the UNAMID position on 1 January 2010, Mr. Gambari came to the Mission with diplomatic skills, United Nations experience and knowledge of Africa. Prior to his current role, he held the position of the Under Secretary-General

for Political Affairs at UN Headquarters in New York and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Africa.

During his tenure as JSR, Mr. Gambari has been on the move, in and around Darfur, to meet with the Sudanese Government and armed movements, garner international support for the Mission and brief AU and UN leaders on his efforts to facilitate peace in Darfur.

In a lengthy conversation at UNA-

MID headquarters in El Fasher, Mr. Gambari talked with *Voices of Darfur* about his role as JSR, the challenges he has faced and the prospects of a renewed Darfur peace process.

Voices of Darfur: What was your reaction when approached by the UN Secretary-General about this assignment?

Gambari: I was hearing rumours that I was likely being considered to come here, but at that time I was too busy working on Myanmar and on the International Compact with Iraq. Also, I had been a headquarters man since my first appointment at the UN Secretariat in December 1999, except for a few months when I went to Angola as Special Representative to the Secretary-General. Really, I was not enthusiastic, so I proposed a Nigerian for the position.

I nominated somebody who was a retired General in the Nigerian Army with vast military experience. He was a former foreign minister, a former senator, and a former administrator of a state government in Nigeria. He was offered the job. However, he turned it down so they came back to me and the Secretary-General said I must go. The eyes of the world were on Darfur. I did not have a choice, but I am glad I came here because it is a great challenge.

VOD: What has been your experience here so far?

Gambari: It has brought me closer to African issues. Formerly, I was at the UN Secretariat on special assignment to Africa and then African Affairs, and my focus was later expanded to Cyprus, Myanmar and Iraq. So coming to Darfur brought me back to the African dossier and also closer to Nigeria. It is often overlooked that the only country separating West

Darfur from Nigeria is Chad. Millions of Sudanese who have Nigerian origin are here in Darfur.

So I took the challenge and I am glad that I am here. It is now two years and six months. It has been a great experience managing the biggest peacekeeping mission in the world and being held accountable for a budget ranging between US\$1.5 and US\$1.7 billion. It is a complicated challenge.

There are five characteristics that make UNAMID special. First, it is the first and the only hybrid mission in the world jointly mandated by the AU and UN. Second, it is the biggest. Third, it is the most expensive. And fourth, it is the only mission that was deployed in advance of a peace agreement.

Normally, you must have a peace agreement before deployment. But in this case, there was no peace agreement because the Darfur Peace Agreement signed in Abuja, Nigeria, was between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Army / Minni Minnawi. There really was no peace agreement to implement, so UNAMID was deployed in advance of an agreement, which means the JSR had to try to do his best to promote an agreement that would allow UNAMID to function normally.

The fifth unique characteristic of UNAMID is that, until July last year, the heads of peacekeeping and peacemaking were separated. I was doing the peacekeeping but somebody else was doing the peacemaking in Doha, Qatar. Those are the challenges. Addressing them has been rewarding.

VOD: And what of the peace agreement now and the challenges you have faced?

Gambari: At least now we have the peace agreement, which UNAMID is doing its best to promote. The Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, the DDPD, led to the creation of the Darfur Regional Authority. Later I was asked to take on ad-

ditional responsibilities as the Joint Chief Mediator. However, there are other challenges because the DDPD is still signed only by Sudan and one of the armed movements. So there is the challenge of trying to bring in all the nonsignatory parties. This is a real challenge.

Another challenge is that because we are the biggest and most expensive peacekeeping mission in the world, all eyes are on us. We have had visits by the members of the UN Security Council, the Fifth Committee, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the AU Chairperson, the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security and visits by ambassadors of the countries that are represented in Khartoum, especially the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

“For the future of peacekeeping, I am convinced the situation in Africa warrants a joint effort to address peace and security on the continent and other troubled spots.”

Also, there is constant criticism by displaced persons, who, by definition, are always dissatisfied with the situations in which they have found themselves. Some have been living in IDP camps for nine years. In addition, there is criticism by the armed movements that are not part of the peace process. These are some of the situations and challenges that must be managed.

VOD: Did your expectations about the situation match your experiences here?

Gambari: The situation is a lot more complex than I had imagined because I didn't quite realize until I was about to come here that Darfur is the size of France or twice the size of the UK, with little or no infrastructure. Also, I did not realize how difficult the terrain was or how the armed movements would keep dividing and subdividing. As we speak,

there are several divisions within the Sudan Liberation Army movement, the Justice and Equality Movement and other movements. That was a surprise to me.

Considering the realities on the ground, there are difficulties in managing the expectations of the powerful members of the UN Security Council and the AU, and in dealing with the Government of Sudan. However, it is a great challenge and I am doing my very best to achieve results, together with colleagues in the Mission.

VOD: You've made numerous trips to Khartoum and key capitals abroad. What was the atmosphere like on your visits and what were the outcomes?

Gambari: There are visits that I made as head of the Mission and those I made as Joint Mediator. As the Mission's head,

I visited capitals of key troop- and police-contributing countries, namely Nigeria, Rwanda, Burkina Faso and Ghana. I visited the countries to thank them for contributing troops and the sacrifices they are making, as well as to discuss issues relating to predeployment training and logistics. In fact,

Nigeria has lost 29 soldiers since the period of the AU Mission in Sudan, Rwanda six, Senegal and Togo two soldiers, and there have been others who have sustained injuries while in the line of duty.

I have embarked on visits to raise issues so that the troops who are coming to Darfur get first-hand information on the region and the environment. I have been to the UK, France, China, Russia and to the United States, all key members of the UN Security Council.

Furthermore, to encourage the hold-out movements to participate in the peace process, I was in Tripoli, Libya, three times to meet with the late Khaleel Ibrahim, the head of the Justice and Equality Movement. I was in Kampala, Uganda, twice to meet with Sudan Liberation Army / Abdul Wahid and to France three times. I have been to Juba, South Sudan; Ndjamena, Chad; and Ouagadougou,

Burkina Faso—the country of Djibril Bassolé, who was my predecessor as the Joint Mediator.

Generally, during these visits, the reception has been good, particularly in Chad, which to me is most committed to peace in Darfur because of its proximity to Sudan. Peace in West Darfur is a result of the joint efforts of President Omar Al-Bashir and President Idriss Déby of Chad. Sudan stopped supporting the armed opposition groups from Chad and, in return, President Déby stopped supporting the Justice and Equality Movement, which made the movement lose its base there.

Also, Chad and Sudan set up a joint task force of about 4,000 troops and they rotate the presidency of the task force—six months Sudanese and six months Chadian. Even the location is rotated between El Geneina and Abéché. This led to the peace enjoyed in West Darfur. Some of the refugees are now coming from East Chad to West Darfur and some IDPs are moving from South Darfur to West Darfur. The benefits of the visits are to consolidate the support for peace.

I have been to Cairo many times. The League of Arab States is strong in supporting the peace in Darfur. We have to acknowledge Qatar, which has played a great part in mediation and in facilitating the peace process through the Doha meetings. I remember my last visit there was my twenty-ninth.

