

VOICES

of Darfur

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Painting for peace: an interview with artist Hanan Bakheet



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HYBRID OPERATION IN DARFUR (UNAMID)

The last-mile Challenge in Darfur: An interview with UNAMID DJSR, Anita Gbeho

UNAMID:
Promoting peace through sport

UNAMID conducts training for rural court judges in Darfur

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF NOTE

I am pleased to introduce the October 2018 issue of Voices of Darfur, which contains news, interviews and a feature story not only about unique aspects of life in Darfur but also about UNAMID's ongoing efforts to facilitate lasting peace in the region. It also focusses on the Mission's ongoing reconfiguration and gradual exit from Darfur, as mandated by Security Council resolution 2429 (2018).

In an interview with Voices of Darfur, UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative (DJSR), Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho, talks about the critical need to ensure maintenance of gender parity during the Mission's reconfiguration process, the Mission's enhanced collaboration with the UN Country Team during this process and her view of a brighter future for Darfur.

The feature article entitled: "UNAMID: Promoting peace through sport", focusses on sport as an effective tool in achieving peaceful coexistence and enhancing relations between communities in Darfur.

The Photo Story features a collection of photographs, focusing on UNAMID's Rule of Law Section's training programmes for rural court judges from various Localities in Darfur. This training is aimed at building capacity on adjudication and mediation as well as Sudan's civil and criminal procedural laws and mediation techniques for rural court judges in Darfur.

Finally, Voices of Darfur presents an interview with artist, Ms. Hanan Bakheet, who talks about her artistic activity, art landscape and innovation, challenges facing local artists and their role in reinforcing peaceful coexistence between communities in the Sudanese region of Darfur.

As Voices of Darfur continues to evolve as a news magazine, we welcome your feedback. Send your comments by email, addressed to "Letters to the Editor / Voices of Darfur" in the subject line and send to:

unamid-publicinformation@un.org

Carlos Araujo

Chief

Communications & Public Information Section

ON THE COVER



Artist Hanan Bakheet, paints at her home in El Fasher, North Darfur. Ms. Bakheet talks about her work, the artistic landscape and innovation, as well as challenges facing local artists and their role in reinforcing peaceful coexistence among communities in Darfur. Photo by Amin Ismail, UNAMID.



UNAMID Joint Special Representative, Jeremiah Mamabolo, on 30 August signed the condolence book for the late former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The signing took place at the United Nations Development Programme office in Khartoum. Condolence books have been opened at various UN missions in different countries. Photo by Mohamed Nureldin.

PAGE 2 USG Khare concludes three-day visit and pledges continued support to Darfur

PAGE 4 UNAMID DJSR Concludes Working Visit to Sector West

PAGE 5 UNAMID commemorates International Youth Day

PAGE 6 UNAMID hands over two sites in Darfur to the Government of Sudan

PAGE 8 UNAMID celebrates Nelson Mandela International Day

PAGE 9 UNAMID organizes workshop on mediation and negotiation skills in West Darfur

PAGE 10 UNAMID organizes Photo Exhibition and Cultural Performances in El Fasher, North Darfur

PAGE 12 Hundreds of former combatants demobilized in West Darfur

PAGE 13 UNAMID continues its support to local mechanisms on violence against women

14 INTERVIEW

The last-mile Challenge in Darfur:

An interview with UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative, Anita Gbeho

20 FEATURE

UNAMID:

Promoting peace through sport

26 PHOTO STORY

UNAMID conducts

training for rural court judges in Darfur

30 CULTURE

Painting for peace:

an interview with artist Hanan Bakheet

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USG Khare concludes three-day visit and pledges continued support to Darfur

United Nations Under-Secretary-General in the Department of Field Support, Mr. Atul Khare, has concluded a three-day visit to Darfur, during which he met stakeholders and saw key projects in the Jebel Marra area where UNAMID is establishing a temporary operating base (TOB) in Golo, Central Darfur.

The mission was part of a week-long visit to Sudan from 22 to 27 July, during which he met Government officials in both Khartoum and Darfur, to discuss the overall situation in Darfur and the implementation of UNAMID's new mandate, including the Mission's draw down.

In Khartoum he met with the Sudanese officials from the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense, as well as the National Intelligence and Security Service.

While in Darfur, Mr. Khare met local government authorities, community leaders, representatives of internally displaced people (IDP) and UNAMID staff in North, Central and South Darfur states. He commended the cordial relations between UNAMID, various rungs of Government, as well as the community, and reaffirmed the Mission's commitment to support people in the region.

The state leaders briefed him about the current situation and discussed areas of cooperation, including support for IDPs and refugees to voluntarily return to their areas of origin, construction of internal road networks and capacity building of state government employees through training.

"UNAMID is going to be here for about two more years and within these years we will try to help as much as possible for the future," Mr. Khare said, while noting that projects such as the by-pass road that UNAMID had built between Kabkabiyya and Golo, were being



United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Atul Khare visited on 24 July 2018, Zalingei and Golo in Central Darfur, where he met local authorities and UN staff. He was also appraised on progress regarding the establishment of the Mission's temporary operating base in Golo. Photo by Matilda Moyo, UNAMID.

United Nations Under Secretary General for Field Support, Atul Khare, arrived on 23 July 2018, in El Fasher, North Darfur, as part of his visit to Sudan. He met with the Wali (Governor), Alshareef Mohammed Abad (right) in the presence of UNAMID Joint Special Representative (JSR), Jeremiah Mamabolo (left). Photo by Amin Ismail, UNAMID.

put to good use by the community and facilitating movement. He said UNAMID was improving the road from the TOB to Golo town, while work on the Nertiti-Golo road was almost complete, although the rains had retarded progress.

As the Mission prepared for its exit from Darfur, Mr. Khare said discussions would take place with authorities at locality, state and national level to determine the best use of the facilities established by UNAMID to benefit communities. Some of the facilities, such as camps, could be converted to hospitals, colleges or schools and used for social development, among various options, he said.

In Golo, Mr. Khare met the Commissioner of Central Jebel Marra

locality, Colonel Jafar Mohammed Abaker, who apprised him of the local authorities' work with UNAMID. He applauded UNAMID's peace-keeping role and support through projects that were fostering peace and stability, while contributing to development. For example, the road that UNAMID improved between Kabkabiyya and Golo, had become a main artery for trade.

"During the short period that UNAMID has been here, we have seen a great deal of improvement and cooperation, including in the area peace and stability. We hope this stability will be maintained," he said. Col. Abaker pledged to ensure the removal of the administrative red tape, in order to facilitate the work of UNAMID, UN agencies and civil society organizations operating in the locality.

Mr. Khare also met UNAMID and UN Country Team (UNCT) staff in both Golo and Zalingei, and was briefed on the Mission's operations

in the Jebel Marra area, the status of Golo TOB, the current situation in the area, and the challenges faced. He commended their commitment and diligence and pledged to continue with efforts to improve their working and living conditions.

Mr. Khare also visited Ottash IDP camp in Nyala, South Darfur and interacted with community leaders.

On concluding his visit, Mr. Khare said he was pleased with the outcome as he had seen first-hand most of the issues that were of interest to the Department of Field Services. He expressed commitment to work with community leaders, the Government of Sudan and state authorities, within the Mission's mandate.

