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**BRIEFING BY**

**DR. SALIM AHMED SALIM**  
**AU SPECIAL ENVOY FOR DARFUR,**

**TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL**

**NEW YORK**

**24 JUNE 2008**

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Your Excellency, Mr. Secretary General,

Your Excellency the Current President of the Security Council,

Excellencies distinguished members of the Council,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me at the outset, to congratulate you Mr. Chairman for your assumption of duty, as president of the Council for the month of June.

I am honored and privileged today to address your august Council, jointly with my dear colleague and friend Jan Eliasson, Special Envoy of the United Nations, on the situation in Darfur, with particular emphasis on the status of the peace process.

It is indeed for the first time, since our appointment by the African Union Chairperson and the UN Secretary General respectively, following the High Level Consultations between the African Union, the United Nations and the Government of the Sudan, held in Addis Ababa, on 16 November 2006, that we have the opportunity to do

so. We briefed the African Union Peace and Security Council few days ago, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month.

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I should like to express to you all my deep gratitude for this great opportunity which will in no doubt enable us, after a deep and through analysis of the difficulties encountered and the challenges ahead, to chart a way forward so as to bring to an end the indescribable sufferings and untenable misery of the Darfur population, in particular those of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees. Please permit me to place on record our deepest appreciation for the support and encouragement my colleague and I have received from both the African Union and the United Nations and which has given us the necessary strength to pursue the noble goal of peace, despite all the obstacles on the long and winding path.

It was our considered view, after these long months we spent together endeavoring to fulfill, at the best of our capacities, the daunting, challenging but exhilarating mandate given to us, i.e. to re-energize the political process, that we should share with you our assessment of the present situation as well as inform you of the tremendous and multifarious efforts exerted with the appreciated

assistance of the capable and dedicated Joint Mediation Support Team we established in Khartoum and in conjunction with the regional and international partners, various Darfur stakeholders and peace lovers.

My counterpart Jan Eliasson gave you a detailed account of the various attempts, intensive consultations, road maps, work plans, programmes and strategies, we, our partners and the larger international community conceived and put in place with a view to bringing the parties to the negotiation table. I fully agree with the views he expressed and the recommendations he put forward in his briefing, so as to address the situation in a more vigorous and proactive manner, if we want to rapidly find a durable solution to the long standing Darfur crisis.

Our mandate, as you would recall, has been to create conditions propitious for the Parties, the Government of Sudan and the Movements, to engage in a more inclusive political dialogue leading to a more accepted political settlement of the Darfur problem. Let me say, in earnest frankness that the efforts did not yield the expected results.



The reasons for the failure to produce any success in the various endeavors are known.

Without going into the details, we can cite the un-preparedness, unwillingness and some times pure refusal to accept any proposal of formal or informal talks on whatever subject without a litany of unrealistic and unacceptable pre-conditions, put forward by some movements to enter into any kind of negotiations, the option for military solution chosen by some groups, the claim by others that they are the only representatives of the aspirations of the entire Darfurians and their inclination to exclude all other movements or individuals which they tag as insignificant in terms of representativity or recognized constituency on the ground, the continued fragmentation of the movements. We can add to these, the inability for some of them to articulate a clear common political platform with defined objectives and priorities for the well being of the populations they claim to defend, lack of structured leadership, command and control, shifting of goal post, increased banditry activities by armed groups and militias, deterioration of the security situation, the agonizingly slow deployment of UNAMID with its corollary the evaporation of expectations and hope for a better security and protection for the civilians pinned on it, further complications in the

strained relations between Chad and Sudan, absence of a firm and visible commitment and resolve on the part of those who can use their leverage on the parties..

We owe to fairness and impartiality to say that the Government of Sudan has so far always told us and made public in no uncertain terms their readiness to enter into any negotiations with the movements. Nevertheless, following the recent JEM attack against Omdurman, the GoS labeled that movement as a "terrorist organization" and said that it would not negotiate with it. However we continue to believe that you do not negotiate with friends. You negotiate with your foes. Despite this act which was condemned by the international community, the door of dialogue between all the protagonists should remain open. Everybody should be convinced as the international community is that there will not be no military solution. We ought to also mention that the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A)-Unity has so far responded positively to our initiatives.

