

UNAMID's publication for the people of Darfur

VOICES

of Darfur

JANUARY 2014

Darfur's Contours

An Interview
with Artist
Sayida Omar Adam

**Looking Beyond a
Decade of Displacement**

*Waiting for resettlement
to become a reality*

**Police Women Forging
Critical Bonds**

*Building trust and
promoting rule of law*

**Beyond the Mandate,
Driven to Help**

*Meeting the needs of the
newly displaced*



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MISSION IN DARFUR
(UNAMID)



In El Fasher, North Darfur, artist Ms. Sayida Omar Adam uses various implements, such as the palette knife shown here, to create different textures in her paintings. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

I'm pleased to introduce the January 2014 issue of *Voices of Darfur*, which, like other issues of *Voices*, contains news, features and interviews not only about unique aspects of life in Darfur but also about UNAMID's ongoing efforts to facilitate lasting peace in the region.

In "Looking Beyond a Decade of Displacement," Mr. Emadeldin Rijal describes how the displaced people of Darfur are struggling to cope with the unpredictability of life in this conflict-torn region as they wait for the time when resettlement becomes a real possibility. While national and international efforts to bring a comprehensive, sustainable peace continue, lack of basic services in some areas and recurring violence in others recall the disturbing memories of the early, acutely unstable days of the conflict. Still, as Mr. Rijal describes, displaced people across Darfur are facing these challenges with the stoic perseverance and dedication that could be considered one of the defining characteristics of the people living in this region.

In "Police Women Forging Critical Bonds," Ms. Sharon Lukunka describes how UNAMID's female Police Advisors are serving in many roles across Darfur, patrolling villages and camps for displaced people, assisting in addressing sexual and gender-based violence, building trust and promoting the rule of law. As this story illustrates, the Mission's female Police Advisors are helping to reduce conflict, serving as role models for the community and facilitating access to and support for skill-building workshops for local women. In doing so, they are working to provide a greater sense of security and ultimately a brighter future to the long-suffering people of Darfur.

In "Beyond the Mandate, Driven to Help," Mr. Albert González Farran presents a photo essay designed to highlight UNAMID's intervention

following violent clashes in Labado, East Darfur. The intervention serves as an example of the many instances where the Mission's dedicated peacekeepers have gone beyond the call of duty to aid civilians in a time of need. Driven by compassion, the peacekeepers working near Labado continue to support the Labado displaced as effectively as they can, meeting the basic needs of those who have no recourse to other assistance.

In "Darfur's Efforts to End the Use of Child Soldiers," Ms. Lukunka writes about how UNAMID's Child Protection and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) components have been working directly with armed groups in Darfur to eliminate the use of child soldiers through the establishment of action plans that commit the groups to end the recruitment and use of children for conflict. As this story illustrates, while there is much evidence to indicate a groundswell of change has been steadily gathering momentum to end the use of child soldiers in Darfur, much more work remains to be done.

Finally, in our cover feature, "Darfur's Contours," Ms. Ala Mayyahi presents an interview with Ms. Sayida Omar Adam, one of the few female painters in Darfur. Ms. Adam has made her mark with bold, colourful canvases that, she says, reveal her hopes for a bright future for the people of Darfur. In her art, detailed patterns and traditional symbolism combine with depictions of men and women together into what she says is an expression of her firm belief in equal participation for women in various aspects of Darfuri life.

As *Voices of Darfur* continues to evolve as a news magazine, we welcome your feedback. To send comments by email, please put "Letters to the Editor / Voices of Darfur" in the subject line and send the email to unamid-publicinformation@un.org.

Kirk L. Kroeker
Head of Publications

ON THE COVER



Artist Ms. Sayida Omar Adam is pictured in her studio at home in El Fasher, North Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.



Adam Idris (age five) is pictured in his shelter in the Labado camp for displaced people in East Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

VOICES of Darfur

Head of Publications
Kirk L. Kroeker

Associate Editors
Ala Mayyahi
Priyanka Chowdhury

Staff Writers
Emadeldin Rijal
Sharon Lukunka
Mohamad Mahady

Lead Designer
Arie Santoso

Graphics & Design
Mutaz Ahmed

Photographers
Albert González Farran
Hamid Abdulsalam

Contributors
Chris Cychmanick
Guiomar Pau
Owies Elfaki

Translation
Nabil Mohamed
Eltahir Nourain Mohammed
Alawad Alawad
Ahmad Ibrahim
Abdalla Abdulraheem
Adam War

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 flickr.com/unamid-photo



PUBLICATIONS UNIT
Communications and Public Information
Division (CPID) - UNAMID
Email: unamid-publicinformation@un.org
Website: <http://unamid.unmissions.org>

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UNAMID Head Urges Tribal Leaders to Resolve Conflicts Peacefully

On 19 November 2013, speaking to some 200 South Darfur tribal leaders, UNAMID Joint Special Representative (JSR) Mohamed Ibn Chambas stressed the need to embrace the principle of resolving conflict through dialogue, negotiation and other peaceful means and to guard against repeating the same patterns that have caused suffering in the region.

The JSR met with tribal leaders in a two-day conference in Nyala to discuss the root causes of tribal conflict and recommend possible solutions for sustainable peaceful coexistence in the region.

“After 10 years of conflict and much suffering, it must be clear to everyone that there can be no viable

military solution to the conflict in Darfur,” the JSR stated during the opening session of the conference, which was attended by South Darfur Deputy Wali (Governor) Mahdi Mohammed Bosh.

UNAMID’s Head said he regrets the deterioration of the security situation across Darfur during the past few months. “Conflicts erupted between tribes that have coexisted peacefully for hundreds of years,” he said. “What is even more worrying has been the intensity of these conflicts and the excessively high number of casualties.”

The JSR expressed concern about the tribal violence that has affected the civilian population and has contributed to an increase in the



On 19 November 2013 in Nyala, South Darfur, UNAMID held a workshop, the third in a series that the Mission is organising, to find a solution to the tribal conflicts in the area. Photo by Hamid Abdulsalam, UNAMID.

number of displaced people in camps around Darfur.

“It is also clear that ethnic clashes have contributed to ongoing insecurity and the worsening humanitarian situation in Darfur,” the JSR

said. The event was the third in a series of conferences that UNAMID Civil Affairs has been organising in the five states of Darfur to find a solution to the tribal conflicts in the area. ■

Follow-Up Commission Notes Peace Progress, Challenges

Delegates to the seventh meeting of the Implementation Follow-up Commission (IFC) of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) convened on 16 December 2013 in El Fasher, North Darfur, to discuss progress and challenges in the implementation of the DDPD since the Commission’s last meeting in September 2013.

The Deputy Prime Minister of the State of Qatar, H.E. Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud, chaired the meeting. The Government of Sudan was represented by Minister of State Dr. Amin Hassan Omer, while the Chairperson of the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA), Dr. Eltigani Seisi, and Mr. Altoum Suliman Mohammed Arbaa, represented the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) and

Justice and Equality Movement-Sudan, respectively. Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the AU-UN Joint Special Representative and Joint Chief Mediator, represented UNAMID.

Speaking to the media following the IFC meeting, JSR Chambas noted that the signing of the agreement on 20 November by the Government of Sudan and LJM on the Final Security Arrangements marked a step forward in the implementation of the DDPD. The agreement, he said, is designed to integrate LJM combatants into the Sudan Armed Forces and Police and begin the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process.

The JSR went on to highlight the commencement of 315 reconstruction and development projects, in line with the Darfur



The Deputy Prime Minister of Qatar and UNAMID’s Joint Special Representative address the media following the seventh meeting of the Implementation Follow-up Commission at UNAMID Headquarters in El Fasher, North Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

Development Strategy, as a positive step toward bringing peace to the people of Darfur. He said he hoped that the signing of the DDPD by the Justice and Equality Movement-Sudan would bring additional impetus to the Document’s implementation.

Dr. Chambas briefed the delegates on his efforts to bring

the non-signatory movements to the negotiation table on the basis of the DDPD. He noted that at the technical workshop in Addis Ababa, the movements reiterated their commitment to a negotiated political process to end the conflict and expressed readiness for a humanitarian cessation of hostilities. ■

UNAMID, UNDP Provide Vocational Skills to Prisoners

On 17 December 2013, inmates from Al Shallah Federal Prison in El Fasher, North Darfur, graduated from an intensive training course during which they acquired various vocational skills, including welding, masonry and electrical work, in two new workshops that UNAMID recently conducted.

UNAMID implemented this project with UN Development Programme (UNDP) and Government of Sudan support to empower prisoners at risk of recidivism. Staff members from UNAMID's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) section guided the programme, while Sudanese Police conducted the training.

The Chief of UNAMID's DDR section, Mr. Aderemi Ad-ekoya, spoke during the graduation ceremony, noting that the course's completion marked the end of one of the largest vo-

cational skills workshops ever implemented in a Darfur prison. "We believe in the reintegration of inmates," he said, explaining that Darfur's conflict has increased delinquency rates. "It is a priority to change the lives of these prisoners when they are released on completion of their sentences," he added.

UNDP's representative, Mr. Christopher Laker, also spoke during the ceremony. "This project is an opportunity for the inmates to start a new life with their families," he said, noting that the impact of this project extends not merely to the inmates themselves, but also to the communities to which the prisoners will return once they have completed their sentences.