"We reviewed the situation of peace and security. We also discussed what more efforts are required, particularly in the areas of water, sanitation, health, education and training, not only by UNAMID, but by all other partners, including the UN Country Team and the bilateral partners," he said, adding that UNAMID would work very closely with the authorities to make sure the dreams of the people of Darfur were realised.

UNAMID DJSR Concludes Working Visit to Sector West



UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative, (DJSR), Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho, visited on 05 August 2018, the university campus in El Geneina, West Darfur. The facility used to be the UNAMID headquarters in the city and was handed over to the university in 2015. During her visit she interacted with the university leadership. Photo by Muntasir Sharafadin, UNAMID.

E I Geneina: UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative (DJSR), Ms. Anita Gbeho recently, concluded a two-day visit to Sector West. This is her first working visit to West Darfur since she assumed duty as DJSR in May 2018.

Upon her arrival in El Geneina, Ms. Gbeho paid a courtesy call on the State Wali (Governor), Mr. Hussein Hammad at his office, with whom she exchanged various points of view as part of her efforts to enhance cooperation with local authorities and discuss the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2429 (2018).

In his response, Mr. Hammed

underlined the Government of Sudan's (GoS) collaboration with UNAMID to enhance security and stability in the area. He expressed his hope that the newly endorsed UNSCR 2429, will impact positively on the current stability and humanitarian situation in Darfur. Mr. Hammed further highlighted the stability in West Darfur, which he opined was the conducive environment that facilitated the return of several refugees and IDPs to their areas of origin, and their subsequent engagement in the current cultivation season. "We call on UNAMID leadership to support the West Darfur State

Strategic Plan to achieve a seamless transition from humanitarian aid to development, and facilitate delivery of basic services such as water, health and education which contribute significantly to the quality of life for the host community," Mr. Hammed added.

DJSR Gbeho commended the good relationship that exists between the State Government and UNAMID and expressed her appreciation to the Wali for developing a strategic plan to achieve transition from humanitarian aid to development. After briefing on UNSCR 2429, DJSR Gbeho, explored with the Wali, possible utilization of the

soon-to-be closed Mission's facilities in the area, for health and education and applauded current use of the Mission's former sub-camp in El Geneina town, which the authorities have transformed into El Geneina University, benefitting hundreds of students.

As part of her visit to the Sector, the DJSR held several meetings, including UNAMID staff, as well as UN agencies, Area Security Management Team (ASMT) and Sector's National Staff Association (NSA). Later, Ms. Gbeho paid a visit to the University of El Geneina (former UNAMID sub camp) to assess effective utilization of the building, to be observed

as good practice for utilizing UN assets handed to the government. She was briefed by the Vice-Chancellor of El Geneina University, Prof. El Tyib Ahmed, on the cooperation between UNAMID and the University as well as their plans to support the peace process and development efforts in their Locality.

As part of her visit, DJSR Gbeho also went to Abuzar Camp for internally displaced persons, where she met with women from local protection networks and women's associations from El-Jamaa, Madenat El-Hujaj and Abuzar IDPs camps. She listened intently to their concerns, that included safety and security,

the security of women and children, GBV and capacity building issues, as well as potential social needs such as food, water, health and education services and construction of a women's development center in Abuzar IDP Camp.

Addressing women at the Abuzar IDP Camp, DJSR Gbeho reaffirmed the Mission's commitment to protect IDPs and facilitate their access to humanitarian services and called on the West Darfur Mission leadership to establish a task force comprising Gender, Governance and Community Stabilization and Rule of Law Sections to identify the way forward for IDPs related issues. ■



UNAMID's Communications and Public Information Section, in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the National Federation of Sudanese Youth, joined the rest of the world in commemorating the International Youth Day in El Fasher, North Darfur on 12 August 2018, through a series of cultural and sporting events, held under the theme: "Safe Spaces for Youth". Phot by Amin Ismail, UNAMID.

UNAMID commemorates International Youth Day

On 12 August 2018, UNAMID's Communications and Public Information Section, in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the National Federation of Sudanese Youth, joined the rest of the world in commemorating the In-

ternational Youth Day in El Fasher, North Darfur, through a series of cultural and sporting events, held under the theme: "Safe Spaces for Youth". More than 2,000 people attended the event, which included a marathon, cultural performances

and musical concert, held at the town's Al Zubair stadium.

At the main event, UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative (DJSR), Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho, delivered the United Nations Secretary General's (UNSG) message on the

Day in which the UNSG encouraged all countries to invest in education and training so that young people can achieve their full potential noting that the “world’s young people need safe spaces -- public, civic, physical and digital spaces where they can freely express their views and pursue their dreams.”

In his address, the Deputy Wali (Governor) of North Darfur, Mr. Mohamed Brima Hassab Al Nabi, stated the youth are the hope for the future of Sudan. “We rely on youth to lead the Sudan to peace, stability and development,” Mr. Al Nabi added.

Ms. Hikma Ibrahim Abdallah, Minister of Youth, North Darfur, stated that the Government of Sudan is fully committed to the provision of safe spaces to enable the youth to interact freely and discuss and share issues that are of concern to them.

Eltigani Abdallah Salih, the Commissioner of El Fasher Locality, urged all the youth to participate actively in all aspects of community development to achieve peace and stability in Darfur. “We need the youth to contribute in the voluntary return of IDPs and the activities to

combat drugs,” Mr. Salih stated.

Chairperson of the National Federation of Sudanese Youth, Faisal Ez Alarab, highlighted the important role youth have in aiming to achieve social peace and development in Darfur, particularly in the voluntary return of internally displaced persons to their places of origin.

Sulaiman Abdallah, a student at El Fasher University, observed that through cultural and sporting activities, youth can effectively raise awareness on the importance of peaceful co-existence among communities in Darfur.

■

UNAMID hands over two sites in Darfur to the Government of Sudan



On 08 October 2018, UNAMID officially handed over the Mission’s team site in El Sereif, North Darfur, to the Government of Sudan. The handover, attended by government officials and UNAMID representatives, is part of the Mission’s ongoing reconfiguration as mandated by UN Security Council Resolution 2429. Photo by Amin Ismail, UNAMID.

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2429 (2018) has called for the closing of ten Team Sites across Darfur as part of the Mission’s reconfiguration

process. The Mission intends to complete this task by the end of December 2018. These Team Sites include Mukjar in Central Darfur; El Sereif, Um Baru and Kor-

ma in North Darfur; Masteri and Mournei in West Darfur; Shearia and Labado in East Darfur; Graida and Buram in South Darfur. In accordance with UNSCR 2429,



On 04 October 2018, UNAMID handed over its Community Policing Centre (CPC) in Al-Salam IDP camp, South Darfur, to the Government of Sudan. The handover is part of the Mission's ongoing reconfiguration and gradual exit from Darfur, as mandated by Security Council resolution 2429. UNAMID Sector South Head of Office, Berhanemeskel Nega (second right), represented the Mission in the ceremony. Photo by Mutaz Munafal, UNAMID.

UNAMID has handed over its Community Policing Centre (CPC) in Al-Salam IDP Camp, South Darfur and El Sereif Team Site in North Darfur to the Government of Sudan (GoS) on 4 and 8 October, respectively.

