



Sudan

Activist Brief

The conflict in Darfur, in western Sudan, has led to some of the worst human rights abuses imaginable, including systematic and widespread murder, torture, rape, abduction, looting, and forced displacement. Since February 2003, 300,000 civilians have been killed by conflict-related causes, and 2.6 million have been displaced, including some 250,000 who are refugees in eastern Chad.

On July 31, 2007, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1769 authorizing a hybrid **United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur** (UNAMID) of 26,000 peacekeepers with the mandate to protect civilians. On January 1, 2008, UNAMID began deploying. **More than one year later, just over 60% of the force has been deployed, and it still lacks essential equipment such as helicopters.** The failure of the international community to provide UNAMID what it needs has left civilians at the mercy of armed groups operating in Darfur – government soldiers, *Janjawid* militias, rebel forces, and bandits.

Darfur is the largest humanitarian aid operation in the world, supporting 4.7 million men, women, and children to varying degrees. **On March 4, 2009, the government of Sudan expelled 13 international humanitarian aid organizations and shut down 3 domestic aid organizations operating in Darfur and across Sudan.**

(Organizations working in South Sudan were exempted from the government's order.) The aid agencies that were expelled account for half the aid that is distributed in Darfur. According to the UN, without the assistance of these 13 organizations, 1.1 million people will be without food, 1.5 million without medical care, and more than 1 million without drinking water. Aid agencies that remain are under daily threat due to rampant insecurity throughout the region.



The government's decision to expel or suspend 16 aid operations followed a decision by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to issue an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al

Bashir on seven charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Some UN member states and international organizations, such as the African Union and the League of Arab States, are calling for the UN Security Council to defer the case against President Bashir using Article 16 of the Rome Statute, the ICC's founding treaty.

The warrant is entirely unrelated to the issue of humanitarian access and must not in any way prevent access to basic food, water, and medicine. Under the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, which Sudan has ratified, the Sudanese government is obliged to refrain from actions that violate the economic, social, and cultural rights of its citizens and to seek international assistance if it is unable to carry out its obligations.

AI's Concerns and Demands

1. United Nation member states **must fulfill their commitments to provide UNAMID with troops, funding, and equipment**, in particular ground and air transport equipment, without further delay. Until UNAMID is fully deployed with all essential equipment, it cannot fulfill its mandate to protect civilians.
2. The government of Sudan must **reverse its decision expelling and suspending 16 aid organizations** from operating in Darfur and across Sudan and allow these organizations to resume their life-saving work.
3. The **United States should be commended for taking a strong public stand in support of justice for Darfur**, and it should remain firm in opposing efforts to defer the case against Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. **It is critical that the U.S. continue to be a leader on Article 16 and stand out publicly and firmly on this issue as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.** Any deals that would allow those responsible for abuses committed in Darfur to evade accountability will only serve to undermine security in the long-term

Take Action !

Online Actions

Millions of civilians deprived of aid by the Sudanese government

www.amnestyusa.org/page.php?id=762

Urge the international community to fulfill its commitments on the peacekeeping force in Darfur

www.amnestyusa.org/page.php?id=766

Urge the U.S. to support accountability for crimes committed in Darfur

www.amnestyusa.org/page.php?id=763

Press investors in Sudan's oil industry to take a stand for the people of Darfur.

www.amnestyusa.org/page.php?id=767

Grassroots Activity

Displaced Education and Advocacy Project

www.amnestyusa.org/darfur/displaced

Learn More !

Darfur campaign website

Includes recent press releases and statements

www.amnestyusa.org/darfur

Video

The People of Darfur

www.youtube.com/watch?v=enlHXosKt8o

Report

Sudan: Empty Promises on Darfur: International community fails to deliver

www.amnestyusa.org/document.php?id=ENGAFR540012009

Updates

Blog: Check out the AIUSA Blog for regular updates on the situation in Darfur

<http://blog.amnestyusa.org/tag/darfur>

Web Feed: Sign up for the "Darfur News Feed"

www.amnestyusa.org/rss/en/darfur.xml

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<http://www.amnestyusa.org/iar>

Check out the "Amnesty International: Support & Defend Human Rights Worldwide" cause on **facebook** and network with other human rights activists around the world