

UNAMID BULLETIN

UNAMID promotes resolution on women, peace and security in Darfur



Women attend the Open Day workshop on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in Malha, North Darfur. Photo by Sojoud Elgarrai - UNAMID

UNAMID's Gender Advisory Unit in collaboration with the Ministries of Social Affairs in all Darfur's states held Open Day sessions in several localities to deliberate on the implementation status of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and to raise awareness on the importance of women in peace and development.

The events, which took place in El Daein, East Darfur, Nyala, South Darfur, El Geneina, West Darfur, Zalingei, Central Dar-

fur, and Um Kadada and Malha, North Darfur, brought together hundreds of participants from across civil society organizations, NGOs, women and youth groups, as well as UNAMID and Sudanese government officials.

The sessions were aimed at identifying the priorities, concerns and needs of the women within the context of Resolution 1325, and enabled the participants to review previous recommendations and achievements made so far, tackle challenges and identify

the gaps in its implementation.

Addressing the participants in Nyala, the Head of UNAMID Gender Advisory Unit, Ms. Yegerawork Angagaw, urged women to position themselves as peace builders in their respective communities and also come up with recommendations to be addressed by the UN and the Sudanese government concerning gender issues.

Ms. Yegerawork noted in El Daein the gains made towards the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Darfur, including increased women participation in peace negotiations and strengthening of institutional capacities to address the issues of gender disparities and protection.

She stressed that "women will like to see more systematic and speedy response by the UN to the major challenges confronting them, especially in the areas of women political participation, justice, security, and decision-making," and assured the participants of UNAMID's commitment to further support women empowerment and gen-

der equality in the region.

The participants identified the progress achieved so far and the impact of the Resolution on their daily lives and in key areas of protection, participation in the peace process, women's rights and socio-economic empowerment.

They also made recommendations to enhance the implementation of the Resolution, including the need to reach out to women in rural areas and sensitize them on gender-related issues and on their role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts in the communities.

Resolution 1325 reaffirms the important role of women in conflict prevention, peacemaking and peace building and it sets out three fundamental principles: participation of women in peace building, protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence through the adoption of prevention measures and the promotion of women's rights with emphasis on promoting gender equality and empowerment strategies. ■

Significant step by Darfur armed group to end use of child soldiers

An action plan to put an end to the use of child soldiers has been put forward by the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The establishment of the plan was agreed upon at consultations between JEM and former UNAMID Joint Special Representative and Joint Chief Mediator a.i Ibrahim Gambari, in Stadtschlaining, Austria in July 2012.

The plan, submitted to the United Nations on 25 September, includes the immediate release of children within JEM ranks, the

prevention of recruitment and re-recruitment of children, and granting unhindered access to the UN to monitor and verify compliance. JEM is to designate a high-level focal point to liaise with the UN and to submit reports on the implementation of this plan.

Five other Darfur's groups have made the same commitment earlier: the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) Free Will, the JEM / Peace Wing, SLA / Abu Gasim, SLA/ Historical Leadership and the Liberation and Justice Movement. Three

of their action plans have been fully implemented.

"The African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur acknowledges and commends the efforts made by JEM to adhere to the international conventions that prohibit the involvement of children in armed conflicts," said UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative Mohamed Yonis.

On 11 September 2012, JEM issued a Commander Order prohibiting recruitment and use of child soldiers. Seven other armed movements issued similar orders previously, which have contributed to a decrease in the number of child soldiers in the region.

The UN Security Council demanded in resolution 2068, adopted on 19 September 2012, that parties to armed conflict immediately halt the use and abuse of children and to take special measures to protect children. The Council expressed concerns that certain perpetrators "persist in committing violations and abuses against children in situations of armed conflict in open disregard of the resolutions on the matter."

The UN Secretary-General's latest report on children and armed conflict, released in June 2012, named 52 parties on its "list of shame" of those who recruit and use children. ■

DRA, UNHCR, UNAMID hold workshop on voluntary returns

On 1 October, the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA) in conjunction with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) held in Nyala, South Darfur, a one-day preparatory workshop for the Internally Displaced Persons' Conference on Voluntary Returns scheduled for the first week of November.

The workshop discussed four thematic areas that included returns and basic services, land issues and compensation, justice and reconciliation and the role of internally displaced persons (IDP) and refugees in the return process, as well as peace and development.

At the end of the event, the IDPs representatives made

recommendations, including the need for enhanced security in the camps, disarmament of the combatants, favorable conditions for returnees, prosecution of war crimes and perpetrators and encouraging non-signatories to join the peace process. They also suggested reconciliation among different ethnic groups, vocational training for the youth in camps and more participation of women in the peace process.

The workshop was attended by the Deputy Wali (Governor) of South Darfur, DRA Commissioners, government officials, members of civil society organizations, IDPs representatives, and UNHCR and UNAMID officers.

Similar workshops are expected to take place in other Darfur's states. ■

UNAMID contributes to addressing Darfur educational needs

On 24 September, UNAMID inaugurated three classrooms, a volleyball field and a perimeter wall for the Girls Primary School at Abu Shouk internally displaced persons camp, near El Fasher, North Darfur.

The initiative by the Mission is aimed at addressing educational needs in the region. The facilities, one of many approved Quick Impact Projects by UNAMID, were built by the Mission's Rwandese peacekeepers. ■

Peacekeepers ambushed in West Darfur, several dead



On 3 October, UNAMID Force Commander Lt Gen Patrick Nyamvumba visited in El Geneina the Nigerian injured peacekeepers and inspected the scene of the ambush. Photo by Albert Gonzalez Farran - UNAMID

Four peacekeepers of the African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) were killed and eight injured in an ambush by unidentified assailants that took place on the evening of 2 October in El Geneina, West Darfur.

The incident, which involved a Nigerian military patrol, occurred approximately two kilometers from a Mission's regional headquarters. UNAMID personnel, who were heavily fired upon from several directions, returned fire.

"The Mission condemns in the strongest terms this criminal attack on our peacekeepers who are here in the service of

Darfur's people. I call on the Government of Sudan to bring the perpetrators to justice," said UNAMID Force Commander and currently the Mission's officer-in-charge, Lt. General Patrick Nyamvumba.

In separate statements, the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union Jean Ping, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the members of the Security Council strongly condemned the attack, urged the Government of Sudan to investigate and bring the perpetrators to justice, and expressed their condolences to the families and friends of the peacekeepers, UNAMID and the Government of Nigeria. ■



UNAMID Acting Chief meets former Finnish President

On 17 September 2012, at the invitation of the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), the UNAMID Acting Joint Special Representative, Ms. Aichatou Mindaoudou, met with the former President of Finland, Mr. Martti

Ahtisaari, and the Executive Director of CMI, Ms. Tuija Talvitie, in Helsinki to discuss common interest in mediation. Ahtisaari, who is also Nobel Peace Prize laureate, assured their willingness to support and readiness to assist the mediation in Darfur. ■