The handover ceremony in South Darfur was attended by Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) representatives, Al-Salam IDPs leaders as well as UNAMID staff. Speaking at the ceremony UNAMID Sector South, Head of Office, Mr. Berhanemeskel Nega, stated that the handing over of UNAMID CPC is in line with the Mission's ongoing drawdown. "This CPC serves more than 70,000 IDPs in Al-Salam IDPs Camp. Sudanese Police and the state Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) in close collaboration with the IDPs community, will now take over the responsibility of the CPC. UNAMID is encouraging all stakeholders to work together to ensure the

safety and security of the IDPs to facilitate attainment of durable peace in the community," Mr. Nega added.

In his response, the South Darfur State Commissioner, Engineer Eissa Bassi, advised that the CPC at Al-Salam IDPs Camp has, since its inception in 2004, provided security and community services to the IDPs and will continue to do so in the future. "The [Sudan] Government has agreed to utilize the CPC as a police station where GoS Police, HAC and IDPs leaders will work together take over responsibilities previously performed by UNAMID peacekeepers, including the safekeeping of assets inside the CPC", Engineer Bassi added.

At the handover of the El Sereif Team Site in North Darfur, UNAMID Representative, Ms. Andrea Charles-Browne, emphasized that it was agreed with community leaders and local authorities that the Team

Site premises will be used as a technical school for youth and women, and for general recreational benefit of the community in the area. She added: "UNAMID is appealing to all to maintain and develop the Camp for posterity."

The Humanitarian Aid Commissioner in North Darfur, Ibrahim Ahmed Hamid, expressed the Government of Sudan's appreciation of the gesture and rest assured that the premises will be utilized in the agreed manner for the benefit of the local community.

In line with general UN practices in post-conflict regions, UNAMID recommends that the Government of Sudan transforms team sites and other locations handed to them, into education, health, security and recreational facilities accessible to the local communities as a way of contributing to the overall development of Darfur.

UNAMID celebrates Nelson Mandela International Day



Thousands of people, gathered at Abu Shouk Camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in El Fasher, North Darfur, to commemorate Nelson Mandela International Day, observed under the theme: "Take action, Inspire change. The event marked the centennial of Mandela's birth and drew a diverse crowd including students, women, youths, community leaders and UNAMID staff. Photo by Mohamad Almahady, UNAMID.

On 18 July 2018 thousands of people, gathered at Abu Shouk Camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in El Fasher, North Darfur, to commemorate Nelson Mandela International Day, observed under the theme: "Take action, Inspire change."

The event marked the centennial of Mandela's birth and drew a diverse crowd including students, women, youths, community leaders and UNAMID staff. Activities included music, traditional dances and cultural performances by the UNAMID Rwandan contingent and local groups, as well as a football match between the Mission's Gam-

bian contingent and the Stars team from Abu Shouk camp. The winning team received a trophy and medals sponsored by UNAMID.

Speaking at the occasion UNAMID Representative, Mr. Aderemi Adekoya read UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's message for the day, in which he described Mandela as a towering global advocate for justice and equality.

"Nelson Mandela was held captive for many years, but he never became a prisoner of his past. Instead, he poured his energy into reconciliation, and his vision of a peaceful, multi-ethnic, democratic South Africa," added Guterres.

Abu Shouk IDP Camp Manager, Ibrahim Alkhalil, applauded Mandela's efforts to unify South Africans and praised the work of freedom fighters across the world. He expressed the Government's readiness to support the voluntary return, resettlement and integration of IDPs into the local community.

Representing displaced women, Nafisa Ismail, said Mandela's legacy inspired communities to work for peace and freedom. She urged all the non-signatory movements to join the peace process in Darfur.

NAMID organized similar events to mark the day across Darfur.

UNAMID organizes workshop on mediation and negotiation skills in West Darfur



UNAMID, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs, recently concluded a three-day workshop on mediation and negotiation skills for 30 participants in El Geneina, West Darfur. The workshop aimed to enhance women's capacity to contribute more effectively to peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives in their communities. Photo by Elsadig Daud, UNAMID.

UNAMID, in collaboration with the State Ministry of Social Affairs and the Commissioner for Women and Child Affairs, on 27 June 2018 concluded a three-day workshop on mediation and negotiation skills for 30 participants in El Geneina, West Darfur. Organized by UNAMID's Gender Advisory Unit (GAU) and Governance and Community Stabilization Section (GCSS), the workshop aimed to equip women with mediation and negotiation skills to enable them to contribute more effectively towards peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives in their communities.

Ms. Takako Ugaya, UNAMID representative, highlighted the workshop's importance in equipping participants to manage and minimize the impact of conflict through practical tools and mechanisms,

thus utilizing women's untapped potential. "Women, who are nurturers and preservers of life, naturally avoid violence. Negotiation and mediation require such actors, who genuinely try to resolve conflict by peaceful means," she said. In her remarks, Ms. Sakina El Hussein, State Commissioner for Women and Child Affairs, commended UNAMID efforts in building women's capacity, while promoting their rights and supporting their organizations. She urged participants to share the acquired knowledge with their communities and contribute to enhancing peace and stability in society.

On his part El Hafiz Abdulhadi, Director-General in the Ministry of Social Affairs, noted that women's central role in managing and resolving conflicts was neglected. "I

believe it is time we acknowledge, apply and incorporate that role in conflict resolution among communities," he said, while encouraging participants to use their newly acquired knowledge to benefit their communities.

Speaking on behalf of the participants, Fatima Haroun said they had learnt about the concept, sources, types and root causes of conflicts, as well as, resolution mechanisms such as mediation, dialogue and the traditional Judia. The workshop also covered negotiation skills, approaches, elements and styles.

"The group work, presentations and drama, helped to broaden our understanding of the various negotiation and mediation skills," she said, adding that she had enjoyed the workshop, which was also attended by two men.



UNAMID organizes Photo Exhibition and Cultural Performances in El Fasher, North Darfur

“Darfuri Artists Stand for Peace and Human Rights,” was the rallying call at this year’s International Day of Peace commemoration in El Fasher, North Darfur, as artists brought together hundreds of people from diverse backgrounds to mark the day by celebrating various forms of Darfuri art and culture.

UNAMID’s Communications and Public Information Section, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Information, organized a photo exhibition, Darfuri village, cultural performances and a workshop from 20 to 21 September. The event also included a competition in

which artists depicted peace through their paintings, and a drama performance on the importance of education, peace and development to fight illiteracy, displacement and poverty.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights hence the International Day of Peace was commemorated under the theme: “The Right to Peace - Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70.”

The Mission’s Chief of Staff, Luke Mhlaba, delivered the message by UN Secretary-General António Guterres, in which he called on people to act to-

gether to promote and defend human rights for all, in the name of lasting peace for all. “With the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as our guide, we must ensure the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,” he added.

In his remarks, Mr. Mhlaba, emphasized that peace is a very important element of human existence and a right to which all people are entitled. He noted that lasting peace can only be founded upon respect for universal human rights.

On his part, the Deputy Wali (Governor) of North Darfur, Mr. Mohammed Brima Hassab Al



UNAMID's Communications and Public Information Section, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Information, organized a photo exhibition, Darfuri village, cultural performances and a workshop from 20 to 21 September. The event also included a competition in which artists depicted peace through their paintings. Photo by Amin Ismail, UNAMID.