As part of the Mission's approach to support peace at the community level, UNAMID's DDR section has been



On 17 December 2013, a local singer performs for prisoners and police officers during a ceremony to commemorate the graduation of prison inmates from a skills-training programme at Al Shallah Federal Prison in El Fasher, North Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

implementing similar workshops across Darfur. In addition, DDR has been working on a violence-reduction strategy that has taken several forms in practice, most notably in community-based, labour-intensive projects.

These community projects are designed to support the efforts of the Government of Su-

dan in addressing the needs of at-risk young people and other vulnerable groups in communities and in camps for displaced people. The projects focus not only on building vocational skills, and in many cases facilitating infrastructure development, but also on fostering reconciliation across Darfur. ■

El Fasher, North Darfur



On 1 December 2013, a UNAMID staff member participates in a minute of silence and a candle-lighting ceremony during a commemoration event to mark World AIDS Day at UNAMID headquarters. Photo Hamid Abdulsalam, UNAMID.

El Fasher, North Darfur



On 5 December 2013, UNAMID staff members, students and residents from in and around El Fasher march to commemorate 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence in an event organised by UNAMID. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

Joint Chief Mediator Commends Movements on Peace Talks

On 12 December 2013, the African Union-United Nations Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, said he values and appreciates the three-day workshop on peace and security in Darfur, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the participation of two non-signatory movements, Sudan Liberation Army - Minni Minawi (SLA-MM) and the Justice and Equality Movement - Gibril Ibrahim (JEM-Gibril).

Dr. Chambas said he welcomed the willingness of the participants to move forward into a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the conflict. "We are ready to continue engaging with all the non-signatory movements to bring them on

board the peace process and find a durable solution for the Darfur conflict," he said. "The only way forward is through dialogue, not violence."

The workshop, which concluded on 11 December, was co-organised by the AU-UN Joint Mediation Support Team and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and was designed to discuss issues related to international humanitarian law and human rights.

In a press statement, JEM-Gibril and SLA-MM emphasized the importance of creating a conducive environment for peace talks through confidence-building measures to pave the way for a comprehensive, inclusive, just and durable peace.



On 9 December 2013, AU-UN Joint Chief Mediator Mohamed Ibn Chambas presides over a workshop to explore ways to achieve a comprehensive peace in Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

In their jointly released statement, the two movements expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the Joint Chief Mediator in search of comprehensive peace and their commitment to respect and promote the principles of international humanitarian law and human rights.

UNAMID, Sudanese Police Strengthen Cooperation

On 27 November 2013, UNAMID and the Government of Sudan (GoS) Police held a workshop in Khartoum to discuss the memorandum of understanding they signed in August 2013. The event was attended by some 100 police officers from both institutions.

In his opening remarks, UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative Joseph Mutaboba explained that UNAMID's Police component is assisting in building the capacity of the GoS Police in Darfur, including through the promotion of democratic values, rule of law and respect for human rights.

"It is vital that law and order are restored and main-

tained, and that the police system continues to be an important institution in our efforts to build a society that is based on the rule of law," Mr. Mutaboba said. "It is therefore imperative that the policing system is properly planned and strengthened to enable it to respond to the demands of the community."

The event was attended by the Minister of Interior, Mr. Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamed, who said that the goal of the workshop is to help establish peace and stability in Darfur and that the role of UNAMID is to help in achieving this. "Peace will not be realized by increasing military and police troop numbers, but by making peace a culture," he stated.



On 27 November 2013 in Khartoum, Sudan, UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative Joseph Mutaboba delivers opening remarks ahead of a strategic workshop designed to strengthen cooperation between UNAMID and Sudanese Police. Photo by Guiomar Pau Solé, UNAMID.

UNAMID Police Commissioner Hester Paneras spoke during the event and noted the importance of the memorandum of understanding. "If UNAMID and its partner, GoS Police, work together, they can truly make positive change happen for

the sake of Darfuris," she said.

During the workshop, participants discussed the importance of enhancing the capacity-building of GoS police, protecting Darfuri communities and effectively coordinating community-policing initiatives.

Akuma, North Darfur



On 12 December 2013, an actor performs a drama presentation to highlight issues related to HIV and AIDS during an event organised by UNAMID and the Sudan National AIDS Control Programme. Photo by Hamid Abdulsalam, UNAMID.

El Fasher, North Darfur



On 14 December 2013, in the Abu Shouk camp for displaced people, a UNAMID Police Advisor celebrates the opening of the Raman Women's Shopping Centre, which was built with the personal support of UNAMID's Police component so internally displaced women can sell handcrafted goods to their community. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

UNAMID Observes Human Rights Day in Darfur

On 10 December 2013, with outreach events conducted throughout Darfur, UNAMID joined in the worldwide celebrations on the occasion of Human Rights Day, observed every year on 10 December.

In El Fasher, North Darfur, UNAMID organised an event at Al Salam camp for internally displaced people. The event, attended by more than 2,500 people, including students, community leaders, civil society members and representatives from the State Ministry of Education, consisted of poetry recitals, songs and dramatic performances promoting human rights, peace and coexistence.

The gathering was addressed by the Deputy Chief of UNAMID's Human Rights Section, Mr. Amadu Shour, who emphasized the importance of compliance with human rights standards to ensure justice and

equality for every human being around the world. Mr. Shour affirmed that the Mission is working with all stakeholders to promote and protect human rights.

The Acting Head of UNAMID's Human Rights Section in North Darfur, Mr. Ahmed Hassan, spoke to those in attendance and reiterated the premises of the Vienna Declaration, a document that declares that human rights are universal and commits states to the promotion and protection of all human rights for all people, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems.

The representative of the North Darfur Ministry of Education, Mr. Mohamed Abdulrahim, commended UNAMID's role in promoting human rights through collaborative efforts with stakeholders such as the Government of Sudan and human rights activists to enhance awareness of



On 10 December in North Darfur, an actor performs a drama presentation in Al Salam camp for internally displaced people during a Human Rights Day celebration. Photo by Hamid Abdulsalam.

human rights issues. "We are grateful for UNAMID's role when it comes to human rights enhancement and promotion," said Mr. Abdulrahim.

The celebrations in North Darfur, South Darfur, Central Darfur and West Darfur included the

reading of the messages from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, as well as music performances and drama presentations to highlight specific issues related to human rights in Darfur communities.

Looking Beyond a Decade of Displacement

While more than a decade of conflict has resulted in thousands killed, infrastructure decimated and widespread displacement, the people living in Darfur's temporary camps remain dedicated to a durable solution, lasting peace and, ultimately, resettlement.

BY EMADELDIN RIJAL



On 26 January 2010, some 3,000 people are displaced from 30 different towns in North and South Darfur, due to tribal clashes, and settle in a temporary camp in near Shangil Tobaya, North Darfur. Most of the arrivals are women and children, as many of the men stayed behind to defend their villages. Living conditions in the camp are harsh. There is little water and food and no medical facilities; the shelters are typically made from branches and plastic tarps. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

For more than 10 years, the people of Darfur have struggled to cope with the unpredictability of life in this conflict-torn region. While national and international efforts to bring a comprehensive, sustainable peace continue, the pace of progress is slow due to the situation's complex nature; and in many communities here, the men, women and children of Darfur continue to struggle with the harsh realities of daily life. Lack of basic services in some areas and recurring acts of violence in others re-

call the disturbing memories of the early, acutely unstable days of the conflict.

"We hear news about imminent attacks all the time," says Mr. Ahmed Abdurrahman, a 60-year-old living in a new camp for internally displaced people in the Labado area of East Darfur. Due to clashes between the Government of Sudan authorities and armed movements in 2013, some 29,000 people fled Labado and the nearby villages to inhabit what is now known as the Labado camp for internally displaced persons

(IDPs). The inhabitants of this camp have been relying on the support of the UNAMID peacekeepers deployed in the area for their safety, security and even medical care.

Mr. Abdurrahman says this is not the first time he has experienced displacement. He recounts the early days of the conflict in Darfur and describes how he and his family sought refuge in one of the IDP camps in Nyala. Most of his family still resides there. As the violence in Labado gradually subsided, Mr. Abdurrah-

man returned to his village to take stock of his property and belongings. However, he says, just after he returned, further violence erupted in Labado and he was, once again, forced to leave the area.

Despite the repeated displacements, Mr. Abdurrahman works to provide for his children. He earns a living by making and selling charcoal, requiring him to travel through unsecured areas to collect wood as the main raw material for his small business. The process of making charcoal is a painstaking activity that takes days of effort before the finished product is ready to sell. When the charcoal is finished, the money he earns from the sale of the product is not sufficient even to meet the basic needs of his family.

Mr. Abdurrahman explains that, in addition to his work making charcoal, he must travel several times each week a distance of some 8 kilometres merely to bottle water in jerry cans at the nearest borehole. This water is, of course, a critical necessity for daily use at home. Mr. Abdurrahman cites many cases of humiliation and violence suffered by IDPs, particularly women, as they conduct similar activities away from the relative safety of their villages or camps. Although UNAMID peacekeepers provide escort patrols for such journeys, Mr. Abdurrahman says that many of Darfur's displaced fear for their safety even when a patrol is available and especially when they must venture out on their own.