VOD: On the topic of the Darfur peace process being hampered by several factors including global shifts in politics and economics, how are these trends impacting your work in helping to bring about a political solution and lasting peace in Darfur?

Gambari: There is a lot of conflict in the world, particularly in Africa, where the conflicts have complicated the situation in Darfur. One of the more challenging issues is the economic situation in Sudan. Due to the split of South Sudan, Sudan has lost a lot of land, a lot of population and a lot of revenue base. A lot of money is needed for the implementation of the DDPD. A lot of money is needed for resolving the root causes of the conflict in Darfur. There are compensation and land issues. Sudan

does not have enough financial resources to deal with the situation.

I used to contrast the fact that when the Darfur Peace Agreement was signed in Abuja in 2006, Sudan was believed to lack political will while still having the money to implement. Now with the DDPD signed in July last year, the political will is there but the money is not there. Sudan has had to introduce austerity measures and remove petrol subsidies to cope with the situation. This led to rising prices and an inflationary trend in the country. It really complicates the situation and is why the international community has to come in and assist.

Recently, I told attendees of the Darfur People's Conference, organized by the Darfur Regional Authority, that the implementation of the DDPD is primarily the responsibility of the parties to the conflict, but they must not be left alone to implement it. So Qatar, which cham-

“If the people of Darfur continue not to see the benefit on the ground, and if resources are not made available for really making a difference, then I am fearful the situation will lead to despair that will affect the trust and confidence that seem to be growing for the DDPD and Darfur Regional Authority.”

pioned the DDPD, the League of Arab States, the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank and the international community must come in, in a big way, to provide resources and do projects that will address the root causes of the conflict.

That is why I am particularly excited about the International Donor Conference, which the Qataris are planning to host in December 2012, to bring the international community together to get resources to support the implementation of the DDPD, and, beyond that, to address the root causes of the conflict in Darfur, particularly on issues relating to water and infrastructure, desert encroachment, urbanization and voluntary return of IDPs as well as refugees.

VOD: The Darfur conflict has gone

on longer than some might have predicted. How optimistic are you that the conflict will be resolved once and for all?

Gambari: I think the chances are better now than before. The DDPD, unlike the Darfur Peace Agreement, is supported by a wider spectrum of Darfuris. UNAMID, the Government of Sudan and cross-sections of society, including IDPs, refugees, elected officials and other stakeholders, participated in the process that led to the DDPD. So it is an agreement that is an improvement on the DPA. The process of creating the DDPD brought together a more broad involvement of civil society and IDPs. And although it is signed by Sudan and only one of the armed movements, there is room for others to sign.

The JSR's duty is to pursue the hold-out movements, to sit down and look at the DDPD as a framework and see how it can address their concerns for lasting peace. But there are some challenges. The

armed movements, which are outside of the framework, have now formed an alliance in which they are saying their objective is not only Darfur but the overthrow of the regime in Khartoum. That has been a complication for me as a mediator because I have no mandate for anything other than Darfur.

It has now been almost a year since the DDPD was signed on 14 July 2011. I said before and I will keep repeating it: If the people of Darfur continue not to see the benefit on the ground, and if resources are not made available for really making a difference, then I am fearful the situation will lead to despair that will affect the trust and confidence that seem to be growing for the DDPD and Darfur Regional Authority. This despair may also affect the young people who have

been recruited to perpetuate the conflict. So there is still a lot of work to be done to checkmate the contending issues and ensure the situation does not escalate or return to violence.

VOD: So let's now talk now about the UN and AU partnership. How have you dealt with the challenges associated with UNAMID being a hybrid?

Gambari: This is a very good but tricky question. I report to two masters—the AU and the UN—and serve both of them. That is why I am called Joint Special Representative. I report through the Commission for Peace and Security to the AU and I report to the UN Security Council and through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

In institutions on the AU side, the oversight functions are not as strong as on the UN side. One time I received four UN Deputy Secretary-Generals at the same time. Even the new one for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, has been here twice. The oversight function is much heavier on the UN side than on the AU side. The influence is heavier on the UN side because the UN bears the financial burden, as all our salaries are paid by the UN. Also, the UN is the one that provides the funds and logistics to keep the Mission going.

We have to respect the dual nature of the relationship and work hand in hand with both organizations to facilitate the mandate. It is a unique relationship. Every code cable we send to UN headquarters in New York we also copy to the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa. We try to be as supportive as possible to address any imbalance.

I have been to Addis more than 18 times to brief the Chairperson of the AU Commission and the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security. Also, we have an office in Addis Ababa called the Joint Support and Coordinating Mechanism. It is headed by an experienced staff member whose job is to make the AU more aware of what we do, and to liaise with the AU officials and help them with their oversight functions and responsibilities.

Although we do have our challenges, the cooperation of the AU is not an issue because it is part and parcel of the mandating authority.

VOD: Do you see this partnership



as a paradigm for peace and stability in Africa? And do you believe the future of peacekeeping will be large missions like UNAMID or smaller and more tactical diplomatic missions like we see in Libya, for example?

Gambari: Even though the AU/UN partnership is a child of necessity, UNAMID is a model for future peacekeeping missions in Africa because of its advantages. It provides legitimacy for Africans to take responsibility and see that the partnership works for peace and stability on the continent. Pure UN missions in Africa have had difficulties. In Chad, for example, the Mission was asked to leave,

“Darfur’s leaders should discourage tribalism—Arabs versus non-Arabs and nomads versus farmers. They must promote a sense of commonality. They are all Darfuris. That is the only way they can do away with their past, face the present and future with more determination and commitment, and have a good future for their children.”

and in Congo, the Mission was asked to downsize drastically.

The African Union must build capacity to provide oversight functions, and it must be strong not just in being a provider of legitimacy to missions but also in demanding a say in how missions are run. You could say that partnership is the in-thing now. In dealing with Syria, for example, the UN found that a joint arrangement with regional organizations is useful.

For the future of peacekeeping, I am convinced the situation in Africa warrants a joint effort to address peace and secu-

rity on the continent and other troubled spots. I don’t mind philosophical disagreement, but what bothers me is the people in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations who are not happy with the partnership concept. I think they should learn and also realize the advantages of partnerships. Partnerships are a reality and they are workable. Every day I am in Darfur, I see the value of the UNAMID partnership. It’s more useful than a pure UN Mission in Africa.

The UN tends to deploy in Africa during a crisis of state function. Here is Sudan, you may disagree with the government, but Sudan is not a failed state. It

has functional institutions. In Darfur, you need a larger mission to be able to protect the people. How do you protect the civilian population in a country the size of France with little or no infrastructure? It is complicated because there is conflict between Sudan and the armed movement, but there is also intertribal conflict between nomadic people and the farmers.

Ultimately, in terms of a mission’s size and role, the UN should be prepared to adapt to changing needs and changing environments to be effective at what needs to be done.

VOD: What have you been most proud of during your time as JSR?