Nabi, expressed the Government of Sudan's commitment to achieving lasting peace, particularly in Darfur. He cited initiatives such as the weapons collection campaign as part of government efforts to bring stability to the region, as well as maintain justice and rule of law.

North Darfur State Minister of Culture and Information Mr. Alhadi Burma Salih, noted that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights gave people the right to freely participate in cultural activities, among other freedoms. He thanked UNAMID for supporting the Darfuri community through cultural and de-

velopment initiatives.

Gasim Abdallah El Faki, Director General in the North Darfur State Ministry of Culture and Sport, encouraged artists in Darfur to work towards promoting a culture of peace.

Various artists highlighted the important role of art and culture in promoting peace, stability and development.

"Artists are playing an essential role in reconciliation, peacebuilding and the peace process in Darfur," said Hassan Zakaria, a 59-year-old fine artist. He commended UNAMID for organizing the event, which brought together Darfuri peo-

ple from different backgrounds and contributed to promoting peaceful co-existence among local communities.

This view was supported by 38-year-old Darfuri artist Saida Musa, who said: "All kinds of arts unify people towards peace. Despite the current conflict, we should be enthusiastic and build our country."

The International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September annually and the UN General Assembly declared it as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples. ■

Hundreds of former combatants demobilized in West Darfur



More than 1 thousand former combatants from armed movements who are signatories to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and the Darfur Peace Agreement, concluded on 02 August 2018, a demobilization exercise in El Geneina, West Darfur. The event was organized by the Sudan Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration Commission with the support of UNAMID's Governance and Community Stabilization Section. Photo by Elsadig Daud, UNAMID.

On 2 August, UNAMID's Governance and Community Stabilization Section (GCSS), in partnership with the Sudan Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (SDDRC), concluded a demobilization exercise for 1229 ex-combatants from armed movements who are signatories to Darfur peace agreements including, the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) and the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). The exercise included some combatants from the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and Popular Defense Forces (PDF). This is the fifth demobilization exercise conducted in El Geneina town, West Darfur since 2010.

Addressing DDR exercise participants, Mr. Hussein Hammad, the Wali (Governor) of West Darfur, highlighted the importance of the

demobilization process in attaining comprehensive peace in Darfur. "This demobilization exercise will not only result in transition from war to peace but will facilitate effective re-integration of the former combatants into civilian life. We call on non-signatory movements to lay down their arms and join the DDPD to bring lasting peace and stability in Darfur. We strongly urge the former combatants involved in this exercise, to go back to their communities and work hard to fully contribute to the local economy," Mr. Hammad added.

UNAMID Head of Office, Sector West, Mr. Oumar Kane, reiterated the Mission's commitment to its collaboration with the Government of Sudan and other local and international partners to bring durable peace in Darfur. "Over the past

decade, efforts to achieve peace in Darfur have resulted in the signing of the 2006 DPA, and the 2011 DDPD. Both documents make provisions for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants, and address the issue of civilian small arms proliferation in the area" Mr. Kane added.

Eisa Baraka, Head of Sudan DDR Commission in West Darfur, noted that the demobilization process aims to support peace efforts and the achievement of security and stability in the area. He noted that the "effective partnership between SDDRC, UNAMID and UNDP has resulted in the successful implementation of 33 projects across the State localities, including marking and registering of unlicensed arms recently implemented with the UNAMID's support."

Speaking on behalf of the signatory movements, Mr. Hashim Osman, the State Minister of Investment stated that peace is a strategic option for all parties who want to end the conflict in Darfur and to mobilize all sectors of society to participate in upcoming development projects to rebuild Darfur.

Abdulatif Fadul, an ex-combatant from Reform and Liberation Movement (RLM) underscored the fact that peace is a strategic option available to all, hence their decision to adopt this better option. "We appeal to all partners to this demobilization exercise to expedite the reintegration phase of the programme to enable the former combatants to successfully join their communities and contribute to peace and prosperity in their home areas," Mr. Fadul added. ■

UNAMID continues its support to local mechanisms on violence against women

From 1 to 2 August, some 43 participants, including 11 men from Government offices, Ajaweed council and civil society organizations as well as members of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 State Committee and Gender Mediation Network, attended a workshop supported by UNAMID's Gender Advisory Unit (GAU) in El Fasher, North Darfur.

The workshop, organized in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs, north Darfur, aimed at reactivating and enhancing the existent State Committee on Violence Against Women (VAW) including a specific focus on the State's achievements and challenges on Gender Based violence (GBV) and developed a workplan for the Committee and relevant partners, to be implemented in the foreseeable future.

Representatives from UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and UNDP briefed workshop participants on their respective mandates on gender, women and child protection issues including sexual and GBV. UNAMID Gender Advisory Unit, Human Rights Section and Child Protection Unit also briefed the participants on S/GBV and child protection issues.

Workshop participants called for the review and reform of all laws related to women and child issues and clear coordination with justice mechanisms to provide legal aid to victims of gender-based violence.

Addressing workshop partic-



Some 43 participants, including 11 men from Government offices, Ajaweed council and civil society organizations as well as members of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 State Committee and Gender Mediation Network, attended from 1 to 2 August, a workshop supported by UNAMID's Gender Advisory Unit (GAU) in El Fasher, North Darfur. Photo by Amin, Isamil, UNAMID.

ipants, the Minister for Social Affairs in North Darfur, Mr. You-sif Ishag Adam, highlighted the need to curb harmful practices affecting women and girls and committed to provide his Ministry's support to the UNSCR 1325 Committee to address these issues.

Speaking at the same occasion, the Director General in the Ministry of Social Affairs, north Darfur, Ms Nadra Mustaf, commended UNAMID and the UN Country Team for their continued support to State Committee on end violence against women, highlighted the importance of building the capacity of police women including reactivating and strengthening of the local committees to address gender issues.

Manal Ahmed, the Director of Family and Women's Department in the Ministry of Social Affairs, north Darfur, stated that the workshop is part of ongoing efforts to build the capacity of members of the State Committee on violence against women in the state. "We call for effective coordination with the UN agencies and civil society organization to raise awareness among local communities to end violence against women," Ms. Ahmed added.

Sudha Uprety, UNAMID representative, explained that the Mission's Gender and Advisory Unit, regularly provides technical support to the state committee on Violence Against Women in line with UNSCR 1325 and UNAMID mandate. ■



The last-mile Challenge in Darfur:

An interview with UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative, Anita Gbeho

UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative (DJSR), Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho, talks to Voice of Darfur magazine about the critical need to ensure maintenance of gender parity during the Mission's reconfiguration process, the Mission's enhanced collaboration with the UN Country Team during this process and her view of a brighter future for Darfur.

INTERVIEW BY: ALA MAYYAH



Appointed on 6 March 2018 by the UN Secretary General and AU Commission Chairperson, DJSR Anita Kiki Gbeho brings to this position a wealth of experience from her distinguished career in the United Nations. Since 2015, she has served as Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme, Namibia, where she supported the Government of Namibia to coordinate its external development assistance through the United Nations Partnership and Namibian Development Frameworks. Previously, Ms. Gbeho was Chief of Section for Africa I (2012-2015) and Head of Office for Somalia (2008-2012) with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Ms. Gbeho held other senior positions, such as Director for Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators Office in Sudan (2006-2008) and Head of OCHA Liaison Office in South Sudan (2004-2006), where she led the strategic planning process of the United Nations and Partners for Sudan; and managed the coordination of humanitarian and transition operations for South Sudan.