The men, women and children of Darfur, caught in the ongoing conflict, faced a new dimension of violence during the past year. While fighting between the Government and armed movements continues, tribal clashes related to competition over natural resources and age-old blood feuds have intensified. As a result of this fighting, more and more Darfuris have been forced to uproot themselves and seek refuge in IDP camps. UN reports indicate that, in 2013 alone, more than 460,000 people were newly displaced across Darfur as a result of tribal clashes and fighting between the Sudanese forces and armed movements.

While the people of Darfur, the international community, the Government of Sudan and UNAMID's leadership have

continued to push for an end to this long conflict, the future remains uncertain. "Although no one knows for sure when comprehensive and inclusive peace will be achieved, we still dream of it at every opportunity," says Ms. Safia Saleh, head of the Women's Development Centre in the Abu Shouk Camp for displaced people in El Fasher, North Darfur. The paucity of resources in these IDP camps renders both new arrivals as well as those who were displaced in the early years of the conflict almost powerless to steer their own destinies in terms of vocations, medical care and other basic aspects of what most people consider normal life to be.

Mr. Haider Idrees, leader of the Abu Shouk Camp Youth Union, speaks of a time when one mat would be all that was

available to accommodate a newly displaced family. According to Mr. Idrees, although the current situation in IDP camps is improving on the whole, the recurrence of violence across Darfur represents a significant threat to society at large and IDPs in particular. "As a member of the displaced community, the prolonged conflict is definitely not in our interest," he says with the characteristic understatement typical of political conversations in Darfur, and noting that there is a need for a comprehensive peace agreement that will guarantee the security, stability and eventual return of IDPs to their original homes.

UN reports indicate that while the security situation in Darfur has improved in some areas, it has degenerated in others during the past year, indicating that there

"We are ready to continue engaging with all the non-signatory movements to bring them on board the peace process and find a durable solution for the Darfur conflict. The only way forward is through dialogue, not violence."

—Mohamed Ibn Chambas

On 14 September 2013, in Forobaranga, West Darfur, students listen to their teacher in the Bakht Alrida Primary School in the camp for internally displaced people in the area. The education centre, with four teachers and 338 students, lacks supplies and basic services. The seven classrooms don't have furniture and are in need of extensive repair. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.



is a great need to gather momentum for the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), an agreement signed in 2011 between Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement and in 2013 by a faction of the Justice and Equality Movement. While several armed movements continue to decline to sign the Document, the DDPD has been effective in shaping what many IDPs are now envisioning for the future of this region. The many provisions and stipulations of the DDPD outline a path to peaceful and normal life for Darfur. But the pace of its implementation, steered by the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA), continues to be slowed by conflict, lack of funding and other factors.

A notable step toward relieving the suffering of the Darfuri people and making their dreams of peace a reality was the International Donor's Conference, held in Doha, Qatar, in early 2013. Donors pledged a total of US\$3.6 billion to support Darfur's development needs. However, the slow progress in implementing the provisions of the DDPD has resulted in reluctance on the part of some donors to meet their commitments in providing the promised funds.

"The best solution to the conflict in Darfur is to achieve a lasting peace, allowing conditions to normalize so that citizens can live without fear or intimidation," said Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, UNAMID's Joint Special Representative, in a statement following a series of meetings with IDPs, Darfur's traditional leaders and Sudanese authorities in early 2013.

"A lasting peace can never be achieved unless strong political will and good intentions are shown by the Government and the armed movements," says Sheikh Siddiq Mohammed, a member of the Abu Shouk Camp's leadership. Mr. Mohammed indicates that all residents of the camp want to see security restored and an end to the divisions among the non-signatory armed movements. He also says that additional international engagement, with the Doha Donor's Conference serving as a prime example, is necessary to establish lasting peace.

As part of this ongoing international engagement, Dr. Chambas, who also doubles as the United Nations and African Union Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur, hosted in 2013 a retreat at UNAMID's headquarters in El Fasher for Special En-



On 10 December 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, African Union Commission Deputy Chairperson Erastus Mwencha (centre), greets Mr. Gibril Ibrahim (left), leader of the Justice and Equality Movement, with the presence of AU-UN Joint Chief Mediator Mohamed Ibn Chambas (right), during the second day of a workshop to discuss peace in Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

"The best solution to the conflict in Darfur is to achieve a lasting peace, allowing conditions to normalize so that citizens can live without fear or intimidation."

—Mohamed Ibn Chambas

voys to Sudan to consider recent developments in Darfur and the way forward. The forum, which drew representatives from many countries and organisations, focused on the status of the peace process and the security and humanitarian situation.

As an outcome of this meeting, the Joint Chief Mediator initiated steps to revitalize the peace process through different mechanisms, such as the adoption of a more inclusive process of engaging the armed movements that have not signed the DDPD. The UNAMID Head's peace initiative has been welcomed by the leaders of the major non-signatory movements, including Sudan Liberation Army - Minni Minawi (SLA-MM), Justice and Equality Movement - Gibril Ibrahim (JEM-Gibril) and Sudan Liberation Army - Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW).

In late 2013, the Joint Chief Mediator held consultations in Arusha, Tanzania, and in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with delegations of the non-signatory movements to discuss ways to settle the conflict.

While the holdout movements' representatives at the meeting expressed different attitudes toward the situation in Darfur, in particular, and Sudan, in general, they reiterated their commitment to peace and a continuing engagement in the quest for a final agreement. During the deliberations in Arusha, held in August 2013 and observed by senior officials from the African Union and European Union, along with representatives from other stakeholder organisations and countries, the movements' representatives expressed hope in the peace process and encouraged the support of the international community.

In December 2013, at the Addis Ababa meeting, Dr. Chambas said he welcomed the willingness of the participants to move forward. "We are ready to continue engaging with all the non-signatory movements to bring them on board the peace process and find a durable solution for the Darfur conflict," he said. "The only way forward is through dialogue, not violence."



On 25 March 2013 in Nyala, South Darfur, 600 internally displaced people, including refugees, take part in a conference organised within the framework of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur to ensure that the concerns of displaced people and refugees are addressed, and to solicit recommendations for the Doha Donors Conference. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

In a press statement following the Addis meeting, both JEM-Gibril and SLA-MM emphasized the importance of such meetings in paving the way to a lasting peace. In their statement, the two movements expressed their commitment to respect and promote the principles of international humanitarian law and human rights.

While such developments indicate the peace process is moving slowly but steadily forward, the harsh realities of life in IDP camps continue to be defined by lack of resources and criminal incidents. At local levels, community members have rallied, working with local and international partners, including UNAMID, to address such issues. IDPs living in the Abu Shouk camp, for example, have faced not only an uptick in the number of criminal incidents, but also a lack of resources as the numbers of newly displaced people rise.

Situated on the outskirts of El Fasher, the camp is now home to more than 85,000 residents. The camp's people, some displaced as early as 2003, come from different parts of North Darfur. Abu Shouk has depended mostly on the assistance of UN agencies and international organisations working in the area. This aid includes food, healthcare, water, sanitation as well as education. As a result of the efforts of the humanitarian community, there are now 12 primary schools and four secondary schools operating in the camp. Unfortunately, with

the influx of new residents, each school is overcrowded, and reports from education authorities indicate that the number of students enrolled is growing steadily.

On the healthcare side, residents in the camp have been faced with limited access to medical services. Treatment of diseases such as diabetes and renal complications is well beyond the capability of the non-profit health clinic running in the camp. Apart from health issues, residents of the Abu Shouk camp, as in the many other camps across Darfur, also face food shortages. After more than 10 international organisations ceased operating in Darfur in early 2009, the quantities of food rations received by Darfur's IDPs have decreased. Reports estimate that, in the early years of displacement, one bag of sorghum would be allocated to roughly four individuals monthly. Now, roughly eight people are sharing the same amount of rations each month.

This shortage of healthcare services and food rations is a reality in almost every IDP camp in Darfur. In South Darfur, for example, newly displaced people have taken refuge in several camps that include Kalma and Ottash, on the outskirts of Nyala, the largest city in South Darfur. These newly displaced people, driven from the villages of Labado and Muhajariya, East Darfur, by renewed clashes that broke out in April between Government forces and armed movements, have run into severe difficul-

ties. While thousands of displaced people are reported to be encountering food issues, water shortages and deteriorating health conditions, UN agencies and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) working in the area are struggling to reach out to the affected communities.

UNAMID has been working closely with the local communities and with NGOs to address the root causes of the conflict and improve the living conditions of people in the region. In humanitarian assistance operations to Labado and Muhajriya, for example, the Mission delivered more than 80,000 kilograms of relief supplies to displaced civilians. In addition, to help alleviate the suffering of the displaced, the Mission has been directing several quick-impact projects (QIPs) in areas where they are needed most. These QIPs—which consist of short-term US\$50,000 projects designed to rebuild infrastructure, provide training and address other issues—represent one aspect of the Mission's ongoing commitment to the protection and welfare of the people of Darfur.

In addition to being tailored to meet the specific needs of communities where they are applied, QIPs are designed to build confidence in the peace process by enhancing the relationship between the Mission and local communities and by fostering early socioeconomic recovery. Since the Mission's inception in early 2008, more than 500 such projects have benefitted various communities across Darfur; they include school construction, health centre rehabilitation, agricultural training, women's education, water projects, waste management and other transformative projects designed to benefit Darfuris. In 2013, the Mission decentralized the decision-making process related to managing these projects to address the needs of the communities throughout Darfur more rapidly and directly.

