

UNAMID BULLETIN

Darfur's All-Inclusive Dialogue Process Beginning



UNAMID JSR Mohamed Ibn Chambas addresses the audience during a Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultation (DIDC) planning workshop held on 18 February in El Fasher, North Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

A planning workshop for the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultation (DIDC) mechanism, a key part of the peace process stipulated in the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), was convened on 18 February at the University of El Fasher, North Darfur. The event brought together more than 60 people from the five Darfur states to deliberate on the procedures for conducting the dialogue and consultation process at the locality, state and regional levels.

The primary objectives of the DIDC include consolidating peace by promoting dialogue and confidence-building, and by encouraging reconciliation and unity among the people of Darfur, in

particular, and Sudan, in general.

“You are very experienced men and women who have devoted a lot of effort, energy and time in the search for lasting and durable peace in Darfur,” said African Union-United Nations Joint Special Representative Mohamed Ibn Chambas in his remarks to open the workshop. “Let us use this opportunity to see how we can build a culture of peace and cooperation and understanding to be a significant part of the national dialogue.”

El Fasher University Vice-Chancellor Osman Abduljabar Osman said that if the efforts made by the Sudanese Government, UNAMID and other parties are well used, they can lead to a durable peace in Darfur. “We are

happy and optimistic that signs of peace have become closer, because of the significant efforts being exerted,” he said. “The more important thing is not only to bring peace, but also to make it lasting and sustainable.”

The DIDC’s objectives are expected to be achieved by expanding ownership of the DDPD and mobilizing support for its implementation; enhancing time-tested traditional practices regarding settlement of local disputes; promoting inter-tribal and inter-communal peace, reconciliation and harmonious coexistence; enhancing the status of Native Administration, including restoring its authority and building its capacity; bringing about a social and political rejuvenation in Darfur; and helping the people of Darfur come to terms with the conflict of the past and the way to forge ahead.

The United Nations, the African Union and the State of Qatar are facilitating the DIDC process. The United Nations Security Council resolution 2113 (2013) reaffirmed support for the DIDC taking place in an environment of respect for the civil and political rights of participants, including women and young people.

Ahead of the first workshop to launch the consultation mechanism, UNAMID facilitated a broad survey across Darfur to

gauge interest in and understanding of the DIDC process. While some survey results remain in the process of being tabulated, the vast majority of the respondents indicated they are knowledgeable about the DDPD and believe that it can address Darfur’s problems.

Also, the majority of respondents indicated that the DIDC could contribute to peace and reconciliation in Darfur and could help in resolving tribal conflict. Respondents also indicated that the DIDC process should focus on security, governance, natural resources and the environment, and should address, in particular, the issues that have emerged between farmers and nomads. The survey participants, consisting of people from Central, North and South Darfur, identified some risks, concerns and challenges for the DIDC process. The main concern they shared was related to the deteriorating security situation caused by armed conflict.

The DIDC meetings and outreach events are expected to take place in the months ahead, bringing together all Darfur stakeholders to deliberate on the DDPD’s implementation, make recommendations for the way forward and, ultimately, help steer the peace agreement’s provisions toward effective delivery of tangible results for the people of Darfur. ■

UNAMID Promotes Human Rights in North Darfur Rural Courts

On 16 and 17 February 2014, more than 25 rural courts judges and tribal leaders from North Darfur participated in a two-day human rights workshop organized by UNAMID in collaboration with the North Darfur Executive Office of Native Administration.

The forum provided a platform for the participants to discuss human rights standards and the implementation of fair trials and investigative procedures. “This workshop was valuable; it added more to our

already existing knowledge,” said Mr. Alsadig Abas Daw Elbait, one of the workshop’s participants. “We hope that such training will continue.”

Those attending the workshop agreed on a set of recommendations for the future, including the addition of judge and court assistants who have knowledge of national and international law, promotion of information technology awareness among judges, and documentation of Darfur judiciary traditions. ■



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Gender Forum Held in South Darfur

On 16 February 2014 in Nyala, South Darfur, UNAMID's Gender Advisory component organized a one-day workshop to raise awareness about the impact of armed conflicts on women and recognize the contributions of women in the context of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

The event, which was attended by community leaders and representatives from women's unions, civil society organizations, local Government and the Darfur Regional Authority, provided a platform for the participants to articulate their concerns and discuss how women's participation in conflict resolution and

peace can be improved.

Speaking during the workshop, UNAMID's Head of Office for South Darfur, Mr. Imtiaz Hussain, called for women's full participation in all aspects of peace-building, from negotiations to post-conflict reconstruction, and noted progress has been made in Darfur at all levels.

Beginning in 2011, UNAMID has organized annual "open days" to address gender issues by facilitating workshops and meetings where the participants can make recommendations and follow established action plans. So far, these initiatives have resulted in several achievements, including the establishment of the Governor (Wali's) Advisor



On 5 December 2013 in El Fasher, North Darfur, UNAMID staff members and students from a midwifery school and three technical schools for girls march to commemorate "16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence," a global campaign designed to raise awareness about gender-based violence. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

on Women and Children Affairs in all Darfur states and ensuring that women's representation is

not lower than 25 per cent in executive, legislative and judicial arms of the Government. ■

UNAMID's Head Speaks at Central Darfur Peace Conference

On 15 February 2014, UNAMID JSR Mohamed Ibn Chambas spoke at the Social Peace Conference organized by the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA) in Zalingei, Central Darfur, and emphasized that the root causes of conflict in Darfur can only be addressed through genuine dialogue.

The conference brought together various stakeholders in Central Darfur to identify

their role in the peace process and to come up with practical recommendations designed to contribute to ending tribal conflicts and promoting peaceful coexistence. The event was attended by DRA Chairperson El Tigani Seisi, Central Darfur Governor (Wali) Yousif Tiben, Central Darfur Legislature members and Native Administration representatives, among other participants.

In his opening remarks, the JSR noted that the conference comes against a backdrop of significant developments at the national level, in particular President Al-Bashir's announcement of a major initiative on national dialogue. "It is important for the people of Darfur to take advantage of this momentum to contribute to the national dialogue in a meaningful way in order for

their concerns to be accommodated," he stated.

"Genuine discussion among communities in Darfur on ways to strengthen reconciliation mechanisms, to understand laws pertaining to land use and tenure, and to enhance capacity of local administrative institutions is essential and could provide a firm foundation for durable peace in Darfur," Mr. Chambas said. ■



Human Rights Expert Concludes Visit to Darfur

The Independent Expert on Human Rights in Sudan, Mr. Mashood A. Baderin, examines a prison in Zalingei, Central Darfur on 16 February 2014 during his nine-day visit to Sudan to follow up on his previous visit's recommendations. During his time in Darfur, Mr. Baderin also visited El Fasher, Nyala and El Geneina, in North, South and West Darfur, respectively, to meet with Government officials, UNAMID leadership and local communities. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.