Ms. Gbeho holds a Master's Degree in International Relations from the University of Ghana and a Bachelor's Degree in Social Sciences and African Studies from the State University of New York, Stony Brook, USA.



Voices of Darfur: First, Congratulations on your recent appointment as DJSR for UNAMID. At personal and professional levels, what does this appointment mean to you, especially as it relates to women who see you as a role model and an indication that women can also shatter the “glass ceiling” at the AU and the UN?

Ms. Gbeho: Personally, it means a lot to me to be an African woman serving in a leadership role. This role is positive as it shows that women can indeed continue to break the glass ceiling. My appointment is an honor and sends a message, especially to younger women that it’s very okay to focus on hard work. Your hard work speaks for you, your hard work gets you noticed, your hard work is the ticket to your professional success. I do not believe I have ever been more motivated to undertake an assignment as I am at this moment.

A lot of people work their entire career and never get the kind of affirmation I have received by being appointed to this position.

As an individual, I am passionate about Africa and I believe in the growth potential of the continent. I am of an age where I have seen the positive change taking place on the continent and want to believe, through my tenure with UNAMID, I

can be part of this positive change.

One of the biggest risks to development on this continent is conflict. Darfur has reached its last mile challenge. The last mile challenge can be the most difficult part of the race. You are close to the end where you require not only physical fitness but also mental strength. You must be prepared to do what it takes to cross the finish line. I think that is where we are in Darfur. What we do over the next twenty-one months will be key to keeping Darfur on the peace trajectory and bringing about positive change for the people of Darfur. In a nutshell, I am happy to be in Darfur and I am motivated to be an active part of this last-mile challenge.

VoD: You have rich, professional experience in the United Nations, how would you describe your first four months with UNAMID?

Ms. Gbeho: In one word, a whirlwind. This is because I arrived in the Mission just before the endorsement of the UN Security Council Resolution 2429 (2018) and just after the conclusion of the African Union Chairperson and the Secretary-General Strategic Review process. We have all had to exert a tremendous amount of energy to reconfigure the Mission. While ensuring UNAMID’s readiness to implement SCR 2429s’ two-pronged

approach, we have had to plan the Mission Headquarters move from its current location in El Fasher, north Darfur to Zalingei, central Darfur, and also close 14 Team Sites. The new mandate also called on us to work even more closely with the UNCT to conceptualize a brand new element of the current UNAMID mandate, the State Liaison Functions to contribute to Darfur stabilization’s and to prevent a relapse into conflict. There is no template the Mission can take off the shelf and implement. A lot of thought, that is tailor-made to suit Darfur’s complex context, is required. Implementing the peacekeeping mandate, reconfiguring, moving the Headquarters and initiating a new stabilization concept based on a whole of system approach, requires a lot of effort to plan and coordinate strategically. Over and above this packed programme, I must travel across the Mission’s Area of Responsibility (AoR), visiting the people we serve, our partners and my colleagues in the various Sectors including the key IDP Camps. I plan to travel to all 13 Team Sites by early next year. I am determined.

VoD: The UN encourages female employment to ensure gender balance, including in senior managerial posts, How would you describe UNAMID’s commitment to this key



value, especially during the current Mission's reconfiguration?

Ms. Gbeho: This is an exciting time for the UN especially when it comes to women serving the organisation. The agenda on gender equity has been set at the very top of the organization. Women have the support of the Secretary General. This development gives women the latitude and even more incentive to get the job done. I believe the UN Secretary General (SG) is determined to achieve gender parity throughout the organization. He has managed to rapidly achieve gender parity at the senior management level - Under Secretary General and Acting Secretary General levels. The SG has proven that it can be done and set the example of how the organization can change rapidly.

In UNAMID, currently, international female staff form 29% of the work force, and 14% when it comes to national staff. The Mission is keen to improve these figures. The mission has had commendable success in the past, for example in recruiting national women security officers; not an easy feat in this operational environment. The challenge now is how to retain women as we reconfigure, particularly in non-traditional areas. As we progress, we are determined to ensure that we retain female

staff in all areas of our operations, where possible. Regrettably, some of our existing policies, for example those that guide the Comparative Review Process (CRP), are not adequately aligned to this view. But we are not deterred. This concern has been extensively discussed here in Darfur and has also been raised at Headquarters. We are aware of this challenge and are ready to meet it head on. We will also work with UN Headquarters to come up with recommendations on how to retain female staff during such streamlining exercises in the future.

I recently met with the Military Sector Commander for the Jebel Mara Task Force Area. He was very clear female officers are a valued part of UNAMID military because they can effectively interact with communities, sometimes in ways a man would not be as effective. In many areas of Darfur, women are more comfortable talking to female rather than male uniformed personnel. This allows for a broader and more accurate situation analysis that ultimately leads to interventions that are better targeted: whether this refers to patrols, projects, programs or general discussions. After all, women in Darfur make up 50% of the population, as such their views cannot be ignored.

VoD: UNAMID reconfiguration

1 UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative (DJSR), Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho together with the Head of Office, Sector Central, Lameck Kawiche, and other UNAMID representatives inspected construction works done by the Pakistani Battalion of UNAMID to improve the road from Nertiti to Golo on 24 September 2018. Photo by UNAMID.

2 On 04 July 2018, UNAMID DJSR, Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho, concluded a two-day visit to South Darfur. During her trip she met the Wali (Governor) Mr. Adam Alfaki, and representatives of internally displaced persons from Kass and Kalma camps in South Darfur. Photo by Saeed Salim, UNAMID.

3 UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative (DJSR), Anita Gbeho met on 25 June 2018, with the Undersecretary in the Sudan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Abdul-Ghani Al-Naeem, in Khartoum. They discussed the current situation in Darfur in relation to UNAMID's mandate implementation. Photo by Jane Some, UNAMID.

4 UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative, (DJSR), Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho, visited on 05 August 2018, the university campus in El Geneina, West Darfur. The facility used to be the UNAMID headquarters in the city and was handed over to the university in 2015. During her visit she interacted with the university leadership. Photo by Muntasir Sharafadin, UNAMID.

involving substantial right-sizing of civilian staff, commensurate with military and police component reduction, in conformity with the UNSCR 2429 and the special report of the AU Chairperson and UNSG, issued on 1 June 2018. How will this affect the Mission's capacity to implement its mandate in its Area of responsibility?

Ms. Gbeho: UNAMID reconfiguration is important. We are witnessing a positive change in Darfur. It is



UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative (DJSR), Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho, recently visited the Mission's newly established Temporary Operating Base (TOB) in Golo, Central Darfur. During her trip she met with UNAMID peacekeepers in the area, local authorities and community representatives. Photo by Mohammed Idriss, UNAMID.

not the same Darfur that we saw in 2003, 2007 and 2015. I intentionally picked these years because these are all years where I was involved in Sudan in some capacity or another. UNAMID must now analyze and re-focus its operations in accordance with this change, that is evident in many parts of Darfur. UNSCR 2429 calls on the Mission to focus on peacekeeping in Jebel Marra and its surrounding areas and to work towards stabilization in the rest of Darfur, to prevent relapse. The Resolution also highlights the fact that the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Sudan has the comparative advantage to facilitate development in Darfur. I believe there is recognition that UNAMID has done its part through numerous projects to support local communities. These include the Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), Civilian and Military (CIMIC) projects in-

“What we do over the next twenty-one months, will be key to keeping Darfur on a positive trajectory towards peace, particularly for the people of Darfur.”

cluding training and building capacity in Rule of Law, renovating and constructing classrooms, demarcating migratory routes amongst others. It is incumbent upon UNAMID, in partnership with the UNCT, to ensure momentum is maintained in the implementation of such im-

pactful projects. The Mission will, during this transition period, hand over such projects to the UNCT to ensure continuity towards development and to mitigate against relapse. Ultimately, we all want the same thing, a peaceful Darfur that is on a development trajectory.