Another difficulty facing Darfur's displaced is income generation. The proximity of many IDP camps to large towns provides displaced people with at least some opportunity to earn money through menial labour, such as washing cars, doing laundry, shining shoes, cleaning houses and so forth. In other parts of Darfur, agriculture remains a common livelihood activity, even for displaced people, some of whom continue to live in their camps but return



On 13 May 2013 in El Sereif, North Darfur, Althei Abbakar (age seven), is examined by a medical assistant in a mobile clinic set up by local nongovernmental organisation Anhar for displaced families in the area. Tribal clashes that began in North Darfur in January 2013 resulted in a mass displacement of more than 100,000 people. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

“Although no one knows for sure when comprehensive peace will be achieved, we still dream of it at every opportunity.”

—Safia Saleh

regularly to their homeland to farm it during the appropriate seasons. However, these agricultural activities are frequently hindered by ongoing conflicts.

Many IDPs, especially women, have resorted to activities such as brick-making and creating handcrafted products, such as food covers, mats and other items made from locally available materials such as palm leaves and grass. In most cases, any money earned by an internally displaced person is spent on essential requirements, such as paying children’s school fees, buying medicine for sick family members and, of course, putting food on the table. Consequently, because of the little income IDPs can generate, many of their basic needs regularly go unmet.

Against this backdrop, and in an effort to promote a sense of IDP solidarity, members of IDP camps’ youth unions have started launching initiatives designed to address these challenges. “The Darfuri youth are change-makers,” says Mr. Idrees. “There are a number of things that cannot be accomplished in IDP camps without the efforts of the young” Mr. Idrees says he believes that young people rep-

resent the heart and hope of a community, and that stressing the importance of education and training them in livelihood skills represents the best way forward for displaced populations.

Given the importance of the young people of Darfur, many of whom were born in camps for displaced in the early years of the conflict, UNAMID regularly conducts outreach events that bring young people together in a spirit of peace. In one such event, UNAMID organised a football tournament at the Zam Zam IDP camp in 2013. UNAMID’s Joint Special Representative attended the event and praised the spirit in which the Darfuri youth are coming together to attend and take part in community activities. “Let me thank the young people who have engaged in this healthy competition,” said Dr. Chambas. “It is not important who wins; it is the spirit in which you have been playing together and enjoying yourselves that we have come to celebrate.”

Such sports tournaments are part of a series of activities and events designed by UNAMID to strengthen ties between

the Mission and the IDPs across Darfur with a view toward working together for permanent peace and stability. “We are here in Darfur to provide protection in Zam Zam and other camps, to facilitate humanitarian aid and to work with you in searching for permanent and lasting peace in the region,” said Dr. Chambas.

While there might not be a sizeable job market for young IDPs who have completed their education, Darfur’s broad reconstruction and development efforts have created a class of job vacancies that are suited to those who have specific training in construction, welding and other labour-intensive professional work. There are many Darfur institutions that offer an education path for vocational skills training beyond high school. The university system itself offers some vocational training, but these programmes have limited class sizes and haven’t yet caught up to the demand. The education system in Darfur, while steadily improving following years of conflict that damaged or destroyed basic infrastructure, does not yet have sufficient facilities or offer enough programmes to meet the needs of all the young Darfuris requiring vocational training beyond primary and secondary school.

To help address this shortfall, UNAMID has been implementing a programme called community-based, labour-intensive projects (CLIPs). The CLIPs programme is designed to address several issues in Darfur, including competition over access to vocational training services. Since the commencement of the CLIPs programme in July 2012, UNAMID has implemented more than one dozen CLIPs throughout Darfur, engaging some 2,300 young people. The projects focus not only on developing vocational skills, and in many cases facilitating on-the-job training through community infrastructure rehabilitation and construction, but also on fostering reconciliation across Darfur.

Those working in the CLIPs projects are young men and women typically between 18 and 35 years old. Participation in the projects does not depend on political, movement or tribal affiliation; people with disabilities are encouraged to join. The young people working in the projects—which mostly consist of rebuilding community infrastructure that has been damaged or destroyed—

acquire the kind of livelihood and life skills designed to enhance their employability and social integration. In the process of acquiring these skills, the young people involved in these projects have been rebuilding the infrastructure of their fragile communities.

“We have focused the CLIPs programme in areas where a high rate of unemployment and scarce community facilities have increased the levels of small-scale criminality and fostered social conflict and instability,” says Mr. Aderemi Adekoya, Chief of UNAMID’s Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) section, citing as one example Althoura Shemal, a community located on the outskirts of El Fasher, North Darfur.

“The people of Althoura Shemal are enthusiastic about the new community centre built by 80 local young men and women,” he says. “During the course of this project, the participants developed new skills as masons, painters and electricians; more importantly, they learned how to work as a team.”

While the profiles of CLIPs participants are diverse, the young workers all share a similar passion for acquiring new vocational skills and having a rewarding experience that will lead to potential new careers. UNAMID’s DDR section is now implementing more than one dozen additional CLIPs across Darfur, linking the projects to violence-reduction programmes and other initiatives designed to address the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and an increasing number of ex-combatants.

“Despite the absence of a comprehensive peace agreement, we are seeing real benefits of such projects, particularly as they help young people turn from violence and rebuild their communities,” says Mr. Adekoya. “Without recourse to proper vocational training—a fundamental problem these programmes are designed to address—many young people continue to be drawn into the Darfur conflict in one way or another.”

While progress in high-level peace talks and local-level interventions may signal positive trends, life for IDPs continues to be harsh. As most members of the displaced population will indicate when asked, Mr. Idrees says he does not want to prolong his life as a displaced person. “Staying in the



On 3 July 2013 in East Darfur, young people from in and around El Daein (including football players representing displaced communities) stand together for a photograph before playing a match as part of a welcome programme for the visit of United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

“A lasting peace can never be achieved unless a strong political will and good intentions are shown by the Government and the movements.”

—Siddiq Mohammed

camp is not a choice that we find appealing,” he says, noting that he longs for the time when he can return to his chosen home. However, he explains, such a move requires that the IDPs have a stable security situation and reliable public services in the respective home areas, many of which have been completely decimated from years of conflict. Mr. Idrees points out that the hopes of IDPs returning to their villages are frequently frustrated by setbacks, especially by the new conflicts emerging between tribes.

To help discuss these issues of return and resettlement, more than 400 IDPs from across Darfur, as well as refugees living in neighbouring countries, came together in early 2013 for a two-day conference in Nyala, South Darfur. The forum, facilitated by UNAMID and its partners, was organised within the framework of the DDPD, which stipulates that all stakeholders in the Darfur peace process be able to share their views and contribute to that process. The participants at the conference presented proposals on a host of issues, including return and

resettlement; peace and security; land rights; natural resources; humanitarian aid; and the rights of women and children.

The forum resulted in an agreement by the attending IDPs and refugees on several recommendations, including the formation of a committee to follow up the implementation of the recommendations in partnership with the DRA’s Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission. At the conference, DRA Chairperson Tijani Seisi identified voluntary return as a top priority.

No matter what the conclusions or recommendations of the many forums and consultations held on Darfur might be, IDP leaders are pressing for change. “We need to see the actual translation of words into actions,” Mr. Idrees says. Until the time when resettlement becomes a real possibility, displaced people across Darfur no doubt will continue to face their challenges with the stoic perseverance and dedication that could be considered one of the defining characteristics of the people living in this region.

PROTECTION



On 11 March 2013 in El Fasher, North Darfur, UNAMID Police participate in an event to commemorate International Women's Day. The event, organised under the theme "together to promote the dignity of women and girls," was produced by UNAMID in coordination with UN agencies and the Government of Sudan. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

Police Women Forging Critical Bonds

UNAMID's female Police Advisors are serving in many roles across Darfur, uniquely building trust in communities, assisting in addressing sexual and gender-based violence and promoting the rule of law.

BY SHARON LUKUNKA

As UN peacekeeping operations have evolved to encompass a broader humanitarian approach, an increasing number of women are joining peacekeeping operations. Today, women are deployed in all segments of field operations—in the police, military and civilian components—and continue to make an impact as professionals working in harsh and unforgiving environments. In UNAMID, female Police Advisors serve in many roles and work in all parts of Darfur, patrolling villages and camps for displaced people, assisting in addressing sexual and gender-based violence, building trust among Darfuris and promoting the rule of law.

"The presence of female peacekeepers is essential in Darfur, as the most affected

people here are women and children," says UNAMID Police Commissioner Hester Paneras, who cites incidents of rape as one example of how UNAMID's police women are making an impact. Commissioner Paneras explains that, in Darfur's cultural context, women typically would not report rape or talk about it with male authority figures. "But there is a change now," she says. "My experience is that when they see another woman, their faces light up and find it easier to form a connection; they relate."

This type of bond is exemplified in the work of the female Police Advisors in the Mission. Ms. Julieth Lyimo and Ms. Faidha Suleman, both of whom work as UNAMID Police Advisors in El Geneina, West Darfur, focus on gender issues and child protection

in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). "We work closely with the women in the camps in El Geneina, sharing our personal life experiences with them, lending a hand where we can and advising them on issues of concern," says Ms. Suleman.

