

UNAMID BULLETIN

UNAMID Head Briefs AU Peace and Security Council on Darfur



On 27 May 2014 at UNAMID headquarters in El Fasher, North Darfur, Joint Special Representative Mohamed Ibn Chambas speaks during a meeting of the Mission's senior management. Also pictured are Police Commissioner Hester Paneras and Force Commander Paul Mella. Photo by Albert Gonzalez Farran, UNAMID.

On 9 July 2014, UNAMID Joint Special Representative Mohamed Ibn Chambas briefed the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) on the recent developments in Darfur, the mediation efforts and the implementation of the strategic review of UNAMID.

Mr. Chambas said that although there has been a pause in fighting between the main factions in recent weeks, the proliferation of militia groups and attendant criminality and

banditry continue to be a source of major concern. "More needs to be done therefore to disarm these militias as part of the broader and concerted efforts toward the achievement of comprehensive peace in Darfur," the JSR said.

The Head of UNAMID explained that inter-communal violence in Darfur continued mainly with renewed fighting between tribes competing for resources and retaliating for acts of criminality. He added

that insecurity and intermittent restrictions of movement by Government forces, armed movements and militia groups continued to present sporadic challenges to effective and timely delivery of humanitarian assistance and the protection of civilians.

Mr. Chambas said he is working with the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel and the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Sudan and South Sudan to de-

velop a framework for harmonisation of the mediation efforts as mandated by the AUPSC and the United Nations. "I have urged both the Government of Sudan and the armed movements to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the proposed national dialogue to resume political and peaceful negotiations, bring an end to the fighting and usher in lasting peace in Darfur," he noted.

"Following wide-spread attacks on communities in the first quarter of 2014, UNAMID has been working hard to enhance its capacity to provide physical protection to civilians seeking refuge around its team sites," the JSR pointed out, explaining that in accordance with the new strategic priorities of the Mission recommended in the comprehensive review of UNAMID, the Mission has undertaken concrete measures to refocus its activities and resources to achieve greater effectiveness and cost-efficiency.

The JSR called on the AUPSC to recommend to the UN Security Council an extension of the mandate of UNAMID for another year. ■

Three Humanitarian Workers Released in North Darfur

Three Sudanese humanitarian workers abducted on 18 June 2014 in Kutum, North Darfur, were freed on 19 July in the same locality after 32 days in captivity.

Mustafa Abdalla Adarge, working with UNICEF, and Mohamed Abu Elgassem and Ahmed Elsayed, working with the international NGO Goal, were immediately taken to the Mission's hospital in Kutum, for medical checks. They appeared to be unharmed and in good condition.

UNAMID Joint Special Representative Mohamed Ibn Chambas expressed the Mission's gratitude to the Govern-

ment of Sudan, Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Services and the Governor of North Darfur for their valuable assistance in the safe release of the humanitarian workers. "The role of the humanitarian actors in Darfur is crucial to ensure that those in need received essential aid; it's in everyone's interest to guarantee that they can continue to carry out their duties safely," the JSR said.

These three were among the 25 humanitarian workers who were taken by armed men in three separate incidents in Kutum on 18 June 2014. A total of 20 of them were released the same day, while two staff



On 19 July 2014, UNAMID JSR Mohamed Ibn Chambas welcomes UNICEF worker Mustafa Abdalla Adarge, one of the three Sudanese humanitarian workers abducted in Kutum on 18 June 2014. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

members of the national NGO Sustainable Action Group were

held in captivity for 14 days and released on 2 July 2014. ■

Peacekeepers Commemorate Nelson Mandela Day

Every year, on 18 July, people around the world heed the call from the Nelson Mandela Foundation to devote 67 minutes of their time to helping others, as a way to celebrate Nelson Mandela's life. To join in the celebration, peacekeepers from UNAMID commemorated the day on 17 July 2014 at a primary school in Al Salaam camp for displaced people near El Fasher, North Darfur.

The occasion was marked by a Darfuri music performance, cultural presentations by UNAMID's South African and Rwandese contingents and a tree-planting ceremony. Also, in the spirit of giving consistent with Mandela Day, the Mission's peacekeepers are renovating one of the classroom buildings at one of Al Salaam's schools.

The Mission's Deputy Joint Special Representative (DJSR), a.i., Mr. Abiodun Bashua, presented the United Nations Secretary-General's message for the day. In his message, the Secretary-General recalled Mandela's legacy of human rights and equality. "Each of us can celebrate this day by helping to address real problems in our communities,"



UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative, Mr. Abiodun Bashua, delivers a speech during the celebration of Nelson Mandela Day in Al Salam camp for internally displaced people, North Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

the DJSR quoted the Secretary-General as saying. "Together we can give great meaning to our celebration by paving the way for a better future."

Mr. Bashua assured the Al Salaam displaced of the Mission's commitment to supporting peace efforts. "As a peacekeeper, the greatest achievement is to have all displaced people return to their homes because continued displace-

ments are unacceptable wherever they may be," he said.

"For peace to happen, all of us must dedicate ourselves to peace; and, in order to achieve peace, there must be tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation," he added. "In the spirit of Ramadan, let us give peace a chance for the millions of children here today."

Addressing the participants, the Director of the IDP camp,

Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Nurain, said Nelson Mandela Day represents justice, democracy and freedom. "With stability, we can be able to return to our original villages; if we manage to return, we can contribute to the welfare of the community as well as the economy," he said. Mr. Nurain commended UNAMID for its efforts in rehabilitating the school building. ■

Road Safety the Focus of Week-Long Campaign



Actors from Al Musrahia drama group perform in Al Tijania Basic School for boys in El Fasher, North Darfur. For two days, five local drama groups, sponsored by UNAMID, performed shows in several of the city's schools to raise awareness among children about road safety. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

On 13 July 2014, UNAMID partnered with the Government of Sudan (GoS) to kick off a week-long road-safety cam-

paign under the theme "Avoid Speeding and Distracted Driving," to raise awareness about safe-driving practices. As part

of the week's events, UNAMID conducted seminars with GoS Police Officers and other Government officials to deliver safety messages and advisories, all designed to encourage a culture of safe vehicle use and reduce risk for drivers and pedestrians.

The Darfur-wide campaign, which began on 13 July and ran through 17 July, was designed to increase awareness about safety issues, reduce the number of accidents and sensitize the public to traffic regulations. In addition, during the week, campaign organizers focused on raising awareness about environmental issues by highlighting ways to minimize vehicle operating costs through, for example, efficient mainte-

nance programmes and ride-sharing practices.

Due to the increase in traffic accidents globally, the UN General Assembly has instructed all peacekeeping missions, UN Agencies and key partners around the world to strengthen their cooperation on road safety and to continue raising road safety awareness at the international and national levels by organizing advocacy events and scaling up existing efforts.

UNAMID and GoS conducted a series of events across Darfur, including a walkathon, drama performance by local artists, public information announcements, video presentations, awareness seminars and safety checkpoints. ■