VoD: Talking about peacekeeping in Jebel Marra area and stabilization in the rest of Darfur in line with the UNSCR 2429, do you believe UNAMID is well equipped to be involved in stabilization?

Ms. Gbeho: One of the things that I love about the UN, is that we are one UN system, one UN family. That means we work together, bringing our varied expertise together towards common objectives. We now have the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by global leaders to guide us. These goals are about peace and ultimate-



UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative, (DJSR), Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho (middle), visited on 25 September 2018, Hamadiya IDP camp in Zalingei, Central Darfur. She briefed the representatives of displaced women on the Mission's ongoing reconfiguration and listened to their security and humanitarian concerns. Photo by Abdulrasheed Yakubu, UNAMID.

ly about people and their prosperity. They are also about partnership, not only with National and Local Partners but also internally with Sister Organizations and Agencies. We can make a difference through all these our partnerships. When we come together as the UN, AU families, the Government of Sudan, Darfur non-signatories and communities, we most certainly can achieve a great deal for this region.

VoD: As you mentioned, UNAMID will enhance its cooperation with the UN Country Team in Darfur, especially during the two-year transition period leading to its planned departure in June 2020, what areas do you feel this cooperation should be further strengthened to fully facilitate this transition and handover?

Ms. Gbeho: One of our internal success stories that I have observed

since joining the Mission is the cordial relationship between UNAMID and the UNCT. UNAMID has a close working relationship with the HCT and UNCT. We have a common objective which is stabilizing Darfur. For example, UNAMID and the UNCT recently conducted a workshop to analyze programmatic activities in Darfur. Additionally, during the 73rd UN General assembly meeting, the UN/AU co-organized a side event to focus on Darfur and to begin resource mobilization for the stabilization of Darfur.

UNAMID, the UNCT and the Government of Sudan are working collaboratively to put Darfur's stabilization on the international agenda. We remain hopeful that the side event will lead to a fundraiser for the development of Darfur.

VoD: As you re-ignite your journey with the people of Darfur,

what message do you have for them going forward?

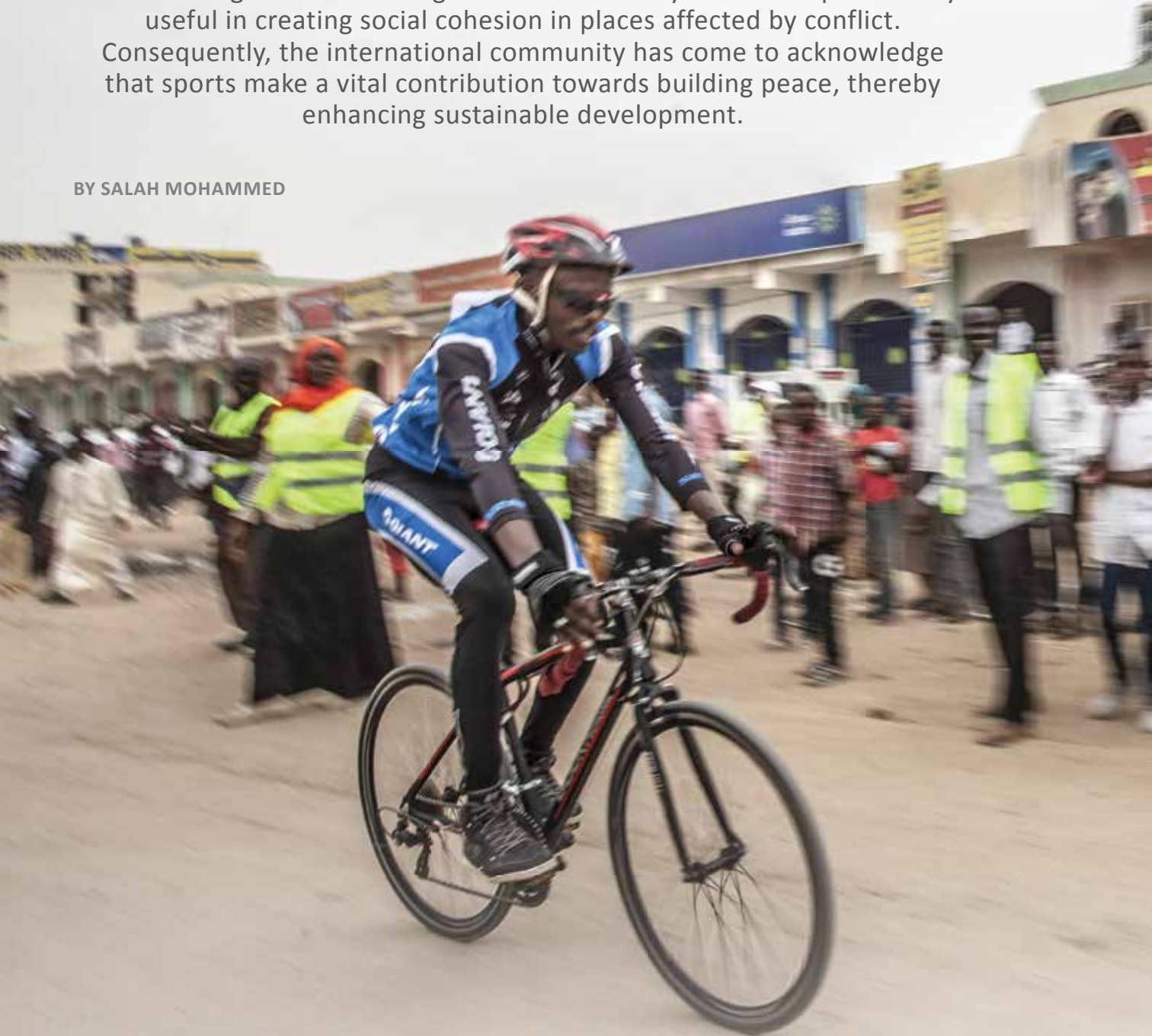
Ms. Gbeho: I am quite clear about UNAMID's role and the fact that we serve at the pleasure of the people of Darfur. We are visitors in their home and we are here to support. It is the brothers and sisters of Darfur who will eventually bring about lasting peace. We can help them by creating the space and the conducive environment they need to dialogue and reach agreement.

I am an optimist. I always see the glass as half full. I am therefore optimistic about Darfur and about this continent. Africa cannot fully develop with pockets of conflict holding us back. One of my favorite proverbs keeps me motivated for Darfur. It says: "However long the night, the dawn will always come." I firmly believe that the sun will rise for Darfur.

