

# UNAMID BULLETIN

## Acting UNAMID Head: Cooperation Key in Protecting Civilians



On 10 December 2012, in El Daein, East Darfur, UNAMID Acting Head Aïchatou Mindaoudou meets with government officials, native administration and community leaders. Photo by Rania Abdulrahman, UNAMID.

**P**rotection of civilians, access, security of UNAMID personnel, peace process, development and early recovery were the focus of the two-day visit which concluded on 11 December by the African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) Acting Joint Special Representative (AJSR) and Joint Chief Mediator a.i., Aïchatou Mindaoudou, to East and South Darfur states.

The visit, which began on 10 December, provided the AJSR with the opportunity to engage with community leaders, native administration and

government officials to explore new avenues for strengthening partnerships at the operational level between UNAMID and all stakeholders, promoting peace and protecting civilians, and supporting development as a key element to addressing some of the root causes of the conflict in the region.

In El Daein, the capital of the State of East Darfur, the UNAMID Acting Head held talks with Deputy Wali (Governor) Abdulmajeed El Zai-er, where they discussed the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur,

UNAMID's framework for the protection of civilians (PoC) and the Mission's efforts to support local mediation initiatives.

"The Cooperation with Government authorities and the community is instrumental to the successful implementation of UNAMID's protection of civilian's strategy, particularly on access, preventive measures and rapid response," said Ms. Mindaoudou in a meeting with the Deputy Wali of East Darfur.

The AJSR also attended a ceremony, held at El Daein Um-Durman University, marking the 16 Days of activism against gender-based violence. Addressing more than 90 women who took part in the event, Ms. Mindaoudou said "This campaign recalls our shared responsibility to discuss, identify community strategies and work together for the advancement of women's human rights, particularly their right to be heard and to shape decisions that affect their lives and the communities they live in."

"UNAMID is firmly committed to continue to cooperate

with national mechanisms to create safe spaces where women and girls are free from fear of violence," added the Acting UNAMID Chief.

In Nyala, the AJSR met with South Darfur Wali Hamad Ismail Hamad where they discussed the status of the yellow fever in the state, issues of access of UNAMID and UN to all parts of Darfur, particularly eastern Jebel Marra, safety and security of UNAMID personnel and cooperation between the State and UNAMID in implementing the Mission's PoC strategy.

The AJSR also used the occasion to visit some of the facilities supported by UNAMID through QIPs in Nyala Central Prison. The facilities include a water tank, women's dormitory and maternity rooms, and kindergarten. The projects represent some of the 47 QIPs that UNAMID is undertaking in support of the development efforts in the South State.

Last month, the AJSR made similar visits to West, Central and North Darfur, in her continued efforts to engage with all Darfuri stakeholders in protecting civilians and promoting the peace process. ■

## UNAMID Supports Judicial System in North Darfur

**T**he African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) on 12 December handed over a rural court to the local and judicial authorities in Tawilla, North Darfur, which was built as part of the Mission's quick impact projects.

The facility is the only judicial institution in Tawilla which will be used to settle conflicts between members

of the community and will facilitate access to justice by the population, especially the internally displaced persons, women and children in the locality. The court will contribute in the fight against impunity and in strengthening the rule of law culture.

"UNAMID will continue to intensify its support to the rule of law institutions

in Darfur including the construction and rehabilitation of other judicial institutions in North Darfur," said UNAMID's Head of Rule of Law unit Ly Djibril.

In his remarks, Chief Judge for North Darfur Bakri Mohammed Bakri, thanked UNAMID for its efforts in the construction of the court and its contribution to the justice

system in the region, assuring that the authorities will equip and furnish the newly built court in Tawilla.

UNAMID's Rule of Law support in Darfur includes mobile courts, capacity building for judges, prosecutors and lawyers, and facilitate access to justice for people in remote areas through provision of transportation. ■

## Darfur Joins in Celebrating Human Rights Day



Women in Shagra village, located just outside of El Fasher, North Darfur, on 10 December join in the many celebrations taking place marking Human Rights Day. Photo by Sharon Lukunka, UNAMID.

Hundreds of participants, including women and youth groups, students, community leaders, native administration, local authorities and African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) staff, joined on 10 December the global celebration of Human Rights Day under the slogan "My Voice Counts." The Day was marked with several events throughout Darfur, including dances, traditional

songs and drama.

In North Darfur, the events, organized by the Council for Child Welfare and UNAMID, were held in Shagra village, located about 20 kilometers west of El Fasher, and in Abu Shouk camp for internally displaced persons.

Addressing the participants in Shagra, the head of the North Darfur Council for Child Welfare, Ms. Khadija Adam Abdulmagid, expressed appreciation to the people for joining in the celebration of Human Rights Day, which is important for enlightening the community on their rights which are also included in the Sudanese Constitution.

The Mission's representatives read out statements from UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

According to Ms. Pillay's statement, millions of people have taken to the streets over the past few years, demanding civil, political, economic, social or cultural rights, and asking for their right to participate fully in important decisions and policies affecting their daily lives.

The UN Secretary-General's message reiterated that everyone has the right to be heard and to shape the decisions that affect their community. "International law is clear: No matter who you are, or where you live, your voice counts. On this Day, let us unite to defend your right to make it heard."

Mohammed Abdulrahman Salah, a representative of Shagra village, appreciated the activities which raised awareness on human rights issues and called for more assistance in the provision of basic services and infrastructure in the region. ■

## Women in Darfur Mark 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence



On 6 December 2012, girls in the Zam Zam camp for internally displaced persons, North Darfur, perform traditional Darfuri dances and songs at the event. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

To draw attention to women's rights, a series of events organized by the African Union – United Nations in Darfur (UNAMID), took place throughout Darfur to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-

Based Violence.

The campaign, which was launched on 25 November 2012 under the theme: "Zero Tolerance against Violence towards Women Now," concluded on 10 December, Human Rights Day.

The forums provided an

opportunity for hundreds of Darfuri women including those internally displaced, students, midwives, representatives from civil society organizations, and persons with disabilities, to come together and unify their voices to end the act of violence against women in their communities.

The events, many of which kicked off with large marches through the center of several towns across Darfur, also included cultural performances, drama and songs. These activities were performed by women, men and children from the community, in order to draw attention to violence against women and to serve as agents to further spread the message.

"Millions of women and girls around the world are assaulted, beaten, raped, mutilated or even

murdered in what constitutes an appalling violation of human rights," said UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative for Operations and Management Mohamed Yonis as he read a statement issued by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

"From battlefield to home, on the street, at school, in the workplace or in their community, up to 70 per cent of women experience physical or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime. As many as a quarter of all pregnant women are affected," said Mr. Yonis quoting the UN head.

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual global campaign aimed at raising public awareness on women's human rights and actions to combat sexual and gender-based violence. ■