UNAMID Acting Joint Special Representative (JSR) Aichatou Mindaoudou and Joint Chief Mediator a.i. together with the parties to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), discussed progress made so far and challenges in the implementation of the Document with the leadership of the African Union (AU).

The meetings, held at the AU’s headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, brought together the Chairperson of the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA), El Tigani Seisi, the Sudanese Minister of State, Amin Hassan Omer, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, and the AU Peace and Security Commissioner, Ramtane Lamamra.

The DRA Chair highlighted the priorities of the institution, including creating an environment conducive to the return of internally displaced persons and refugees, facilitating reconstruction and development in Darfur, and conducting internal dialogue and consultation in Darfur. Dr. Seisi requested the AU to advocate for the upcoming Darfur Donor’s Conference, set to take place in January 2013 in Doha, Qatar.

The Acting JSR called attention to the importance of unconditional access to all areas of Darfur so the international community can assist the population more effectively and, in particular, so UNAMID can implement its mandate in the protection of civilians.

She concluded by commending the spirit of cooperation between the parties. “I encourage the Government and the DRA to redouble their efforts to accelerate the implementation of the DDPD and to sustain their cooperation with UNAMID,” she said.

UNAMID Encourages Traditional Singers to Promote Peace in Darfur

On 21 November 2012, UNAMID Acting Joint Special Representative (JSR) Aichatou Mindaoudou, together with the parties to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), discussed progress made so far and challenges in the implementation of the Document with the leadership of the African Union (AU).

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UNAMID Peacekeepers Construct Women’s Market in Jebel Marra, Central Darfur

In their latest effort to support development in Darfur, Rwandan peacekeepers from the African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) completed the construction of a market for use by women in and around the Nertiti locality in the Jebel Marra area of Central Darfur. The new building is spacious enough to accommodate roughly 20 local women, who now will be able to sell their goods indoors.

Speaking at the ceremony on 20 November to inaugurate the new market, the Rwandan contingent’s Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. Christopher Rutaremara, explained that the construction project was planned and completed by UNAMID’s Rwandan contingent to contribute to peace in Nertiti.

“The market is designed to create job opportunities for internally displaced women and returnees, as well as to raise their standard of living and their economic status in the community,” said Lt.-Col. Rutaremara. “Women are at the heart of the family.”

The ceremony was attended by UNAMID’s Force Commander, Lt.-Gen. Patrick Nyamvumba, who commended the troops for taking the initiative to work on such development projects in line with UNAMID’s mandate to protect the civilian population and assist in ensuring peace and security in the area.

The Force Commander said that the market will address the needs of the Nertiti women, enhance their living conditions and reduce the hardship they face in conducting business. “The completion of the market is an indicator of an improved security situation within the troops’ area of responsibility, despite challenges,” he said.

UNAMID’s Rwandese peacekeepers are currently implementing three other projects in Central Darfur, including the construction of a primary school and the construction of a perimeter fence at a secondary girl’s school.

UNAMID Supports Nomadic Education in North Darfur

As part of its support to recovery and development in Darfur, the African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) on 22 November presented 12 tents to the North Darfur Ministry of Education to be used as mobile classrooms for nomads in five localities in North Darfur.

The donation is part of the Mission’s Quick Impact Project (QIPs) programme and was executed by the national non-governmental organisation Nomads Development Organizations Network in North Darfur. The nomadic communities requested UNAMID to assist them with facilities to enable their children to attend schools. The tents will accommodate thousands of nomadic boys and girls and their teachers in the localities of El Waha, Serif, Saraf Omra, Kabkabiya and El Cuma, and will allow them to learn in a conducive environment.

North Darfur’s Commissioner for the Humanitarian Aid Commission, Mr. Ibrahim Ahmed Hamid, thanked UNAMID for the gesture and also urged the Mission to assist the nomadic communities with capacity building and other skills training programmes. “The tents will improve the standard of learning for nomads, who are always on the move, including boys, girls and even the elderly,” said Hamid.

QIPs are small-scale projects and among the key elements of UNAMID’s strategy to underpin the peace process in Darfur and bring about socio-economic recovery and development. To date, the Mission has implemented more than 500 projects of benefit to diverse communities in all Darfur states.