

AFRICAN UNION  
الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE  
UNIÃO AFRICANA

---

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P.O. Box: 3243 Tel. (251-1) 51 38 22 Fax: (251-1) 51 93 21  
Email: [situationroom@africa-union.org](mailto:situationroom@africa-union.org)

---

8603<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the United Nations Security Council

26 August 2019, New York

**Briefing on UNAMID By  
Ambassador Smail Chergui  
AU Commissioner for Peace and Security**

*As delivered*

1. Madam President, I wish to express my sincere thanks to you for giving me the opportunity to update the Council, on behalf of African Union Commission, on the situation in Darfur and the work of UNAMID since the adoption of the communique of the 856<sup>th</sup> meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council, on 13 June, and resolution 2479, adopted by the UN Security Council on 27 June 2019. I am honored to do so alongside my dear friend Jean-Pierre Lacroix.

**Distinguished members of the Council,**

2. For the past decade or so, UNAMID has remained a commendable illustration of synergy between the AU and the United Nations in responding to the needs of humanity and addressing the odd effects of conflict and political instability.

3. At the outset, I wish to congratulate the people of Sudan on the signing of the landmark constitutional declaration two weeks ago. This is a remarkable milestone, ushering the country into a new phase of its political history and towards consolidating democracy and peace.

4. Madam President, against the background of fast evolving political developments in Sudan that culminated in the collapse of the former Government of National Congress Party (NCP), UNAMID continued to implement its mandate as set out in resolutions 2429 and 2479. As the AU, we support the delay in the drawdown plan to reduce the military component ceiling to 4,050, in order to allow the Mission to protect its sites and installations, particularly at the logistics hub in El Fasher, therefore, maintaining a strength of 4,375.

5. The overall security situation in Darfur remains volatile, with intermittent armed clashes between the Government forces and the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) around Golo in Jebel Mara. During the reporting period, the SLA/AW has abducted local civilians and staff of INGOs for ransom, robbed commercial trucks and looted property of local medical and humanitarian organizations.

6. Notwithstanding the relatively improved security situation in Darfur, IDPs continue to express security concerns mainly increased criminality, farm destructions and unlawful land occupation issues. With the outset of the farming season in June, tensions are growing between farmers and herders, with the latter depriving the former of access to their land. This has resulted in increased attacks by the pastoralists against the local farmers and IDPs across Darfur. The removal of various government officials and redeployment of some of the government security forces to Khartoum has created administrative and security gaps presenting a challenge in effectively managing tensions and providing basic services to the populations.

7. The current farming season is likely to witness more land-related violence, which may affect the harvest prospects. In this regard, UNAMID has put in place measures to reduce tensions and threats, including by intensifying inclusive engagement with communities and national stakeholders, while simultaneously laying the foundation for peacebuilding as part of the Mission's transition process.

8. UNAMID continues to engage the Government to further strengthen mechanisms for addressing human rights concerns in Darfur. The Mission also conducted monitoring, investigation and verification of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law committed in the region.

9. The inadequate footprint and capacity of rule of law institutions in Darfur including judiciary, police, prosecutions and prisons outside the main urban centers, continued to have an adverse impact on the security situation and in ensuring accountability for serious crimes and human rights violations. The prevalence of crime including conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), has been reported in the Greater Jebel Marra area, including Golo, Kass, Kabkabiya and other parts of Darfur.

10. Furthermore, the root causes of conflicts and continuing inter-communal conflicts arising from issues related to land and other conflict drivers remain unaddressed and conflicts involving armed movement of SLA/AW continues to result in displacements in many Jebel Mara areas.

11. Madam President, on the political front, following sustained efforts and intense pressure from the Joint AU and Ethiopian mediation as well as the international community, the TMC and FFC have agreed on a Political Declaration and Constitutional Document signed on 17 July and 17 August, respectively. These two documents, in particular the Constitutional Document, provide for a power sharing arrangement during a transitional period of thirty- nine months while outlining the key priorities of the transitional government during this period.

12. In that regard, the first six months of the transition will be devoted to peace negotiations and achieving a comprehensive peace in all conflict areas of Sudan, including Darfur, the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states. The Constitutional Document devotes a separate chapter on comprehensive peace issues detailing the peace process and special measures that will be taken to achieve a comprehensive peace and to address the root causes of the conflicts in Sudan. However, the armed movements, represented by the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), which are also members of the FFC, are of the view that their concerns have not been sufficiently reflected in these documents, as agreed between the SRF and the FFC in Addis Ababa on 25 July 2019.

13. Meanwhile, in my discussions with the President of the Sovereign Council, Lt. General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the Prime Minister, Dr. Abdalla Hamdok, I stressed that the inclusion of armed movements in the peace process is a top priority.

14. With uncertainties about the directions the peace negotiations would take, the implementation of the DDPD remained stalled. The Constitutional Document, which governs the transition period in Sudan, provides for the completion of a comprehensive peace no later than six months from its signing. It also stipulates that past peace agreement reached between the government of Sudan and the armed movements shall be reviewed to address its shortcomings and to ensure comprehensive peace is achieved. In view of these fast moving developments, it is important that the armed movements are fully engaged in the political process.

15. So far, stakeholders seem to hold divergent views on the way forward. But, it is our considered view that the Sudanese stakeholders and the international community have invested a lot in the Doha Process, and it should continue to serve as a base for our efforts to an early conclusion of the conflict. Bringing the negotiations to Khartoum as an alternative, may, however, require an agreement on cessation of hostilities and strong security guarantees for the armed movements.

16. Moreover, it is important that the international community, at this critical juncture, comes with a coordinated approach and see how best to support the peace process in order to ensure inclusivity and a successful outcome. Moreover, it is important to note that the leader of SLA/AW Abdul Wahid Nour and the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N) Abdelaziz El Hilu still remain outside the peace process and continue to refuse engaging; and it is imperative that they are persuaded to join the process, otherwise they will remain spoilers. Allow me to stress this once again, that it is imperative that they are persuaded to join the process, otherwise they will remain spoilers.

17. In conclusion, it is worth noting that the current political environment and the changes taking place in Sudan provide a unique opportunity for ending the armed conflicts and for achieving comprehensive and lasting peace in Darfur and Sudan as a whole. The international community should seize this opportunity to demand a constructive engagement of all concerned actors.

18. I wish to confirm that the African Union and the United Nations will continue their joint efforts to be at the forefront and provide full support for Sudan's efforts and for the fulfilment of the aspirations of the people of Darfur and the rest of Sudan for lasting and just peace.

I thank you for your kind attention.