

UNAMID BULLETIN

UNAMID Acting Head Participates in Darfur Negotiations between Government and Non-signatory Movements in Addis Ababa



On 23 November 2014, the AU-UN Acting Joint Special Representative and Joint Chief Mediator *a.i.* for Darfur, Abiodun Bashua, participates in the opening session of the negotiations between the Government of Sudan and non-signatory Darfuri movements in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Photo by Hamid Abdulsalam, UNAMID.

The African Union-United Nations Acting Joint Special Representative (AJSR) and Joint Chief Mediator *a.i.* for Darfur, Abiodun Bashua, participated in the opening session of the negotiations between the Government of Sudan and non-signatory Darfuri movements in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 23 November.

The opening session was chaired by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, the Chairman of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), and attended by representatives from the African Union (AU), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Government of Sudan, Sudan Liberation Army/

Minni Minawi and Justice and Equality Movement/Gibril.

Having thanked the Government of Ethiopia and the AU for sponsoring the negotiations, President Mbeki welcomed the start of discussions between the Government of Sudan and the movements to end the conflict in Darfur, in collaboration with the UN, UNAMID and IGAD.

He also indicated that the national dialogue initiative announced by President Bashir earlier this year provides an opportunity for a comprehensive and inclusive process to address the challenges faced by Sudan, and how welcome this call has been to the AUHIP and the entire international community in facilitating a holistic approach to deal with the conflict in Darfur.

Cognisant of the challenges ahead, both the Government of Sudan and the movements reiterated their principal positions and their commitment for a negotiated end to the Darfur conflict through dialogue and peaceful means.

President Mbeki wished the parties success in the negotiations and encouraged them to overcome challenges and differences to create an environment that is conducive for peace. ■

UNAMID Acting Head Visits East and South Darfur States

The Acting Joint Special Representative (JSR) of the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and Joint Chief Mediator *a.i.*, Abiodun Bashua, visited Nyala in South Darfur and El Daein in East Darfur from 18-20 November, as part of his regional tour to follow up on coordination and cooperation between the Mission and the states' authorities to achieve peace in Darfur.

In a meeting with the South Darfur Wali (Governor), Adam Mahmoud Jar Alnabi, on 18 November, they discussed the security situation, development programmes and voluntary return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their original villages. Mr. Bashua urged the federal and local authorities to bring perpetrators who were involved in attacking and killing UNAMID peacekeepers to justice. He also called for unhin-

dered movement of the Mission to all parts of Darfur. He commended the collaboration between the state, UN Country Team and UNAMID in South Darfur.

In El Daein, the Acting JSR met with the Wali of East Darfur, Altaib Abdulkarim Ahmed, and the Minister of Reconstruction and Infrastructure at the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA), Tajedin Bashir Nyam. They discussed the ongoing activities of the Mission in the state and further support that UNAMID could provide in terms of capacity building, local mediation and reconciliation activities, especially for the forthcoming conference between the Ma'aliya and the Reizigat, expected to take place in December.

During his visit to East Darfur, Mr. Bashua visited Khor Omer camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) where he met with



On 20 November, the Acting Head of UNAMID, Abiodun Bashua, met with native administration leaders in El Daein, East Darfur. Photo by Abdulrasheed Yakubu, UNAMID.

representatives of the IDPs and the refugees from South Sudan living there and listened to their concerns. He promised to convey the requests raised to relevant UNCT agencies for follow up actions.

The Acting Head of UNAMID also met with native administration leaders who requested UNAMID to provide training opportunities geared to-

ward advancing peace advocacy and logistics. Mr. Bashua reiterated that UNAMID is committed to support the restoration of the important role of the native administration within the limits of its resources. He later inaugurated the native administration building constructed under the UNAMID-funded Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) programme. ■

UNAMID Launches Campaign against Recruitment of Child Soldiers

As part of its Darfur-wide campaign geared to prevent the recruitment of children as soldiers, on 26 November 2014, the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) reached out to the Masteriha community, North Darfur, in an event attended by more than 1,000 men, women and school children.