Gambari: We have a peace agreement, which I am very proud of. Also, we have the Darfur Regional Authority, which gladdens my heart in terms of the progress of the agreement. The Mission has become a lot more cohesive and respected. Some years ago, there are those who referred to UNAMID as the United Nations African mistake in Darfur, citing poor management. But now, nobody is laughing at UNAMID. It is a serious mission.

I am proud that UNAMID has contributed effectively to the relative stability that has been enjoyed in Darfur today, especially in the sense that nobody mentions Darfur as much as before. People are talking about Abyei, South Kordofan, Blue Nile, South Sudan. This is testimony to the fact that there is relative peace now in Darfur. The Mission contributed immensely to that.

Another area I am proud of is the envoy retreats. There are 15 special envoys for Darfur, but they were not meeting among themselves or with us to share their experiences. So I instituted a special retreat for the envoys. The first was in Kigali, Rwanda, and the second was held here in El Fasher. Others were held in Nyala and El Geneina.

VOD: How does this assignment compare to previous assignments you have had in peacekeeping and other political missions?

Gambari: Well they are quite different. The UNAMID assignment is the longest I have stayed on the ground. When I was doing my work in New York, I would go and come back, except for about six months when I stayed in Angola. This is a peacekeeping mission that is not located in the capital city. All peacekeeping mis-



sions in the world are located in capital cities. And in this case, the political authority is in Khartoum, but the work is here in Darfur. That in itself is a challenge.

In many ways, UNAMID cannot be compared to any other mission. It is unique. But there are some fundamentals that are similar. There is the need to be impartial and fair in your conduct and the need to build trust and confidence with government entities as well as with armed movements. It is a tricky situation. Every mission certainly has its own characteristics, but the important thing is to be impartial and fair in the work and in the mediation efforts, and to cultivate confidence and trust on all sides.

VOD: What challenges do you see ahead for your remaining time in UNAMID and for the next JSR?

Gambari: I didn't particularly want to come here, and I begged to nominate somebody else. I have been here now for two and a half years, and it is a difficult job. For mission business, I have been to Doha 29 times, Addis Ababa more than 20 times, New York more than 15 times, Washington DC four times, London four times, Paris three times, Russia twice, China once, Nigeria more than 10 times, Ghana four times, Burkina Faso three times, Ndjamena three times, Kampala four times, Juba three times, Cairo 10 times, Saudi Arabia once, Djibouti once and Tripoli three times.

In Darfur, I must have been to El Geneina more than 12 times, Zalingei eight, Nyala 10 and to El Daein, the capital of the new East Darfur state, as well as to Khartoum many times to manage relations with the Sudanese Government and the armed movements and to meet with the members of the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Commis-

sion. All this takes a toll.

Obviously, my tenure is coming to an end but I have three things that I would like to accomplish before leaving. First is to make further contribution to consolidating the peace process and the Darfur Regional Authority. Second is to build capacity and advocate for peaceful coexistence by bringing the armed movements, the nonsignatories, to the table to endorse the DDPD and to invite everybody to relaunch the mediation. Third is to see to the hosting of the International Donor Conference in Doha, Qatar, to bring projects and development to the region. This conference is close to my heart because you cannot have durable peace without development.

I may not be able to achieve all of that, but I will try to ensure there is progress and then pass on the baton to my successor. I hope he or she will carry on from where I left off in working to ensure peace, growth and development for the people of Darfur.

VOD: What is your message to Darfur's leaders and what would you say to the future leaders, the children of Darfur?

Gambari: I am calling on the elders and other community and religious leaders in Darfur to preach peace and show the people that there is no alternative to peaceful coexistence for them to prosper and grow. They should not allow the present situation to persist. There is no need to have 1.7 million IDPs in a region where you have a total population of about seven million. The camps are a breeding ground for all sorts of bad things, and it does not augur well for growth and development.

Darfur's leaders should discourage tribalism—Arabs versus non-Arabs and nomads versus farmers. They must pro-

mote a sense of commonality. They are all Darfuris. That is the only way they can do away with their past, face the present and future with more determination and commitment, and have a good future for their children.

Whenever there is conflict or war, those who suffer most are the women and children. Therefore, it is in their best interest that this conflict is permanently put in the past. Until then, their needs must be addressed for them to live a decent life. I call on the holdout movements to join the peace process to guarantee a better future for their women and children and to show the international community that they are tired of this situation.

The people of Darfur must put pressure on the armed movements to put down their arms and ammunition and demand the benefits of peace from their leaders and the government.

VOD: On a final note, what are your plans for the future?

Gambari: My future is in the hand of Almighty Allah. I continue to do what I can do best and make myself available to the service of humanity, whether internationally or nationally. They say charity begins at home. Maybe it is time to put my experiences to work back at home in the service of my own country, where there are a lot of challenges.

VOD: There is some chatter for you to vie for the presidency in Nigeria. What are your thoughts about this?

Gambari: Well, Nigeria is a very complicated country, as you know, and my position is that I am out there ready to serve the people. I started public service at a young age. I was foreign minister at 39, so if they think my experiences, talents and contacts will be helpful, I will not stand in their way. ■



Protection of Civilians: Lessons from Darfur

Darfur is one of the first situations in which the diplomatic communities have invoked the “responsibility to protect” concept as an aspect of the Protection of Civilians doctrine.

BY ORIANO MICALETTI

During his tenure, former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan stressed time and again that the principle of state sovereignty cannot be used as a shield for human rights abuses. Indeed, it is now generally accepted that the UN Security Council can authorize forceful humanitarian intervention when it determines that widespread domestic human rights abuses are a threat to international peace and security.

Within this context, the Protection of Civilians (PoC) doctrine emerged as a means to locate an appropriate legal balance between state sovereignty, humanitarian law and human rights. In doing so, the PoC doctrine makes considerable contributions to defining state responsibilities under both human rights and international law.

Darfur is one of the first situations in which the media and diplomatic communities have invoked the “responsibility to protect” concept, which has yet to evolve to achieve its maximum potential as an aspect of the PoC doctrine. The emergence and evolution of the “responsibility to protect” concept reflects the ongoing transformation of traditional international law norms in that the concept enables international law to address a moral imperative regardless of international borders.

The situation in Darfur represents one of the first successful tests of the PoC doctrine. With the recognition and consent of Sudan, UNAMID began in 2008 with a protection mandate that adheres to fundamental principles of international humanitarian law.

In coordination with the Humanitarian Country Team and in consultation with Sudan, UNAMID has articulated a PoC strategy that not only includes humanitarian intervention, but also includes conflict-prevention, response, justice, recovery and development.

One example of UNAMID’s PoC strategy is the civilian personnel deployment to the deep field. This deployment strategy, which puts personnel closer to local authorities and the international humanitarian community, is designed to foster synergy and

Sudan’s acceptance of UNAMID’s deployment with a protection role has been one of the most tangible steps toward ending the conflict in Darfur.

quick response to challenges. Presence in the deep field proved to be critical for the situations at Shangil Tobaya, Khor Abeche and Zam Zam where UNAMID delivered humanitarian assistance, *in extremis*, by supplying water, food and medical attention to needy populations.