UNAMID: Promoting peace through sports

Sports are globally recognized as an effective tool for promoting peace and boosting relations among communities. They have been particularly useful in creating social cohesion in places affected by conflict. Consequently, the international community has come to acknowledge that sports make a vital contribution towards building peace, thereby enhancing sustainable development.

BY SALAH MOHAMMED







In Darfur, sports have been valuable in resolving differences and promoting mutual understanding among people from different backgrounds and with divergent views, following the protracted conflict that displaced hundreds of thousands of people and split the region's social fabric.

Recognizing the importance of sports and cultural activities, UNAMID, through its various peace campaigns, has supported various sports and cultural initiatives to disseminate information and foster peace among local communities. The Mission, through its Communications and Public Information Section (CPIS)'s Community Outreach Unit,

jointly organizes such initiatives with government and non-governmental partners, including at least 15 regular sporting events across the region annually.

"Sporting activities play a crucial role in unifying Darfuri people and providing a conducive platform to demonstrate love, peace and brotherhood towards each other. For example, at the height of deep inter-communal conflict in Mallit, North Darfur early this year, a football tournament organized by UNAMID and the Mallit Football Union, helped to diffuse tensions," says Dr. Makarim Mohammed Ahmed, Head of the

Community Outreach Unit.

The activities take place in various settings such as Darfuri villages, towns, cities and especially camps for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), so they reach a diverse audience. They range across disciplines and encompass football, volleyball, horse and camel racing, bicycle racing and marathons among other activities. Most of the initiatives target the youth due to their vulnerability, thereby creating safe spaces for them to participate in community activities and work together across social, ethnic and other divisions.

As the activities attract thousands of people, UNAMID max-



imizes on the opportunities to disseminate messages about peace and raise awareness on the Mission's mandate and priorities. Branded items such as trophies, medals and sports kits, distributed at such events, carry messages that foster peace and leave a lasting impression in the community, long after events have passed.

Darfuri leaders and communities commend the Mission's efforts, as they have also seen the benefits of promoting peace and enhancing stability through sports.

"UNAMID's involvement in local cultural activities and sports helps us to collectively achieve peace and stability in the region,"

1 UNAMID's Communication and Public Information Section, in collaboration with the North Darfur Horse Racing Union, organized on 6 April 2018, a horse racing competition in El Fasher, North Darfur. The event is part of the Mission's ongoing "Together for Peace" campaign, aimed at promoting peaceful co-existence across Darfur. Photo by Amin Ismail, UNAMID.

2 UNAMID's Communication and Public Information Section (CPIS) jointly with Al Mawrada Sport and Social club and Al Salam IDP camps football union organized on 17 September 2018, a "Together for Peace" football tournament and a musical concert in Tumbasi area in El Fasher, North Darfur. The event aimed to promote peaceful coexistence among community members. Photo by Mohamad Almahady, UNAMID.

3 UNAMID's Communications and Public Information Section, in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the National Federation of Sudanese Youth, joined on 12 August 2018, the rest of the world in commemorating the International Youth Day in El Fasher, North Darfur, through a series of cultural and sporting events including marathon, held under the theme: "Safe Spaces for Youth". Photo by Amin Ismail, UNAMID.

says Musa Mustafa Shogar, the North Darfur State Minister of Youth and Sport.

The benefits to hosting such events are numerous, particularly for the community. Through such



UNAMID Police- Sector North organized a women's volley ball tournament in Abu Shouck Camp for internally displaced persons in El Fasher, North Darfur. Four Secondary Schools Girls participated in the competitions on 23 October 2014, El Fasher. Photo by Mohamad Almahady, UNAMID.

platforms, young people can contribute towards and participate in Darfur's peace process, while networking, improving their health and benefiting from alternative recreation. In some cases, their participation has paid off, evolving into fully-fledged careers, that become sources of livelihood for the youth.

Sports-based initiatives have also helped to address war-related trauma by enabling people to heal, regain a sense of security and normalcy, as well as rebuild relationships in a safe space. In cases of conflict-related disability, sports have helped affected people to rebuild confidence in their abilities.

More recently in Darfur, sports helped to advance demobilization and disarmament efforts, as well as to support the sometimes-dif-

“Sport has an unparalleled ability to transform, empower and unify people,” says UN Secretary-General, **Antonio Guterres.**

ficult reintegration of ex-combatants, particularly former child soldiers, into their communities.

Major sporting activities supported by UNAMID so far this year include a football tournament and musical concert hosted in partnership with Al Mawrada Sport and Social club and Al Salam IDP Camp Football Union, in Tumbasi area, in El Fasher, North Darfur in September. The

event, which was organized as part of the Mission's Together for Peace campaign, was well attended and the community commended the initiative.

“The tournament provided an opportunity for Darfuri people to interact closely, particularly for the IDPs. Such events enhance gains made in peacekeeping amongst communities. Through sports, the message of peace can easily communicate to the local community. This gathering in Al Salam IDP camp comprises football teams from different Darfuri tribes. We are united as brothers,” remarked Mohamed Yahya, captain of the Al Salam IDP Camp Football team, after the tournament.

Another significant event was the grand finale to the Ramadan Cup Football for Peace Tourna-



UNAMID's Communications and Public Information Section (CPIS), in partnership with the National Federation of Sudanese Youth, organized a football tournament in Sewilinga village near El Fasher, North Darfur. The event aimed to promote peaceful coexistence among the local community in the area as part of the "Together for Peace" campaign on 15 October 2018. Photo by Amin Ismail, UNAMID.

ment, which took place at Abou Shouk IDP camp in El Fasher under the theme: "No Life Without Peace." Organized by UNAMID and the Abou Shouk Sport and Culture Association, the event included an Iftar (evening breaking of Ramadan fast) attended by hundreds of youth, community leaders and school children.

Local Imams (religious leaders) and other respected community leaders used the week-long tournament to promote peace. While highlighting the importance of Ramadan, the holy month in the Islamic religion marked by fasting, the leaders emphasized the role of Darfuri youth in the ongoing peace process across the region. They also encouraged young people to actively participate in voluntary work, combat

drug abuse and enhance regional peace efforts through dialogue in their respective communities.

Another exciting sport that draws large crowds is horse racing. Known as one of the most popular sports and associated with nobility as it is associated with advocating for the weak, defending honor and protecting the vulnerable in Darfur, horse racing has been practiced in the region for over 4,000 years and remains an important part of Sudanese culture.

UNAMID and the Kabkabiya Horse Racing Club, regularly organize horse racing events in Kabkabiya locality, North Darfur. One such event, held under the theme: "Partnerships for Peace, Dignity for all," attracted more than 500 people from various backgrounds.

"Such sporting events enhance

peaceful co-existence among various communities living in our area. They definitely bring people together in a very peaceful atmosphere and facilitate the building of trust among the different tribes," says Dr. Adam Ahmed Salih, Kabkabiya Locality Commissioner.

These sentiments are echoed by the Native Administration leader in Kabkabiya, Shartai Eltayeb Ankara, who acknowledges the impact of UNAMID's efforts in contributing towards peace building through sports.

"Such social and sporting events pave the way for a brighter, peaceful future for both young and old alike. These events foster a peaceful environment for people to carry out normal social and religious activities, unperturbed. It is time to build peace," he concludes. ■

UNAMID

conducts training for rural court judges in Darfur

As part of its continuing efforts to enhance justice and rule of law among Darfuri communities, UNAMID's Rule of Law Section routinely conducts training programmes for rural court judges from various Localities in Darfur on adjudication and mediation as well as Sudan's civil and criminal procedural laws and mediation techniques.