## **Excellencies Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is time now that we face the realities. We can say without any embarrassment that the amount of efforts, intensive consultations, persuasion, flexibility and accommodation, understanding, patience, impartiality, pro-activeness, in other words all what is required from a mediation, within the limits of what is humanly possible to do in order to jump start a peace process, were met by procrastination, rigidity, intransigency and refusal of even mere informal consultations on an issue which remains the top priority preoccupation of the Darfurian: security.

From a common stand point with the regional and international partners, we came to the conclusion that most of the parties are not prepared for the substantive talks in the mean time, thus plunging the peace process into a deep stalemate, despite our continued engagement with them inside and outside Darfur. And a significant breakthrough that was achieved with the reduction of the factions into five major groups.

The regional and international partners, who can do so, should be urged to use their respective comparative advantages to press upon

the movements to accept to go for negotiations. The responsiveness of the parties to the peace process should be seen as evidence of true desire for peace in Darfur and should be rewarded. Pressure and award of incentives should be resorted to in a fair and transparent manner.

The rapid deployment of UNAMID and the provision of the required strength and equipment are a prerequisite for ensuring a minimum of security on the ground which would contribute to creating a propitious environment for substantive talks. It is difficult to make any Sudanese interlocutor accept the fact that the entire international community has been unable to provide 24 helicopters to UNAMID. However, we should also keep in mind that the even if the needed personnel and equipment are deployed, the Hybrid Force will still need the full cooperation of all parties to correctly execute its tasks.

Furthermore, an effective support should be provided to the Contact Group and its mechanisms established to monitor the implementation of the Dakar and other agreements in the framework of efforts to normalize relations between Sudan and Chad. The resolution of the conflict in Darfur is largely contingent on



the restoration of normalcy in the region bordering the two countries.

Arms are still flooding into Darfur in a large scale, despite the existence of an arms embargo. They must have come from somewhere. The issue has yet to be tackled seriously so that measures are taken to cut the sources of armament. This was done elsewhere why it can not be done in Darfur. A more energetic engagement with the civil society in this particular junction was strongly recommended by the Geneva consultations that the Mediation organized on 4 and 5 June 2008 with the regional and international partners.

### **Excellencies**

#### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Before I conclude, I should like to underline the need for the AU PSC and the UNSC to urgently take necessary measures to send the right and strong messages to the Parties to make them shoulder their responsibilities. The two institutions should be more engaged. The role of the Special Envoys has a rather limited scope. So is the case for the Joint Chief Mediator whose appointment should be

accelerated, because he will need time to understand the complexity of the situation and to gradually build confidence and trust amongst the Parties. We should not raise unreasonable expectations with the arrival of the Mediator. Naturally if the movements agree to have common positions on the substantive issues, the work of the Mediation will be accordingly facilitated.

The Mediation will continue its shuttle diplomacy to engage the parties on security as well as on substantive issues. To succeed it needs the concrete and decisive support of all. There is no other choice than to keep the political process moving. We shall continue to engage the GoS and the movements and other stakeholders. But everybody has to understand that we do not have all the time at our disposal. We shall still continue to push for the reduction of the level of violence. A security meeting will be preliminary to obtaining gradual commitments of all the parties including the GoS to a final agreement on COH and ceasefire.

I am of the view that the above mentioned recommendations could constitute the basis for convening as quickly possible, the High Level Meeting with the participation of Foreign Ministers of the Permanent members of the Security Council, representatives of the

Government of Sudan, regional and international partners to take a workable decision to bring the Sudanese parties to the negotiation table. The meeting which was proposed during the Geneva consultations should be convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations and the Chairperson of the African Union, following adequate preparations.

I thank you