The Darfur-wide presence of peacekeepers and an increase in the number of daily patrols all over the territory (from 90 patrols per day in 2009 to 250 in 2012) are factors contributing to the reduction of any form of offensive against civilians. UNAMID has not registered incidents of mass death, destruction or mass displacement for a long time.

Sudan’s acceptance of UNAMID’s

deployment with a protection role has been one of the most tangible steps toward ending the conflict in Darfur. In addition, the recent establishment of the National Commission for Human Rights, as stipulated in the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), is expected to strengthen the capacity of Sudan’s justice system to deal with abuses, conflict-related crimes and violence against women and girls.

The recovery process in Darfur is still embryonic, and there is a strong need to revitalise the economy, support returnees and build up basic infrastructure. At this moment, it is critical that the Government of Sudan, the international humanitarian community and UNAMID continue to work together and recognise their fundamental responsibilities for improving the quality of lives of Darfur’s people.

There is new hope that the peace agreement, the DDPD, will bring the conflict to a close, and that the actors in Darfur will be able to move from prevention and reaction to rebuilding. For that to happen, diplomats and politicians must learn how to use the “responsibility to protect” concept, must work toward its realisation and must recognise the benefits it can produce.

Finding the right pressure point to deter atrocities is paramount to the successful implementation of a PoC strategy and the related “responsibility to protect” concept. ■

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Darfur's Traditional Healing Practices

Islamic principles, deriving from Koranic verses, influence the practices of Darfur's traditional healers, who craft special items designed to offer protection from all manner of harm.

BY RANIA ABDULRAHMAN & SHARON LUKUNKA



On 21 June 2012, in the Abu Shouk camp for internally displaced persons, Sidiq Ahmad Mohamed prepares a treatment for mental illnesses. Mr. Mohamed is a Faki, a practitioner of traditional medicine. His client must smell the smoke that rises from a burning piece of paper inscribed with verses of the Koran. The charcoal used to burn the paper is made with Sudanese roots and Indian spices. Treatments such as this typically cost 100-200 Sudanese pounds (US\$20-\$40). Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

Ahmad Ibrahim Ahmad sits on a mat inscribing special phrases from the Koran on a wooden tablet. As part of the process a *faki* (or traditional, religious healer) uses to provide hope, protection and even restorative healing to clients, Faki Ahmad is preparing to make a potion for a Darfuri who has come to him seeking help.

Islamic principles, deriving from Koranic verses, influence the practices of the traditional healers, who receive respect and recognition from their communities. Nearly every Darfuri has paid a visit to a faki at some point in his or her life.

Ahmad, age 37, moved from Jabbel Sei to the Abu Shouk camp for internally displaced people in El Fasher, North Darfur, seven years ago. He lives with his father Ibrahim Ahmad Adam, age 65, who began educating him in the practice in his home village when he was 12 years old. "The practice is passed on from generation to generation," says Mr. Adam. "My father practiced and so did my grandfather and great grandfather."

Mr. Ahmad's son, Adam Ahmad Ibrahim, who is five years old, has started learning how to read and write the Koran. His father says that when he turns 12, he

will begin practicing the faki art. While there are a great many practitioners, not everybody is suited for the role, according to Faki Ahmad, who says it requires certain skills and spiritual gifts that only some people possess. "The Koran contains many secrets," he says. "You should know them to be able to heal others."

Some of the religious healers in Darfur never went to school, and cannot speak Arabic, the original language of the Koran, yet they still read it and have committed large portions of the text to memory.

Faki Ahmad says that most of the

On 16 April 2012, Musa Mohammed makes hijabs in the Al Moashi Market in El Fasher, North Darfur. Hijabs are small leather pouches that can be attached to a string and worn around the neck or tied to an arm. Hijabs contain folded pieces of paper with verses from the Koran written on them, and are typically worn by Darfuris to ward off danger and disease. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.



communities in Darfur rely on traditional healing for many purposes, chiefly to protect against threats, secure luck, remove evil spirits, cure disease and to induce love. Even newly born babies are given special tokens from the fakis to protect them from harm.

As part of their work, fakis typically create different kinds of items that become the vessels to convey the protective or restorative power. These items take the form of potions, known as *mahia*, or inhalable smoke, known as *bakbra*,

Despite access to modern medical facilities, many people in Darfur rely on Fakis to remedy all sorts of ailments.

or edible medicinal plant mixtures. The most common faki item in Darfur is the *hijab*, which consists of a small leather pouch attached to a string. Hijabs can be hung around the neck or tied to an arm. Inside these pouches are folded pieces of paper with verses from the Koran written on them.

The process for creating any of the objects made by the fakis is elaborate. To create a *mahia*, for example, the fakis use ink made from Arabic gum mixed with ash and water. They first write phrases from the Koran on a wooden tablet and

then wash the written phrases from the tablet with water, which is poured into a bowl and drunk by the client. The whole process is completed in a ritual that may take an entire night.

When asked about the effectiveness of *mahias*, hijabs and the other items he creates, Faki Ahmed says he has never received any complaints. “Most of the people who come to us asking for help have expressed satisfaction,” he says.

There are other spiritual practitioners in Darfur known as *Moshawzeen*, or witches, whose art does not rely on the Koran. *Moshawzeen* are reported to perform rituals that can make somebody sick, lose a job or even die. Babiker El tijani, a Sheik from El Fasher, North Darfur, cautions about dealing not only with the *Moshawzeen*, but also with the faki because some of them claim to know the future and claim they can cure any disease. “Instead, they cause harm,” he says.

Despite access to modern medical facilities, many people in Darfur rely on fakis to remedy all sorts of ailments. “A lot of people who have sought medical assistance and did not get well, are then referred to a faki for further treatment,” says an educated Darfuri who declined to be identified by name. As a Darfuri who believes in the power of the fakis,

he uses a specific type of hijab to protect him against harm from weapons.

“During the conflict, fighters wore hijabs to protect themselves from being captured or injured, but when hijabs break, they lose their effectiveness,” he explains. “That is how a new practice evolved of cutting open the skin and inserting the hijab beneath the skin.”

This Darfuri also says that hijabs are useful for long trips, and were important to the people of Darfur even before security became an issue in the region. “People use hijabs to protect themselves against armed robbery, especially during travelling or when they are in public places,” he explains.

The services of the fakis are not offered to everybody. Faki Ahmed says he does not provide hijabs for protection to people he does not know or to those who live outside his community because they may harbor ill will or could be planning attacks against the community.

Sidiq Mohammed, age 38, is one of the Abu Shouk camp residents who uses hijabs to bring luck and protection from danger. “I know people personally who use hijabs to get jobs and protect themselves,” he says. “I have used many kinds and they have worked for me.”

Despite the widespread belief in the usefulness of the fakis, there are those to do not believe the fakis wield special power. Saeed Hamdon, age 22 and a resident of the Abu Shouk camp, says he



doesn't use hijabs or other items provided by traditional healers. Instead, he says he believes in destiny. "Wearing a hijab will not change what will happen to me or give me more luck," he explains. "My destiny is in God's hands."