Additionally, these training programmes are aimed at building the capacity of judges on the use of mediation to settle inter-communal conflicts, including land disputes, to ensure peaceful co-existence and harmony amongst the diverse Darfuri communities.











Painting for peace: An interview with artist **Hanan Bakheet**

Born in 1964 in El Fasher, North Darfur, Hanan Bakheet, completed her education at schools in El Fasher before graduating with a degree in Fine Arts from the Sudan University of Sciences and Technology. She majored in printing and cover making, then went on to pursue her love for art through a career in teaching. A firm believer in art as an expression of freedom, Hanan has always encouraged her students to express their artistic talents through painting, theatre, handicrafts and other forms of art.

BY SALAH MOHAMMED

In an interview with Voices of Darfur (VoD), artist Hanan Bakheet talks about her work, the artistic landscape and innovation, as well as challenges facing local artists and their role in reinforcing peaceful coexistence among communities in Darfur.

VO D: What issues do you feel you have addressed through your work

as an artist since you graduated from university?

Hanan Bakheet: When I began my career as a teacher in 1992 our local community did not embrace the fine arts, and even the students did not fully understand the importance of art in the school curriculum. It was not an easy start to my

career as a teacher. My mission was to deliver a message to people that fine arts represent life and express freedom. Through my work, I try to help the students to understand how they can express the meaning of freedom through fine arts. While at university, my dissertation was titled: "Innovation and the Freedom



of the Artist.” This is a prominent feature in all my works.

VOD: Have you since addressed these concerns, especially in imparting the importance of peace, stability and peaceful coexistence between different groups in Darfur?

Hanan Bakheet: A year ago, I participated in the Sultan Ali Dinar centenary celebrations. Ali Dinar was the most famous of all Sultans in Darfur. The most prominent painting I submitted for this exhibition portrayed the role of a father in the nucleus family. The focus was on polygamy and depicted Sultan Ali Dinar as an example because he had an illustrious military career and led a successful social life at a time when polygamy was perceived in positive light. Perceptions have since changed and

a lot of negativity is now associated with polygamy in our society. In addition, I submitted a painting called “The Beginning,” which focused on a man of weak character, who despite all his negative qualities, stuck to his values. The collection represents the diversity of the people of Darfur.

VOD: How can Darfur artists contribute, through their works, to the call for peace and peaceful coexistence between different ethnic groups in the region?

Hanan Bakheet: Fine arts are there to serve humanity. Awareness plays a major role in harnessing our diverse talents to promote peace. All the works I have presented at various exhibitions call for peace. The most recent event I participated in was the “Painting for Peace” competition organized by UNAMID on 20 September 2018 to mark the International Day of Peace. I exhibited a painting that appealed to all Darfuris to not only take the call for peace seriously, but to fully participate in efforts being exerted to attain durable peace in the region. In the absence of peace, people will suffer and regress.

VOD: Describe your participation in the painting for peace competition organized by UNAMID?

Hanan Bakheet: I felt very honored to be part of the group that participated in this competition, to finally get a platform before both a local and an international audience to promote my views on peace in Darfur. It was also great because I met other Fine Art artists and we exchanged ideas on how we can move our passion forward. I really did not expect my painting to win first place in the competition because there were many fine works from different talented artists. I was ecstatic when I won the first prize. I also value the observations from other artists on how I can further improve my work.

VOD: How can such exhibitions and competitions organized by UNAMID help to promote culture and enhance the growth of Fine Arts in Darfur?

Hanan Bakheet: I was ecstatic about being part of such an event. In addition to the many artists who

came, UNAMID also organized various artistic and cultural activities that centered on peace. Women from all walks of life actively participated in the exhibition. We hope in future, UNAMID will dedicate more time and resources to such exhibitions as they attract many people. Hosting the exhibition in a central area close to the local market made it accessible to many people from different backgrounds.

VOD: What are the major challenges facing artists in Darfur?

Hanan Bakheet: The main challenge is that artists do not receive due recognition for their hard work, as the local community still views them simply as entertainers but not as role models for the youth to emulate.

VOD: What do you feel is your legacy in the discipline of Fine Arts given the many years you have invested in grooming young artists?

Hanan Bakheet: I believe I have done my best to transfer my skills to the young artists who have passed through my classes. My door remains open to students and amateurs who need support and guidance to build a fruitful career in fine arts. I also share my knowledge through my work with various cultural groups in El Fasher.

VOD: Do you feel young artists receive enough support from their parents and peers to contribute meaningfully towards enriching culture and innovation in the region?

Hanan Bakheet: Honestly speaking, I do not believe that young artists receive the support they need to fulfil their dreams in fine arts. Most activities related to the arts here in Darfur are seasonal, with no financial support being provided at both local and central level. I firmly believe that if all artists, in their diverse fields, were to be organized under a single body, it would be easier for them to access the limited resources available for such activities. Such a body would also enhance coordination of artists, so they can even find or explore opportunities to participate at national and regional events.

VOD: Have you participated in



any Fine Arts event in the capital Khartoum or outside the country?

Hanan Bakheet: I have participated in a number of exhibitions in Khartoum but one that stands out was in 2015, when the North Darfur Judiciary offices invited me to participate in a conference of the African Judiciaries. This was a high point in my career. The works I exhibited featured Ali Dinar from Darfur and Nelson Mandela from South Africa. One of my paintings won first place among the works of artists from all states in Sudan. The conference was a great networking opportunity as I engaged with the visiting delegations and we discussed the important role of youth in our societies.

VOD: Why did you choose Ali Dinar from Darfur and Nelson Mandela from South Africa as the focus of your work?

Hanan Bakheet: The choice was mainly based on the fact that many parts of the world, especially Africa, were suffering from the negative im-

pact of war. Both personalities had significant roles in fighting for freedom and promoting peace.

VOD: How have Darfur artists used the arts to enlighten people about issues affecting the community?

Hanan Bakheet: Artists continue to educate communities through their work. For example, Darfuri artists receive many invitations to take part in awareness raising campaigns and convey messages to communities through their participation in workshops, seminars or training sessions aimed at enlightening people about peace and socio-economic issues pertaining to women, youth and children.

VOD: How can women contribute to promoting peace in Darfur?

Hanan Bakheet: One cannot over-emphasize the fact that women play a vital role in bringing peace to any community and the upbringing of future generations. Women are natural nurturers. This nurturing role is evident in their own homes and

cascades to other parts of society where they are involved such as religious gatherings, handicraft making and schools. Women are really working hard to achieve peace in Darfur.

VOD: Do you have any message for fine artists in Darfur?

Hanan Bakheet: I strongly appeal to artists to focus their attention on innovation in the Fine Arts and use their talents to uplift their respective communities. This is achievable through using fine arts to send messages of peace and peaceful-coexistence amongst the various sections of Darfuri society.

VOD: What is your message to the people of Darfur, in general?

Hanan Bakheet: All of us should move forward and search for the seeds of love and tolerance. People should communicate with each other. We must forgive and tolerate one another. We must also reinforce values of patriotism, as Sudan is a big country that can accommodate all of us.



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(رجل الدين والحق والحكمة والعدل)

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