Ms. Lyimo and Ms. Suleman, both from Tanzania, accompany UNAMID's Formed Police Unit (FPU) patrols through the camps in the area each morning to meet with displaced women and record their concerns. Each day, while remaining respectful of local tradition and culture, they interact with women and girls at water points or in the market areas to discuss any notable developments, including the security situation and other challenges uniquely affecting women and children in the camps.

“Depending on the topic under discussion, we sensitize them on matters concerning women, such as the dangers of early marriages, the importance of girls’ education, healthcare, hygiene, domestic violence, sexual and gender-based violence, and human and child rights,” says Ms. Suleman. “We also advise them on different sorts of income-generating activities and how to go about them.”

The approach to help improve the lives of women in Darfur has taken many different forms. To build confidence not only in the Mission’s work in particular but also in the peace process in general, UNAMID has implemented several quick-impact projects (QIPs) designed to equip displaced women with skills that will enable them to generate adequate income. One such project resulted in the new El Geneina Women’s Centre, which serves as a safe location where women can meet to learn various skills, prepare food items for sale and discuss issues affecting their communities.

“We have taught women how to bake doughnuts, locally known as *maandazi*, from East Africa, and rice bread commonly prepared in Sierra Leone,” says Ms. Lyimo. “With these new skills, women are able to generate an income that helps take care of their homes as well as send their children to school,” adds Ms. Suleman, noting that the Centre now offers English language classes and serves as a place where UNAMID’s Police Advisors can conduct workshops on sexual and gender-based violence.

Both Ms. Lyimo and Ms. Suleman say they have cultivated lasting and meaningful relationships with the people they have come here to serve. Beyond interacting and reporting in routine patrols, Ms. Lyimo and Ms. Suleman participate in local events and community sports tournaments. “Being transparent to the community, and informing and educating them about our role as UNAMID Police Advisors, helps us gain acceptance,” says Ms. Suleman. “Our presence has led to more women’s involvement in their communities; they are no longer content with being restricted to traditional roles, and are pushing for their own rights and for participation in the peace process.”

“The presence of female peacekeepers is essential in Darfur, as the most affected people here are women and children.”

–Hester Paneras

As a result of workshops, training and other kinds of local-level interaction designed to raise awareness about women’s issues, says Ms. Suleman, more and more women in Darfur are becoming actively involved in security issues and not only are confronting challenges more directly but also are making recommendations to address the unique issues they face. Many other female Police Advisors in the Mission are playing similar roles in Darfur, working with local women to encourage their participation in the peace process and serve as agents of change in their communities.

Police Advisors Margaret Korko from Cameroon and Delphine Karasira from Rwanda, both of whom work in North Darfur, interact regularly with women and children as part of their daily duties. Ms. Korko explains that the presence of and regular interaction with Police Advisors has given Darfuri women, especially those living in IDP camps, access to information that plays a crucial role in developing locally tailored strategies for their protection. “Local women are now able to articulate their concerns with greater clarity and address their issues proactively,” she says.

Ms. Yegeerawork Angagaw, UNAMID’s Senior Gender Affairs Officer and Chief of the Mission’s Gender Advisory Unit, underscores the importance of being sensitive to gender issues in the day-to-day activities of UNAMID’s Police component. “Gender is a cross-cutting issue, and the work of Police Advisors integrates the gender aspect to ensure that any activity they undertake with the community does not perpetuate gender discrimination,” she says. “While patrolling, Police Advisors map out areas where women are facing challenges so their concerns are addressed promptly.”

In addition to interaction while on patrol or during regular workshops, UNAMID Po-

lice Advisors maintain contact with Darfuris through the Mission’s many community policing centres. Police Advisors also work directly with Sudanese Police in what are called co-location centres. The purpose of the co-location centres is to create an environment that builds confidence and trust between the Mission’s Police Advisors and Sudanese Police. This cooperation at the Government and local levels has enabled the Mission to help strengthen rule of law institutions, establish a Police Women’s Network across Darfur and facilitate a more rapid crime reporting and response system.

The Government of Sudan’s Police Women’s Network, in particular, officially launched with the direct support of UNAMID’s Police Advisors. The Network, consisting of Sudanese female police officers working in various roles, is designed to unite these officers through mentoring, training and advocacy, and to promote their role in building community trust, protecting the most vulnerable members of those communities and contributing to the peace and security of Darfur.

Stressing the importance of building confidence in the peace process through such activities, Police Commissioner Paneras explains that, while the responsibilities of Police Advisors and FPU’s in Darfur remain both diverse and numerous, each and every activity of the UNAMID Police component is designed to strengthen Darfur’s many communities and make them more secure. This concept goes to the heart of the Mission’s mandate, as security is a prerequisite for peace. A stable and secure environment, she notes, allows for strengthening rule of law mechanisms and their related institutions, directly and indirectly benefitting Darfur’s communities.

UNAMID’s FPU’s conduct patrols in each of the five Darfur states to serve as a deterrent to violence and contribute to this

Top: On 28 November 2013 in El Fasher, North Darfur, UNAMID Police Advisor Maimouna Andji holds an internally displaced woman's baby during a routine patrol. Police Advisors on patrol interact with displaced men, women and children to identify any issues of concern. Ms. Andji, who is a UNAMID Police focal point for women's issues in Abu Shouk, served in Darfur in 2005 as part of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

Bottom: On 14 July 2013 in Khor Abeche, South Darfur, a UNAMID Police Advisor recovers in a Mission clinic from injuries she suffered during an ambush on 13 July, when seven peacekeepers were killed and 17 military and police personnel were wounded. UNAMID Joint Special Representative Mohamed Ibn Chambas and Police Commissioner Hester Paneras visited the recovering patients. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

environment of safety and security. During these patrols, the FPU officers and attached Police Advisors interact with members of the community to document security incidents that are later analysed to identify appropriate forms of redress with Government authorities, parties to the conflict, IDP communities and UNAMID's partners. The Mission's work at the political and local levels through mediation, conflict resolution and reconciliation initiatives, its work on gender issues, and its work to promote human rights, rule of law, child protection and good governance all are measures designed to create this stable and secure environment that provides protection to civilians.

Ms. Paneras, from South Africa, was appointed as UNAMID's Police Commissioner in June 2013 and has been leading the Mission's Police component in creating stronger connections at Government and community levels to build trust in the Mission's overall mandate-driven objectives, with the ultimate goal of helping to protect Darfur's most vulnerable. "This appointment places a large responsibility on my shoulders," says Paneras. "But, at the same time, it is a stellar opportunity to explore how female police peacekeepers have created and used networks as an effective tool to raise issues affecting them and to empower female counterparts within the domestic police."

The Police Commissioner explains that, given the success of the local-level efforts and the Police Women's Network, one of her goals is to incorporate more women in



"Our presence has led to more women's involvement in their communities; they are no longer content with being restricted to traditional roles, and are pushing for their own rights and for participation in the peace process."
–Faidha Suleman

the Mission. "I led a UN delegation to South Africa for the International Association of Women Police conference," she says. "In my current professional role and, being a woman myself, I intend to advocate for bringing on board women of influence to support peacekeeping operations."

Some 20 years ago, women made up roughly 1 per cent of deployed uniformed personnel in UN operations. In 2012, among approximately 125,000 uniformed peacekeepers around the globe, the number of women

deployed amounted to 3 per cent of military personnel and 10 per cent of police personnel. In 2012, the male-female ratio of personnel at UN headquarters in New York was 52:48; reports indicate the largest disparity was in middle management and at senior levels. In peacekeeping operations and special political missions, these figures are notably different, with women making up 29 per cent of international and 17 per cent of national staff.

In UNAMID's Police component, 16 per cent of the personnel are women, who



Top: On 5 December 2013 in El Fasher, North Darfur, UNAMID Police Advisor Agnus Arooj dances during an event designed to raise awareness about sexual and gender-based violence. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

Bottom: On 20 December 2012 in El Fasher, North Darfur, Sudanese police march during the official launch of the Darfur-wide Police Women's Network, which is designed to unite these officers through support, mentoring, training and advocacy, and to promote their role in building community trust, protecting the most vulnerable members of those communities and contributing to the peace and security of Darfur. Photo by Sojoud Elgarrai, UNAMID.

Like all other military and police officers who are deployed to missions for a fixed time, Ms. Lyimo and Ms. Suleman are ending their tour of duty with UNAMID. These police officers will return to Tanzania, and new recruits will be deployed in their place to continue their work. Both Police Advisors say their efforts have had a significant impact on the local population, especially women. However, both say they are reticent to leave behind the projects they have begun in the communities in which they have worked so diligently to build trust and good will.

While the work of these two Police Advisors has resulted in closer cooperation and stronger ties between the Mission and the communities UNAMID is tasked to help protect, much more work remains to be done to empower women, not only in the IDP camps of El Geneina, but also everywhere else across Darfur. As the peace process moves slowly but steadily forward, this work will include addressing the specific needs of female ex-combatants, mentoring female cadets at Sudanese police and military academies, and encouraging women to make their concerns known in the communities in which they live.