Mr. Hamdon points out that people who use traditional healers assume the services will change their lives. "It will not," he says.

While not all Darfuris believe in the traditional healing practices of the fakis, and some Muslim communities believe the practice is inconsistent with Islam, for many Darfuris who seek faki remedies, their beliefs about the power of the services transcend their social status, their educational background and the cultural backlash of those who frown on the practice. For these Darfuris, it is simply a matter of hope—hope of the parents who want to bring some protection to their newborn child or hope that they can protect themselves from harm so they may continue to provide for their families. ■

On 30 May 2012, in Forog, North Darfur, a member of Sudan Liberation Army /Abdul Wahid wears many hijabs as he greets a UNAMID delegation that has come to the area to open a new medical clinic. Hijabs, common in Darfur, consist of a small leather pouch attached to a string. Inside these pouches are folded pieces of paper with verses from the Koran written on them. Photo by Albert González Farran.





Stopping the Silent Killer: Efforts to Address HIV/AIDS in Darfur

UNAMID's HIV/AIDS Unit works to provide Darfuris with greater access to information and medical care designed to help protect them from the spread of the disease.

BY ABDULLAHI SHUAIBU

HIV/AIDS interventions in peacekeeping operations are supported by UN Security Council resolution 1308 (17 July 2000), which details the need to address the disease in all possible ways. Following this resolution, on 27 June 2001 the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS adopted a declaration of commitment that calls on all UN agencies, regional and international

organizations, as well as nongovernmental organizations involved with assistance to regions affected by conflict or natural disaster to provide HIV/AIDS awareness and training programmes.

The Security Council adopted resolution 1983 on 7 June 2011 to reinforce its earlier mandate on HIV/AIDS. Among other things, the resolution called for formalising approaches to HIV prevention,

treatment and support, and initiating programmes for counselling and testing in peacekeeping operations, as well as providing assistance to national institutions.

In line with this framework, the African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) has been addressing the HIV/AIDS situation in the region. Although there is no definitive data on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Darfur,



On 1 June 2011 in South Darfur, more than 1,000 ex-combatants participate in a reintegration program held at the National Service Camp in Nyala. The initiative is organized by the North Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission with the support of UNAMID. Activities in the programme include financial assistance, technical support, medical examinations, HIV tests and advisory services. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

Facts about HIV/AIDS

Infection by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a life-threatening disease that gradually destroys the immune system, preventing the body from fighting infections. Currently there is no cure, but special antiviral medications can keep the virus under control.

Over time and without treatment, the presence of HIV can prevent the body from being able to fight infection and disease. When that happens, the HIV infection leads to AIDS, or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. AIDS is the final stage of HIV that puts those infected with the disease at extreme risk for opportunistic infections.

Other facts:

- Approximate number of people living with HIV/AIDS is more than 42 million globally.
- Women account for nearly half of all HIV/AIDS cases.
- Significantly more young women than men are infected by HIV/AIDS.
- The number of new HIV infections is estimated at five million annually.
- Deaths from AIDS numbers roughly three million people annually.
- World AIDS Day, held on 1 December each year to honour AIDS victims, focuses attention on the prevention and treatment of conditions related to HIV and AIDS.

“Our women will not tell you easily if such a thing happens to them. In our culture, it is a shame, and women will hide this in their hearts so that the men do not hear about it.”

—Ramatu Tahir

the nine-year conflict introduces several factors to the area that experts say are contributing to the spread of the epidemic here. These factors include economic and social disruption, widespread poverty and population movements.

According to human rights observers, women around the world are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS on the whole, largely as a result of gender

inequality, poverty, inadequate access to education and the tragic cycle of sexual violence, which places a burden on social, economic and medical resources. The situation is further complicated by the reality that many women living with HIV/AIDS are subjected to ill treatment and are denied health care, housing, employment or the right to travel.

The stigma associated with the disease

represents a serious problem, with many women often refraining from seeking medical treatment following rape because of the risk that they will be ostracized within their family and community. “Our women will not tell you easily if such a thing happens to them,” says Ramatu Tahir, a women activist in El Fasher, North Darfur. “In our culture, it is a shame, and women will hide this in their hearts so that the men do not hear about it.”

Prior to the Darfur conflict, most estimates put the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in Darfur at slightly more than 2 per cent. According to Sudan National AIDS Programme (SNAP), the prevalence rate for HIV currently ranges between 0.67 and 1.6 per cent. However, this statistic

“When a population is displaced, the socioeconomic base is totally affected; there is likely to be a change in behaviour. The bottom line is that the disease is in Darfur.”

—Dr. Joseph Gernal

cannot be verified, as no organized data collection has been undertaken except in a few isolated programmes.

Dr. Joseph Gernal, Deputy Chief of the UNAMID's HIV/AIDS Unit, acknowledges that HIV/AIDS rates today have not yet been accurately approximated in Darfur but he says the prevailing consensus points to an increase rather than a reduction. To respond to this increase, UNAMID has been implementing HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and has been focusing on building community networks that facilitate counselling and testing services.

The work is being carried to the communities and to ex-combatants. More than 2,500 demobilized combatants in

Darfur have benefited from the Mission's HIV/AIDS interventions, and the awareness campaigns have reached more than 1,100 prison inmates across Darfur. In addition, more than 2,700 members of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) have been trained in HIV/AIDS issues. To provide training and facilitate the awareness campaigns for ex-combatants, the HIV/AIDS Unit has been working with the Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission.

“The Sudan DDR Commission repeatedly expresses the need for UNAMID to support demobilized combatants in matters of HIV and AIDS,” says UNAMID HIV/AIDS Head Margaret

Masenda-Simbi, who notes that, in addition to partnering with Sudan's DDR Commission and SNAP, the HIV/AIDS Unit has been collaborating with Sudan's Ministries of Health, the Sudanese Military and Police, and civil society organizations working at national and grassroots levels to address HIV/AIDS among vulnerable groups in Darfur.

Outside of the logistical and coordination challenges, the main problem, says Dr. Gernal, is that many people in Darfur still do not know enough about the disease, its methods of transmission or its consequences. “Fear of the unknown generates stigma and this is why more awareness is needed to educate and enlighten the communities on the dangers and consequences of the epidemic,” he says.

The Ministry of Health Coordinator of AIDS in South Darfur State, Dr. Dawoud Adam Ahmed, points to progress being made in responding to the HIV/AIDS threat through the awareness-raising programmes and services facilitated by the HIV/AIDS Unit. Such awareness-raising programmes include training sessions for

HIV/AIDS Prevention Strategies in Darfur Camps

BY IRENE HAUROBI



HIV/AIDS Unit counsellors discussing the disease in the Otash camp for internally displaced people in South Darfur.