During the event, the pupils of the Masteriha mixed school performed songs pertinent to the occasion as a show of solidarity with issues related to the protection of children. UNAMID, which was accompanied by members of the Sudan Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission and UNICEF, distributed caps, scarves, T-shirts and vests with messages promoting peace in Darfur, the protection of children and against the use of child soldiers.

"We believe that with your continued support, child protection is in progress," remarked Boubacar Dieng, Head of UNAMID's Children Protection Unit, in his speech at the event. "The protection of children will not be complete without peace in Darfur," he said.

Tribal leader Sheikh Musa Hilal appreciated the launching of the campaign in the area and reiterated the Command Order he issued on 26 July 2013, prohibiting communities under his leadership to use children in tribal clashes. He also reiterated his commitment to a Community-based Strategic Plan against child soldiering initiated by him on 6 October 2014, which was endorsed by leaders from the Beni Hussein, Tamma, Fur, Gimir and Awlad Janoub tribes.

Sheikh Hilal outlined that he has been working on social reconciliations at the grassroots level in order to create tribal harmony. "When it comes to peaceful coexistence, we have had a number of conferences in different areas for the sake of stability and security in Darfur," he said. Additionally, he called on the humanitarian community, UNAMID and the UN agencies to engage in further activities in the field of development in the region.

The Head of UNAMID Sector North, Mr. Mohamed El-Amine Souef, emphasized that the Mission's mandate is focused



On 26 November 2014, pupils of the Masteriha School in North Darfur participated in an event organized by UNAMID to advocate against the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Photo by Emadeldin Rijal, UNAMID.

on protecting civilians, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance and contributing to peace and reconciliation efforts.

"Children are the backbone of society and we want them to be educated instead of being recruited," said Mohamed Izat, the Secretary General of the Reizegat Council, calling for the provision of health, education and water services for nomadic communities.

On behalf of the youth in Masteriha, Ramadan Ahmed Bakheit condemned all forms of recruitment and use of child soldiers and highlighted the role of youth in promoting peaceful

coexistence. "Despite the scarcity of resources, we have been making a positive impact in the community through the launch of sports events and symposiums to enhance local awareness about common issues," said Mr. Bakheit.

Ms. Amira Mohammed, a representative of women groups, drew attention to the concerns and problems faced by women and girls. She said that women suffer from early marriages and problems related to reproductive health. "Women need to be empowered through access to livelihood activities, education and literacy classes," she remarked. ■

UNAMID Hands Over Multipurpose University Hall in North Darfur



On 27 November 2014, UNAMID DJSR, Abdul Kamara, is pictured at the handover of a multipurpose university hall constructed as part of the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Section's Community-based, Labour-intensive Projects (CLIPs) programme.

On 27 November 2014, the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) handed over a fully constructed multipurpose hall to the Open University of Sudan

in El Fasher, North Darfur. The building was constructed as part of the Mission's Community-based, Labour-intensive Projects (CLIPs) initiative implemented by the Disarmament,

Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Section.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative (DJSR), Abdul Kamara, stated that the Mission's contribution to the construction of a new hall underscores its commitment to the development of the University as well as to the overall advancement of peace and progress in Darfur.

The DJSR urged the community to take advantage of the institution to advance the cause of peace through the education of Darfuri youth to give them better employment opportunities. He added that this contribution by UNAMID will enable the University to transfer its Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution from Khartoum to El Fasher.

In his remarks on the occasion, the Chancellor of the University, Abu Al Bashir, expressed appreciation for UNAMID's support and explained that the facility will serve as an examination hall for Open University students as well as create a conducive atmosphere for addressing issues related to reconciliation and peaceful coexistence among local communities.

Speaking on behalf of the Wali of North Darfur, Mr. Isa Ahmed Abdullah, Commissioner, El Fasher locality, thanked the Mission for its continuing contribution to peace and development in the region.

Mr. Kamara also presented certificates to 40 students who participated in a skills training workshop in construction. ■