And as the conflict continues, leading to insecurity, instability and criminality, the work will no doubt continue to include conducting interviews with women who have suffered from one form or another of sexual or gender-based violence. In this context, female Police Advisors are helping to reduce conflict and confrontation, serve as role models for the community and facilitate access to and support for skill-building workshops for local women. In doing so, they are working to provide a greater sense of security and ultimately a brighter future to the long-suffering people of Darfur.



come from more than 35 different countries. Rwanda contributes the largest number of female police officers, with more than 100 Rwandese women serving as UNAMID Police Advisors. “We are currently looking at getting more women officers from Arabic-speaking countries,” says the Commissioner. “Recently, we have welcomed a few police women from Jordan to our ranks, and we hope these numbers will increase.”

Ms. Paneras explains that she is working to bring female police officers from Egypt and elsewhere to contribute to peace in Darfur with Arabic-speaking skills. “It is important that women are strongly supported by their countries and encouraged to join police units,” she says, noting that gender parity is a priority for United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General’s “Bridging the Gap” programme is an initiative designed to address some of the barriers to retaining

female staff in the field. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) continues to respond to the call for adding to the numbers of women in peacekeeping, especially in all women-, peace- and security-related mandates, by consistently advocating for the deployment of more women. Consistent with this “Bridging the Gap” initiative, DPKO personnel work to ensure that gender balance is considered as a core part of any plan for staffing peacekeeping operations.

Another important aspect of this “Bridging the Gap” initiative is ensuring the implementation of gender mainstreaming, an undertaking whereby gender perspectives are integrated into all elements of policy development, and especially in the police and the military components of peacekeeping operations. However, the ultimate responsibility for more women being part of peacekeeping mission lies with the individual countries that contribute troops and police to UN missions.

Beyond the Mandate, Driven to Help

In Labado, East Darfur, repeated outbreaks of violence have destroyed most of the area's already aging infrastructure, forcing thousands to approach UNAMID's team site for relief and medical aid.

BY ALBERT GONZÁLEZ FARRAN

As a peacekeeping mission, UNAMID's core mandate is to protect civilians, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and support the peace process in Darfur. However, during its six years of operation, there have been many times when the Mission has been the only actor on the ground capable of providing life-saving support to Darfuris affected by the ongoing conflict. This is the scenario that played out recently in Labado, East Darfur.

An outbreak of fighting between Government troops and an armed movement in April 2013 decimated the Labado area: the main market, the locality's schools and the single healthcare facility were looted and destroyed, in the process displacing approximately 29,000 people from Labado and its surrounding villages to different camps across South, East and North Darfur. A few thousand sought refuge in the vicinity of UNAMID's team site in the area.

Prompt and efficient healthcare is typically one of the most urgent needs of people displaced from their homes. At the time of the Labado displacements, the UNAMID clinic was the only functional medical centre in the area. Recognizing the need, the Mission's team site medics began to address the situation. Since the Labado violence first broke out in April 2013, the Mission's clinic has been treating some 200 patients, mostly women and children, each week.

The most common sicknesses and ailments reported by the UNAMID medical staff near Labado include malaria, typhoid, malnutrition, flu, wounds and eye infections. In addition to helping to heal the wounded and sick, the medical team has assisted in delivering babies and has supported pregnant women experiencing prenatal difficulties.

"Within our limited capacity and resources, we have done everything we could to support the community and save lives," says UNAMID physician Lt. Matthew Gowon, from Nigeria. "We have called on humanitarian agencies to urgently provide necessary

support, particularly medicine, for children and pregnant women."

Toward the end of November 2013, UNAMID succeeded in installing a temporary medical clinic at the camp for the Labado displaced. The clinic, run by medical staff from the Sudanese Red Crescent organisation, relies on medicine provided by the World Health Organisation.

In addition to providing medical aid to the Labado displaced, the Mission has delivered water and educational materials, supplied by UNICEF, for one of Labado's primary schools, which reopened in November 2013 with 945 students in attendance. While the school still lacks desks, chairs, textbooks and other basic items, the Sudanese Ministry of Education has dedicated several teachers to the school. More are expected to arrive soon.

The Mission, along with the humanitarian community, continues to provide support to the people of Labado and its surrounding communities. Following the outbreak of violence in Labado, UNAMID immediately reinforced its security measures in the area and began to conduct regular escort patrols for the displaced people, especially women, who venture out in search of water and firewood.

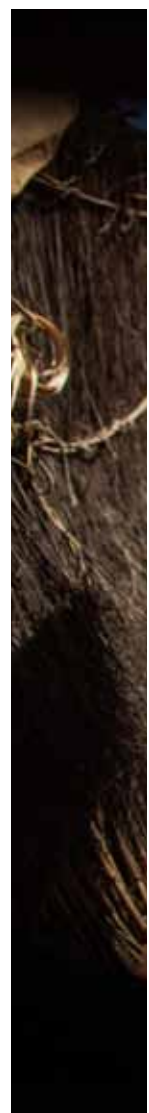
Typically, when a peacekeeping mission assumes humanitarian responsibilities, it moves beyond its core mandate to keep the peace, as UNAMID has done many times since the Mission first deployed in early 2008. Driven by compassion, the peacekeepers working near Labado continue to support the Labado displaced as effectively as they can, meeting the basic needs of those who have no recourse to other assistance.

As this photo essay is designed to illustrate, UNAMID's intervention during the Labado conflict serves as an example of the many instances where the Mission's dedicated peacekeepers have gone beyond the call of duty to aid civilians in a time of need.

1 Adam Abdala Idris, age five, is pictured in his shelter in a camp for displaced people. This camp, located near the UNAMID team site in the Labado area of East Darfur, is populated by people displaced from fighting in and around Labado in April 2013.

2 Children are pictured emerging from a shelter set up to function as a primary school classroom in a camp for people displaced due to the April 2013 Labado violence. Residents of the camp have been receiving assistance from UNAMID peacekeepers stationed in the area.

3 Abubakar Usman and his wife Alina Mohamad Issa are currently living in the temporary camp for people displaced from the Labado area. They are living without any basic services or amenities, and are receiving support from UNAMID peacekeepers nearby.









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Children are pictured in a classroom of the basic school in Labado village. The school reopened in November 2013 after some of the fighting in the area subsided, allowing some residents to return to their homes. The school had been looted and nearly destroyed.

5

Headmaster Abdurrahman Ibrahim helps UNAMID troops provide potable water to the newly reopened basic school in Labado, which still lacks desks, chairs, textbooks and other necessities required by a properly functioning educational institution.

6

Women and children displaced by the Labado conflict wait at the UNAMID team site for medical assistance. Until a temporary clinic was set up at the end of November 2013, the residents of Labado had no recourse to healthcare other than that provided by UNAMID medics.

7

Women and children from Labado wait for assistance from the Mission's medical personnel in a tent installed at the UNAMID team site in the area. Since the Labado violence first broke out, the Mission's medics have been treating some 200 patients each week.

8

UNAMID peacekeepers register displaced women from Labado before they are treated by the Mission's medical personnel. The most common sicknesses reported by the UNAMID medical staff include malaria, typhoid, malnutrition, flu, wounds and eye infections.

9

A peacekeeper helps women and children form a queue as they wait to see a UNAMID medic. In addition to helping heal the wounded and sick, the UNAMID medical team has assisted in delivering babies and has supported pregnant women experiencing prenatal difficulties.



8



9

CHILDREN



Darfur's Efforts to End the Use of Child Soldiers

As children are among the most severely affected by the ongoing conflict in Darfur, steps are being taken to end their participation in the widespread violence in the region.

BY SHARON LUKUNKA

As defined by the Cape Town Principles of 1997 and the Paris Principles of 2007, a “child soldier” is any person under the age of 18 who is part of a regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including, but not limited to, cooks, porters, messengers and those accompanying such groups other than purely as family members. This definition of child soldiers

includes girls recruited for sexual purposes or for forced marriages. This definition does not, therefore, only refer to a child who is carrying or has carried arms in combat.

The reasons children join or are forced to join armed groups are numerous and varied. Some join of their own volition, seeking employment; others are recruited forcibly. Children affiliated with armed movements typi-

cally begin their work in support functions, often carrying heavy loads, including ammunition. Some children act as messengers or cooks, or perform other routine duties.

Mujahid, a 13-year-old former child soldier from El Geneina, West Darfur, says it was his own choice to join an armed movement operating in the area. “We mostly worked as support staff, fetching water for



Far Left: On 26 July 2009 near El Fasher, North Darfur, 25 child soldiers begin the formal process of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. Photo by Olivier Chassot, UNAMID.

Left: On 27 November 2013 in El Fasher, North Darfur, 13-year-old Mujahid receives instructions from his teacher. After several years assisting an armed movement by providing water and food to older combatants, he left the movement to go to school. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

“While all these crucial steps support a certain measure of optimism, an end to the scourge of recruitment and use of children in armed conflict also depends on the collective will of the adults waging war to embrace peace and protect children.”

—Boubacar Dieng

the combatants as well as purchasing food and other essentials from the market,” he says. When asked about his reasons for joining, Mujahid says he initially believed in the movement’s cause. As time went by, he says, his idealism faded because children were not allowed to go to school.

Faiza, another former child soldier, ex-

plains how he became part of an armed group as support staff because his father and brother were part of the movement. “I thought I would be reunited with my family; I didn’t know what was going on,” he says.