Although some of the women in the Otash camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) were previously

not aware of the specific ailments to which their husbands eventually succumbed, one woman says she began

to understand the symptoms after she heard about them during a UNAMID HIV/AIDS training session. At that point, she says, she understood what happened to her husband before he died. Now, despite knowing about the need for testing, she has not yet availed herself of the procedure due to the stigma associated with it.

This scenario is not unique. Many of the widows in Darfur's IDP camps, including in the Otash camp, which is home to some 85,000 people in South Darfur, have experienced similar tragedies. Many households in Otash camp are headed by women, partly due to family structures that have been destroyed as a result of years of conflict and, in some cases, HIV/AIDS. It is against this backdrop that UNAMID, along with the Sudan National AIDS Programme (SNAP) and the Sudan



On 4 July 2011, UNAMID representatives conduct a presentation on HIV/AIDS for ex-combatants on the first day of a programme jointly run by UNAMID and the North Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission. Some 400 ex-combatants are demobilised in this particular exercise. Photo by Olivier Chassot, UNAMID.

Ministry of Health (MoH), embarked on HIV/AIDS sensitization in the Otash camp.

The aim of the HIV/AIDS Unit's ongoing interventions in Otash camp is to provide an enabling environment for behaviour change among men, women and youths; to improve access to voluntary counselling and testing; and to build the capacities of SNAP, MoH and local communities so eventually they can take responsibility for the programmes and continue their momentum. UNAMID's HIV/AIDS Unit is focusing on activities that involve the camp's leaders in planning and delivering sensitization and awareness sessions, training HIV/AIDS peer educators, and distributing education materials in the local languages.

To date, UNAMID's HIV/AIDS Unit has conducted more than 40 awareness sessions in Otash camp and has distributed thousands of pamphlets and posters. As a result of these coordi-

nated efforts, there has been a general increase in awareness about HIV/AIDS in the camp. "Before this session, I did not know that having multiple partners could lead to contracting HIV, and I never knew about condoms or testing," says a young male in Otash camp. "Now that I know, I will change my behaviour and I will take great care."

Raising awareness through culturally sensitive training and information distribution has helped dispel the myths and misconceptions held by Otash IDPs. "I used to believe that if one has HIV and AIDS, one needs to eat the head of a dog to get cured," says an Otash camp leader. "But now I know about testing and treatment."

Despite the progress made, there are several challenges faced in Otash camp. For example, there is no established counselling and testing centre in the camp, and negative attitudes toward HIV prevention methods, such as condoms, remain prevalent.

In implementing these programs and working to address these challenges, the HIV/AIDS Unit in South Darfur has learned that the involvement of local IDP camp leaders is essential for the acceptance, increased ownership and sustainability of information and training activities. The Unit has learned, furthermore, that training peer educators is an important part of delivering correct messages in a locally acceptable way, and that partnership with other actors will help maximise community participation and avoid duplicating activities and wasting resources.

Information campaigns that involved Otash IDPs and have been sensitive to their cultural and religious beliefs have encouraged participation in HIV/AIDS awareness activities. The increased awareness in Otash has resulted in the adoption of positive behaviour change and safer practices. ■

IRENE HAUROBI WORKS FOR UNAMID'S HIV/AIDS UNIT AS A COUNSELLOR AND TRAINER.

volunteer peer educators, who take what they have learned and educate others.

“So far, the performance of UNAMID HIV/AIDS Unit in all parts of Darfur is satisfactory, and we are benefitting from it as it makes us aware of the deadly infec-

tion and ways to avoid getting infected and how to live and treat those suffering from it,” says Mohamed Hamdan, a student at El Fasher University in North Darfur and also a volunteer peer educator on HIV/AIDS.

However, despite the steps that

have been taken to raise awareness, UNAMID’s HIV/AIDS Unit personnel say community attitudes indicate there is still a long way to go in eradicating the silent killer that continues to claim lives in the region. ■

HIV/AIDS Interventions for Ex-Combatants

BY YUSUF KAGGWA



A counsellor from the Sudan National AIDS Program (SNAP) in North Darfur discussing HIV/AIDS issues with demobilized young combatants.

Ex-combatants across Darfur cannot readily access HIV counselling and testing services because the majority of counselling and testing facilities are located in Darfur’s state capitals, leaving rural areas not served. In some places across Darfur, there are health facilities that could be used for counselling and testing, but these facilities suffer from inadequate technical capacity.

In addition, the lack of adequate follow-up mechanisms on the status of demobilized combatants has posed a challenge because ex-combatants are mobile and are not easy to track down. This factor is partly attributable to the political nature under which Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) exercises are conducted in Darfur.

In this context, HIV/AIDS training sessions conducted during DDR exercises have provided a rare opportunity for ex-combatants to learn about the HIV and voice concerns about their personal health, especially

considering that there are high levels of stigma and discrimination related to HIV/AIDS not only among ex-combatants but also in the communities where ex-combatants are reintegrated in Darfur.

Collaboration with various actors has been a crucial factor for the success of HIV/AIDS interventions during DDR exercises. So far, UNAMID’s HIV/AIDS Unit has reached out to more than 2,500 ex-combatants through DDR exercises conducted in various Darfur locations. More than 90 per cent of the ex-combatants to whom UNAMID officers talked during demobilization exercises have expressed concern about the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS.

In addition to conducting training sessions during demobilization exercises, the UNAMID HIV/AIDS Unit has conducted several workshops for Government of Sudan (GoS) officials. The workshops have included participants from Sudan Armed Forces, Po-

lice, National Security, State Ministries, the Sudan National AIDS Programme, the Ministry of Health and offices of the Walis (Governors). The workshops are designed to raise the HIV/AIDS profile among GoS officials so that they can more effectively support demobilized combatants.

“The workshop helped me to better understand the HIV needs of high-risk and special groups,” says an official from the Ministry of Health. “After the workshop, I am going to incorporate ex-combatants in the State Ministry’s work plan for this year.”

UNAMID’s HIV/AIDS Unit has established a network of liaison officers among the Police and Military components of the Mission. The liaison officers are attached to the HIV/AIDS Unit and regularly liaise with their counterparts to organize and implement awareness and sensitization activities in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). In North Darfur, for example, more than 1,500 IDPs have so far been reached through this initiative, which involves liaison officers joining patrol teams to sensitize IDP camp residents and leaders on HIV/AIDS.

In the context of these developments, UNAMID is working to strengthen ties with other organisations and agencies to provide Darfuris with more robust HIV/AIDS services. With Darfur being a conflict area, there is a possibility of the prevalence of HIV/AIDS escalating, and there is an ongoing need for community-based interventions to address issues such as stigma and discrimination. ■

YUSUF KAGGWA WORKS FOR UNAMID AS AN HIV/AIDS OFFICER AND IS THE NORTH DARFUR TEAM LEADER.

The Backbone of Darfur's Peace Agreement

Chapter VI of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur deals with the permanent ceasefire and final security arrangements. Arguably, it is the most important chapter of the Document.

BY PATRICK NYAMVUMBA

On 14 July 2011, the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur was signed by two former belligerents, namely the Government of Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement.

The DDPD consists of seven chapters, each of which is dedicated to a specific issue. Chapter I deals with human rights and fundamental freedoms, while chapter II is concerned with power-sharing and the administrative status of Darfur. The third chapter is on wealth sharing, the fourth on compensation and the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, while the fifth covers justice and reconciliation. Chapter VI deals with a permanent ceasefire and final security arrangements. The last chapter, chapter VII, details internal dialogue and consultation and implementation modalities.

Needless to say, each of the seven chapters of the DDPD is important to the parties and must have taken hundreds of hours to negotiate. Yes, each of the seven chapters is crucial for the successful implementation of the entire DDPD. After all, all the seven chapters are interrelated so that the success of one affects the success of the other six.

Having said that, however, it would be fair to say that some chapters are more important than others, at least in terms of the degree of impact on the entire peace process. In fact, I will argue that chapter VI, the chapter that deals with the permanent ceasefire and final security arrangements, is the most important of them all. Here is why.

It is an indisputable fact that the taking up of arms by a disaffected group is

the best indicator of conflict in society. All other manifestations of discontent may pass unnoticed, at least by the international community. In other words, the outbreak of an armed conflict is the surest indicator of a political or social problem. And when fighting breaks out, it creates its own logic that makes it difficult to address the original social, political, economic or even human rights issues that led to the armed conflict in the first place.

It is an indisputable fact that the taking up of arms by a disaffected group in society is the best indicator of conflict. All other manifestations of discontent may pass unnoticed, at least by the international community. In other words, the outbreak of an armed conflict is the surest indicator of a political or social problem.

That's why any attempt to broker a peace agreement between warring parties always begins with negotiation for a cessation of hostilities. The reason ceasefires are hard to negotiate and even harder to maintain is that each of the warring parties fears that the adversary would take advantage of the ceasefire to strengthen its position. That's why, no matter how well crafted a ceasefire agreement, the parties will always find a way to violate it.

A ceasefire commission, well-structured and well-resourced, is the only sure way to safeguard the integrity of a ceasefire agreement. And when the ceasefire is

safeguarded, the parties' representatives are in a better position to implement provisions contained in the other chapters, such as those dealing with power-sharing and wealth-sharing.

When the former belligerents have been integrated into the national military, police and security services, it gives their political masters the confidence to go ahead with power-sharing arrangements. Of course it would also be true to say that combatants will never be willing

to disarm unless and until they have full guarantees of power-sharing.

Let me end this piece with one observation: Peace is difficult to achieve and it takes a lot of courage and patriotism to negotiate and implement a peace deal. Developing a permanent ceasefire and final security arrangements, including integration of former belligerents, is the starting point. A ceasefire commission is the best instrument to make this happen. ■

LIEUTENANT GENERAL PATRICK NYAMVUMBA, BASED IN EL FASHER, NORTH DARFUR, IS UNAMID'S FORCE COMMANDER. HE IS ALSO CHAIR OF THE CEASEFIRE COMMISSION, A REGULARLY MEETING ENTITY THAT IS STIPULATED BY THE DOHA DOCUMENT FOR PEACE IN DARFUR. CONTACT HIM AT NYAMVUMBA@UN.ORG.

Easing Tensions Between Pastoralists and Farmers

Conflict between nomadic pastoralists and settled farmers not only has slowed the pace of Darfur's economy, but also has created an impact on the security situation across the region.

BY EMADELDIN RIJAL

Darfur's pastoralists and farmers represent two sides of the same coin, or, to use an architectural metaphor, the twin pillars on which Darfur's economy is built. However, despite the similarities, the long conflict between the settled farmers, who cultivate the land for food, and the nomadic pastoralists, who tend to the many different types of animal herds in the region, not only has slowed the pace of Darfur's economy, but also has created a significant impact on the security situation here.

One of the original conflicts in Darfur dates to the 1932 clashes between pastoralists and farmers over claims to land. In recent years, observers have attributed the steady escalation of such frictions in part to local authorities neglecting to make formal arrangements for seasonal movement of nomadic pastoralists across Darfur.

As the desert continues to encroach on verdant areas, nomadic pastoralists have abandoned the previous routes they travelled in search of land for grazing. This shift has heightened the tension between the two groups. Compounding this situation is the absence of a formal schedule for the movement of the nomads' herds. Tension with the framers typically becomes much more acute during harvest time, when entire crops can easily be destroyed by hungry passing cattle.

"During the harvest period, the situation is potentially dangerous, especially if pastoralists do not refrain from invading our farms," says Yahia Al-Noor, a West Darfur farmer who explains that the careless invasion of the farms results in hostile attitudes and even armed clashes.

Through careful planning, civil society representatives and government officials in West Darfur are attempting to address this situation and ease the tensions between the two groups. The Wali (Governor) of West Darfur, Haider Gali Koma, recently established a High Committee for Protecting the Agricultural Season. The purpose of the committee is to find a compromise solution to this longstanding problem.

"Our concern lies in protecting and making the agricultural season successful," says Abdallah Hamdan Ballal, Chair of the



On 14 February 2012, a woman from the Mahammad tribe returns to Damra Toma in North Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

High Committee. "The routes taken by nomadic pastoralists are likely to cause friction."

Mr. Ballal explains that, in the past, many cattle routes in West Darfur were a mere 70 metres wide. Because they were so narrow, the cattle were prone to deviate from them into the farmland. "As a result, pastoralists have been on a collision course with the farmers over agricultural resources," he says.

The conflict between farmers and pastoralists highlights the scarcity of Darfur's resources, especially water, says Al Haj Abbaker, a farmer from North Darfur. There has been a steady increase in the number of Darfuris who need access to these resources, he explains, pointing out that an expansion of agricultural lands along with an increase in the general numbers of animals tended by the pastoralists have led to the outbreak of larger tribal clashes.

To ensure protection of the farms and prevention of such



The new strategy has been hailed as a positive step toward resolving the historic friction between pastoralists and farmers.

to prosperous agricultural practices.

The new strategy has been hailed from many quarters as a positive step toward resolving the historic friction between pastoralists and farmers. Some are saying the strategy will have a much larger impact on Darfur because it addresses one of the root causes of the larger conflicts here. Adam Mohamed Osman, the leader of the farmers' union in West Darfur, says the strategy will contribute greatly to the realization of security and stability in the region.

In 2011, the Sudanese Government sponsored a conference in El Fasher, North Darfur, on peaceful coexistence. More than 600 people from different segments of Darfur society attended the conference, which focused on ways to work toward better cooperation at all levels of society, including between pastoralists and farmers, by strengthening the role of Darfur's traditional civil administration structures. Those attending the conference discussed ways to find common ground, including legal aspects and customs, between pastoralists and farmers.

In early 2012, Sudan sponsored a similar conference to identify strategies for dealing with the farmer-pastoralist conflict, including the cattle paths and the timing of the nomadic movements, and to develop ways to move forward on general tribal reconciliation. Sudan's official news agency reported that, as a result of the agreements made at these conferences, friction between pastoralists and farmers declined dramatically.