The Sudan Armed Forces Act of 2007 and the Sudan Child Act of 2010 criminalize the recruitment and use of child soldiers. To

end the use of child soldiers and protect the rights of children in Darfur, the Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (SDDRC), established in 2007, conducts activities to verify and register child soldiers, and reintegrate them into normal life. These activities are undertaken in Darfur with the support of UNAMID, UN agencies and nongovernmental organisations.

Between 2009 and 2012, SDDRC registered more than 1,000 former child soldiers in Darfur. As part of its mandate, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has been working directly with SDDRC to establish a programme to meet the specific reintegration needs of such children. UNAMID’s Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DRR) section conducts similar work.

Mr. Mohammed Ahmed, a Child Protection Officer working in SDDRC, says that children here are usually recruited by armed groups from their own communities and families. “Children who have witnessed or participated in violence become dehumanized,” he says. “They know something is wrong but are incapable of articulating it; it separates them from their emotions and from normal development far more severely than an adult going through the same experience.”

Mr. Ahmed also says that the steps involved in reintegrating children associated with armed groups are reactive in nature. After their registration, DDR personnel conduct detailed assessments, then work on provisions for the reintegration process, determine social work providers, identify appropriate nongovernmental organisations, develop project proposals and procure funding and resources. “The reintegration process for these children may be delayed



On 20 September 2012 in EL Fasher, North Darfur, field commanders of the Liberation and Justice Movement participate in a workshop session on child rights and child protection conducted by UNAMID's Child Protection component. Photo by Sojoud Elgarrai, UNAMID.

due to verifications, and can take up to two or three years," he explains.

Many children who once were active participants in Darfur's armed conflicts are now being educated full-time; many return to school prior to formal reintegration projects. Free schooling for former child soldiers is available in three of Darfur's states. In some cases, as is to be expected, there is a certain amount of antipathy directed toward these new students, so SDDRC has set up dedicated centres where ex-child combatants can acquire skills, engage in sporting activities and receive psychological counselling. The programmes conducted in these centres are supported by the Sudanese Ministry of Social Affairs at the state level and the Child Protection Networks at the community level.

Mujahid and Faiza, both 13-year-old boys, were among more than 80 children released from their work as child soldiers after their movement signed a peace agreement with the Government. Both boys are currently enrolled in school at the Al Nasri Community Centre in El Fasher, North Darfur; others, released at the same time, are enrolled at various vocational centres around the region. On 12 December 2013, 30 former child soldiers graduated from Nyala Technical School after a six-month training programme in carpentry and welding in South Darfur.

UNAMID's Child Protection component has been working directly with armed groups in Darfur to eliminate the use of child soldiers through the establishment of action plans that commit the groups to end the recruitment and use of children for conflict. While there is much evidence to indicate a groundswell of change has been steadily gathering momentum to end the use of child soldiers in Darfur, much more work remains to be done.

To date, armed movements listed in the Secretary-General's reports for recruitment and use of child soldiers have taken steps in compliance with United Nations Security Council resolutions. Sudan Liberation Army-Free Will (SLA-FW), Sudan Liberation Army-Mother Wing (SLA-MW), Justice and Equality Movement-Peace Wing (JEM-PW) and Sudan Liberation Army-Historical Leadership (SLAHL) have established action plans indicating their commitment to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers, and have taken measures to prevent further recruitment.

SLA-FW formally submitted its action plan to the United Nations in June 2010 and filed a progress report in August 2010, confirming the submission to SDDRC of a list of former child soldiers. Similarly, JEM-PW submitted an action plan in December 2010 and filed a progress report in May 2011 after providing a list of former child soldiers to SDDRC. In October 2011, JEM-PW

submitted its final progress report, confirming the registration with SDDRC of child soldiers. In its final report, the movement indicated it would be converting to a political party, and that it had registered with SDDRC all the children associated with it.

SLA-MW submitted an action plan in August 2010, issued an order prohibiting recruitment and use of child soldiers and registered former child soldiers with SDDRC. Meanwhile, SLA-HL adopted an action plan in 2011 and in January 2013 identified and registered with SDDRC former child soldiers that the movement had earlier released. Currently, these four movements—SLA-FW, SLA-MW, JEM-PW and SLA-HL—are not militarily active parties to the conflict and reports indicate there has been no evidence of new recruitment into their ranks.

Even though not listed in the Secretary-General's reports on armed movements and forces using child soldiers, the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM), a signatory of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), adopted an action plan on child soldiers in May 2012 to prevent violations related to children in armed conflicts. In support of LJM's initiative, UNAMID has provided training on child rights and child protection to LJM commanders, combatants and supporters.

In January 2012, UNAMID leadership engaged in discussions with JEM leadership and formally met in July 2012, following which, in September 2012, the movement issued a command order to its members prohibiting the recruitment and use of child soldiers. In September 2012, the movement signed and established an action plan and later appointed a committee tasked with the plan's implementation.

In November 2012, UNAMID leadership held a meeting with Adul Wahid al Nur, chair of the Abdul Wahid faction of the Sudan Liberation Army to discuss the establishment of an action plan. The November 2012 meeting resulted in the issuance of an order by the movement's lead commander prohibiting the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

The most recent breakthrough in ending the use of child soldiers in Darfur occurred on 17 December 2013, when Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi (SLA-MM) issued a command order prohibiting the recruitment and use of child soldiers. The order also included a provision for all field

commanders of SLA-MM to follow up on its implementation. This command order resulted from a meeting chaired in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, by UNAMID Joint Special Representative and Joint Chief Mediator Mohamed Ibn Chambas.

UNAMID is undertaking this work to end the use of child soldiers in Darfur in a peacekeeping context in which, technically, there is no comprehensive peace agreement in place. “Unlike typical peacekeeping operations where the DDR programme is usually within the framework of a comprehensive peace agreement, Darfur is an exceptional case because no comprehensive peace agreement exists here,” says UNAMID DDR Chief Aderemi Adekoya. “The efforts of the UNAMID DDR section are focused on community-oriented programmes designed to set the stage for formal DDR activities, fostering trust at the local level and supporting programmes to move the peace process steadily forward.”

UNAMID’s DDR section has been working within a framework that has come to be known as second-generation DDR. Rather than focusing exclusively on formal DDR activities, second-generation DDR takes a more organic approach in focusing on peace and security at the community level, and ensuring the involvement of these communities in the peace process. As one part of this second-generation approach, UNAMID’s DDR section has been implementing a violence-reduction strategy that has taken several forms in practice, most notably in community-based, labour-intensive projects (CLIPs).

These community projects are designed to support the efforts of the Government of Sudan in addressing the needs of at-risk young people and other vulnerable groups in communities and in camps for displaced people. The projects focus not only on developing vocational skills, and in many cases facilitating on-the-job training through community infrastructure rehabilitation and construction, but also on fostering reconciliation across Darfur. So far, the CLIPs conducted in Darfur are designed to address issues associated with large groups of at-risk young people who lack employment opportunities and thus may turn to armed movements or criminal behaviour to earn a living.

Competition over access to the educational services that are offered has been a



On 12 August 2009, UNICEF and UNAMID successfully complete a children’s disarmament programme in Kafod, North Darfur, in a ceremony attended by armed movement commanders as well as Sudanese and foreign officials. Photo by Nektarios Markogiannis, UNAMID.

“The efforts of the UNAMID DDR section are focused on community-oriented programmes designed to set the stage for formal DDR activities, fostering trust at the local level.”

—Aderemi Adekoya

source of tension that CLIPs are designed to address. Since the commencement of the programme in July 2012, DDR has implemented 17 CLIPs in 14 different localities throughout Darfur, engaging more than 2,300 young people. The young people working in the projects—which mostly consist of rebuilding community infrastructure that has been damaged or destroyed—acquire the kind of livelihood and life skills designed to enhance their employability and social integration. In the process of acquiring these skills, the young people involved in these projects have been rebuilding the infrastructure of their fragile communities.

Another aspect of the Mission’s work is to conduct training sessions for members of armed movements who have signed the DDPD. On 8 December 2013, UNAMID conducted a DDPD workshop for members of Justice and Equality Movement-Sudan (JEM-Bashar), focusing on the DDPD provisions related to disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration activities.

“Clearly, progress in eliminating the use of child soldiers in Darfur depends on de-

velopments such as these,” says Mr. Bou-bacar Dieng, Chief of UNAMID’s Child Protection component. “While all these crucial steps support a certain measure of optimism, an end to the scourge of recruitment and use of children in armed conflict also depends on the collective will of the adults waging war to embrace peace and protect children.”

Despite evidence indicating that the end of using child soldiers is steadily gathering momentum here, much more work remains to be done. It is evident that UNAMID, the Government of Sudan, armed movements and communities across Darfur are united in protecting Darfur’s young people. Peace in Darfur remains an interest shared by everybody—including Sudan, the international community and, above all, the long-suffering people of Darfur. There cannot be an inclusive peace in Darfur if the region’s most vulnerable population—its children—are drawn into conflict and continue to be socially detached and disenfranchised, having no educational or vocational choices other than combat. ■

Darfur's Contours: An Interview with Artist Sayida Omar Adam

In an interview with *Voices of Darfur*, Ms. Sayida Omar Adam talks about her passion for painting and how she sees her art as an expression of Darfur's desire for peace.