"North Darfur witnessed a great reduction in friction between farmers and pastoralists following the strict application of the recommendations of the conference," the Wali (Governor) of North Darfur, Osman Mohamed Yusuf, was quoted by Sudan News Agency as saying. Mr. Yusuf also said that cooperation between the two groups is in the best interest of enhancing peace and stability.

The High Committee now has the support of national and international organizations, such as the Humanitarian Aid Commission, the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Animal Resources, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNAMID, which has provided supplies to help the Committee perform its role more effectively.

As for the future of efforts to avoid conflict between these groups, Mr. Ballal says that members of the High Committee will continue their work in West Darfur to brief citizens on the new strategies and raise awareness about the importance of making every effort to protect farms while still making it possible for the pastoralists to move their cattle around Darfur. ■

On 16 August 2011, internally displaced persons (IDPs) near Tawilla, North Darfur, farm the lands they rent from local owners. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

frictions, the High Committee in West Darfur has clearly demarcated acceptable cattle routes that are 150 metres wide. The demarcation applies to the nomads, who must keep their animals within the boundaries of the routes as they travel, and to the farmers, who must cultivate only the land outside the routes.

In addition to establishing new, wider routes, the High Committee has set dates for the pastoralists to move their animals from one part of Darfur to another. Starting 28 February each year, this period, called the *talaga*, will be the time cattle can pass through the farmlands following the harvest season.

Mr. Ballal explains that the High Committee has set up several subcommittees to monitor the situation and report at weekly meetings. The subcommittees, which consist of union representatives for farmers and pastoralists, are watching the new strategies closely to ensure their success in preventing friction and to address any other issues that might arise as a barrier



Painting Darfur: An Interview with Artist Ahmed Adam

Local artist Ahmed Adam talks about his art, the role of the artist in Darfur and his optimism for a near-term solution to the conflict in the region.

BY ALA MAYYAH

Ahmed Adam, a young Darfur painter who focuses on telling the many stories of the region through visual media, was born in 1986 in North Darfur, and currently lives in his hometown, El Fasher.

Small pieces of paper, walls and school fences were Mr. Adam's first media. Pencil and watercolour were his first tools. With these items he sketched the scenes of his childhood and the faces that caught his eye. He eventually started using pastel, charcoal, acrylic and oil.

In his teenage years, Mr. Adam decided to formalise his interest in art and attended Sudan University, where he graduated in 2003 with a major in Drawing and Art Education. After graduation, he worked as a teacher at a primary school and continued to refine his art.

While he does some teaching today, he has taken an interest in business and now runs an advertising shop in El Fasher, producing signage and billboards for local merchants. The business has not taken him away from his art. He continues to

draw and paint today, favouring watercolour and paper in a unique style for which he has become known in Darfur.

Voices of Darfur talked with Mr. Adam about his art and role of the artist in Darfur.

Voices of Darfur: To what extent are the Sudanese arts affected by other African arts, in terms of colours and styles?

Adam: In the old history, art in Sudan came through mixing and trading with neighbouring nations. Other Afri-



far left. On 18 June 2012, Darfuri artist Ahmed Adam stands beside one of his favourite watercolour paintings. The piece is titled "Rural woman." Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

left. A watercolour painting created by El Fasher artist Ahmed Adam.

can countries preceded Sudan in the arts because art had been emerging in ancient civilizations in other areas. So of course art in Sudan was affected by these adjacent sources, and it was boosted mostly when Christianity came in to the country. Architecture was the most-used art form at that time. Then drawing and sculpture followed to decorate church interiors and exteriors.

In recent history, Sudanese painting styles have clearly differed from Egyptian and African. For example, impressionism or realism is the common style locally rather than the more abstract styles, while the latter is widely used in the bordering countries.

VoD: Speaking of recent history, how are Darfuri artists affected by the conflict here?

Adam: We all are affected by the conflict in one way or another. The conflict has had a great impact on artists, as

with many other groups, morally and financially. As artists, we feel sad to see our people go through such a terrible struggle.

VoD: Do you think this kind of suffering stimulates the artist's work or hinders it?

Adam: It depends. Suffering from lack of financial resources would definitely hinder the artist's work, especially when artists can't afford the required tools for their art. But emotional or psychological suffering pushes the artist to express his or her inner anguish.

VoD: Because art and other cultural activities can serve a transformative social function, how do you see the role of Darfuri artists in contributing to the development in Darfur?

Adam: Unfortunately, Darfuri fine artists cannot yet play an effective role in this regard due to situations which stand as restrictions sometimes. But if artists

have a larger space of freedom, they would be more capable of contributing, through their arts and activities, to solving Darfur problems.

VoD: So in this respect, do you think artists are not making their voices heard in politics and social life?

Adam: Not to a great enough extent. By nature, most artists are sensitive to all kind of violence. As for me, I express in painting my sympathy for women suffering from social or family violence. Many other artists have done the same. We also promote messages of peace and coexistence, in line with the peace efforts taking place in the region, including the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

VoD: And how do you see the possibility of the Doha Document achieving peace in Darfur?

Adam: I am quite optimistic that peace can be achieved in the near future. The Doha Document is good and can bring peace to us, even if the holdout movements haven't joined the process. The challenge is in the implementation of its provisions throughout the region.

VoD: In terms of your own painting, how do you typically start a painting? Do you decide the details from the beginning or does the design evolve as you work?

Adam: It is hard actually to identify all the details of a painting right from the beginning. I first outline the subject from a specific angle. Only then I can have a better idea about what details I want to add. And that's the part that takes the major time and effort.

VoD: What are the subjects that drive you to paint?

Adam: Landscape has always inspired me to draw. But I also like por-



A watercolour painting created by El Fasher artist Ahmed Adam.

On 26 June 2012, Ahmed Adam works in his studio on a new painting. Mr. Adam's art focuses mostly on women and children in Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

“In the past, the people of Darfur had kindness and compassion for each other, and we can be the same now, especially the young people as they now have greater awareness about the importance of living in peace as a society.”

—Ahmed Adam

traying people in particular situations, for example women making baskets, or a mother feeding her child. I also focus on local rituals and group activities, such as dances and harvesting. These paintings are mostly liked by elderly people.

VoD: How can people here see your work and buy it?

Adam: I do exhibitions from time to time. Since graduation from college, I have held five major exhibitions, in Khartoum and in Darfur. The last one was in 2011 in El Fasher. People like to attend art exhibitions and buy the paintings, and I try to put reasonable prices on them, varying between 50 and 150 Suda-

nese pounds. But my paintings sell more quickly in Khartoum and for slightly higher prices.

VoD: Thank you for talking with us. On a final note, what message would you like to deliver to Darfuris?

Adam: I would like to call on people of Darfur, from all groups, to unite and overcome the past wounds and work together to achieve lasting peace. In the past, the people of Darfur had kindness and compassion for each other, and we can be the same now, especially the young people as they now have greater awareness about the importance of living in peace as a society. ■



A watercolour painting by El Fasher artist Ahmed Adam, whose art focuses mostly on women and children in Darfur.





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