BY ALA MAYYAH



Artist Ms. Sayida Omar Adam displays three of her paintings in her studio in El Fasher, North Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

As one of the few female artists in Darfur, Ms. Sayida Omar Adam has made her mark with bold, colourful canvases that she says reveal her hopes for a bright future. Detailed patterns and traditional symbolism combine with depictions of men and women together into what she says is an expression of her firm belief in equal participation for women in various aspects of a Darfur's life.

Born in 1979, Ms. Adam grew up in El Fasher, North Darfur, as the daughter of parents who supported her interest in and appreciation for art. She holds a Bachelors degree in painting, with a special focus on colour, from the College of Fine and Applied Arts at Sudan University.

In an interview with *Voices of Darfur*, Ms. Adam talked about the artistic process, what inspires her and the different tools and techniques she uses to imbue her work with the depth of insight demanded by her personal creative vision.

Voices of Darfur: Tell us a bit about when your love for art first started to flow-

er. When did you decide to be a painter?

Adam: When I was a child, my father used to referee football matches; he would often take me to the stadium at El Fasher University (then called Dar Al Baydha). I would sit atop the podium and enjoy the wide expanse of nature in front of me. It made me want to draw it.

Later, my father worked in blacksmithing, making chairs and window frames. He would add artistic metal details to his pieces using his own hands rather than depending on pre-moulded casts. This captured my attention. My mother also made leather artifacts with colourful engravings and lines. She would use wooden pieces to spread colours on the leather surface; this fascinated me as well. Since that time, I have always been drawn to any mode of artistic expression.

The first time I drew something was in primary school. I used to fill the pages of all my exercise books with drawings, a fact that got me into trouble with some of

my teachers. However, there were others who loved art and recognized my talent. They encouraged me. Soon, the school management started asking me to make illustrations for study materials.

Since I was still a little girl, I didn't know that I could study painting later in life, so I wanted to be a doctor, like most children in Sudan. In the fifth grade, I discovered a college in Khartoum that teaches the arts, and I decided to specialize in painting.

VoD: How did your family react when you told them that you wanted to study painting in Khartoum?

Adam: Studying in Khartoum wasn't a problem because I had relatives there. As for specializing in painting, it wasn't a surprise to them as they were well-versed with my passion; I was either drawing or designing something most of the time, instead of playing with my siblings. Today, I feel deeply grateful to them for supporting me in studying painting because it greatly boosted my skills and my confidence in my own abilities.

VoD: Was there a particular artist whose work you liked and who inspired you to draw?

Adam: In terms of classic international artists, I like Van Gogh paintings for their bold and diversified colour schemes as well as strong brush strokes. I admire other artists who are not well-known. For example, my cousin, who was a teacher when I was 14 years old, often made pieces for her house. I liked her work a lot even though she wasn't a professional painter. She used to give me colours and tools to draw; this gave me a big impetus to continue with art.

VoD: Tell us about the exhibitions you have held so far.

Adam: I participated in three exhibitions jointly with other artists. Two of these were in Khartoum—one was held at my University to showcase the works of graduates; the other was held at the opening of Finance 2010. The third exhibition was in El Fasher in 2012 at the Culture House. I also had an individual exhibition in 2009 at the Kosti National School, White Nile.

I would like to organise another individual exhibition, but I cannot afford the expenses currently. At present, I am showing my paintings on my Facebook page, which is, in my opinion, a good alternative forum to display artwork for any artist.

VoD: You use symbolic shapes in your paintings. Are these related to your Darfuri heritage?

Adam: All symbols in my paintings can be found within the heart of my Darfuri heritage. They are strongly connected to the social and psychological nature of our society. Our local culture has always been a major source of inspiration for me, in terms of content, form and colour. For instance, the incense burner, which appears in several of my pictures, is used in perfuming the house, a common practice among married women in Darfur. Women usually clean and perfume the house to create a pleasant atmosphere for their husbands when they return from work in the farm or in the city. This tradition reflects how Darfuri women nurture their relationship with their husbands.

Another shape I draw often is palm fronds. The fronds signify peace in Sudan and are similar to the olive branch



Artist Ms. Sayida Omar Adam works on a new painting in her studio. In addition to relying on traditional paintbrushes, Ms. Adam uses various implements, such as palette knives and other tools, to create layers of texture in her artwork. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

“All symbols in my paintings can be found within the heart of my Darfuri heritage. They are strongly connected to the social and psychological nature of our society.”

in other countries. One more recurrent theme is the falcon; found everywhere in Darfur, this bird stands for courage and bravery, often considered to be the distinguishing traits of Darfuri men.

VoD: Figures of men and women are also present together in many of your paintings; what do you hope to express through this?

Adam: My intention is not to highlight romance, but rather to express the importance of participation of women in all aspects of life. Men and women are partners in establishing families, laying the foundations of a good society as well as facing various life situations.

Darfuri women have proved to be strong and capable in managing issues of the house and taking care of children, especially in these difficult, conflict-ridden times. Yet, society often views women as weak and incomplete. Thus, I give women ample space in my work to emphasize her strength and importance.

VoD: What tools do you use and how do they affect the final look of a painting?

Adam: I use more than one tool in creating a painting—knives and brushes,

sometimes my fingers, or a piece of cloth or even plastic; anything I might find around me. Each tool gives a certain density and different texture to a work. I incorporate multiple textures in a painting to give it depth. As for backgrounds, I use either canvas or wooden boards. In terms of paints, I mostly prefer oil-based and acrylic colours, especially for large paintings.

VoD: And what about colour? How do you use colours in expressing a subject?

Adam: I mostly like warm hues such as red and orange and their various shades. Of course, each colour gives a certain meaning and has a psychological affect both in terms of the artist and the receiver. For example, I use blue to denote the sky and a divine protective influence when I draw a Darfuri woman in a faraway, empty land carrying a pile of wood on her head.

I use yellow to signify the earth, stability and belonging, while green implies fertility. Generally, I like using colour as it is, but I do mix and match occasionally to have a variety of new tones.



A painting created by Ms. Sayida Omar Adam, an El Fasher artist who says she focuses heavily on the cultural heritage of Darfur in her work and makes a special point of including images of women in her art. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.

“I feel I have a huge amount of energy to produce good art and to depict beauty in my paintings. Like all other artists who resonate with their homeland, I feel I have enough energy to bring peace to Darfur.”

VoD: How would you describe your style in general and have you reached the artistic level you have desired?

Adam: My paintings combine abstract styles and primitivism. This is not easy as it requires a high level of skill in different tools and techniques, and a solid foundation in drawing. Rich mental reserves are necessary to capture elements of nature and the environment around us. I love this style because it is imbued with meaning and uniqueness.

My achievements so far reflect only a small part of my ambitions as an artist. Art is an ongoing process of search and improvement; once that stops, the artist is finished. I feel I have a huge amount of energy to

produce good art and to depict beauty in my paintings, whether in the form of a bird, a child, a road, a tent or in the single leaf of a tree. Like all other artists who resonate with their homeland, I feel I have enough energy to bring peace to Darfur.

VoD: How can Darfuri artists participate in bringing peace to Darfur?

Adam: Darfuri artists can help the cause of peace immensely by creating works of art that attract people from different spectrums, and by conducting art activities that support messages of peace. From my personal observation, people in Darfur are eager to appreciate good art and long for social and cultural activities. A few months ago, an art exhibition, accompanied by music, was held

for several artists in El Naqaa Square in the El Fasher city market. Lots of people attended; even children, accompanied by parents, came to watch. People gathered in an atmosphere of peace and joy; it was as if the conflict didn't exist. This reflects what artists can currently achieve in Darfur.

VoD: Are there relatively few women painters in Darfur? Or do they lack recognition despite large numbers?

Adam: There are very few women painters in Darfur. Art demands dedication and boldness along with societal acceptance. However, there are lots of women who work in related industries, such as making baskets, pottery and leather items. Such products sell well locally because they find utility in daily life and, thus, provide extra income to those who make them.

VoD: If we compare the fine arts in Khartoum with those in Darfur, will we find stark differences between the two?

Adam: Art in Darfur is original and very expressive because the Darfuri artist lives within a rich natural environment. In Khartoum, the quantity of art production is larger and artists have more means to display and sell their work compared to Darfuri artists.

VoD: Looking at the current situation with regard to art in Darfur, how would you describe its development?

Adam: Art in Darfur is like a dying child. It was born recently but is not getting adequate care, which is necessary for it to flourish.

VoD: If peace is achieved in Darfur, what will be the next priority for artists?

Adam: They will need moral and material support, such as showrooms and exhibition halls for raising community awareness about the importance of the arts. Also, we should have a large piece of public art in every city representing the tragedies of the conflict to serve as a reminder not resort to violence ever again.

VoD: Besides painting, do you dabble in any other form of art?

Adam: Currently, I design Sudanese thobes and do henna drawings as well. This supplements my income. But, first and foremost, I am a painter.

VoD: Is there anything you would like to tell people through Voices of Darfur?

Adam: I would like to say that we have had enough tears. It is time we looked with hope and aspiration toward the future. ■



Artist Ms. Sayida Omar Adam smiles as she displays one of her paintings in her studio in El Fasher, North Darfur. Photo by Albert González Farran, UNAMID.



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