Inclusive Security: Women Waging Peace

Addressing the Crisis in Darfur

Women at refugee camp, Darfur (photo by Linda Mason)

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Addressing the Crisis in Darfur

"What is happening in Darfur has raised awareness in all the world, not only Darfur. I've seen how concerned people are about Darfur and the women here. It's not just a Darfur problem or a Sudanese problem. It's the whole world's problem and we feel the solidarity of women around the world."

- Amma Adam, Manager and Gender-based Violence Focal Point for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Sudan

Women at refugee camp, Darfur (Photo by Linda Mason)

Despite a cease-fire agreement and the presence of an African Union (AU) peacekeeping mission, widespread violence and a severe humanitarian crisis continue unabated in Darfur. Tens of thousands of people have been killed and more than two million residents have been driven out of their homes.[i] In July 2004, US Secretary of State Colin Powell declared, "Genocide has been committed in Darfur and the government of Sudan and the Janjaweed bear responsibility."[ii] In February 2005, the United Nations Commission of Inquiry reported, "The international offences such as the crimes against humanity and war crimes that have been committed in Darfur may be no less serious and heinous than genocide."[iii]

On 24 March 2005, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1590 authorizing a 10,000 person United Nations Peacekeeping Mission (UNMIS) in Sudan. UNMIS will "support the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement,"[iv] signed in January of 2005 between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army. Though UNMIS is an important step toward peace in Sudan, the force does not have the mandate to address the crisis in Darfur directly—and without a peaceful resolution to this crisis there is no hope that the North-South agreement can be implemented effectively. A comprehensive, inclusive, and coordinated approach to the multiple conflicts in Sudan is essential. According to Peter Takirambudde, Africa director of Human Rights Watch, "Real peace in Sudan will only come if donors help provide urgently needed protection for civilians in Darfur."[v]

Women have been disproportionately affected by the violence in Darfur and the subsequent humanitarian crisis. In addition to losing their husbands and sons to the conflict, they have been systematically raped and have lost their homes to burning and looting by militias from the north. Women comprise at least 75 percent of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the refugees fleeing the country. However, women are not just victims in Darfur. Through networks, informal groups, and as leaders of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), they are at the forefront of efforts to alleviate the humanitarian crisis, reconcile with rebel groups, and stop the rampant sexual violence against women and girls. As in other conflicts around the world, Sudanese women are integral to ensuring successful peace negotiations, providing humanitarian assistance, creating accountability, establishing security, and maintaining peace.[vi] It is therefore urgent that relevant parties address the needs of women, support women's peace building efforts, and include women in decision making regarding conflict resolution and reconstruction in Darfur.

i   "At donors' conference for south Sudan, Annan appeals for $2.6 billion for peace." *UN News Center* 11 April 2005.
ii Kessler, Glenn, and Lynch, Colum, "U.S. Calls Killings In Sudan Genocide." *The Washington Post* 10 September 2004.
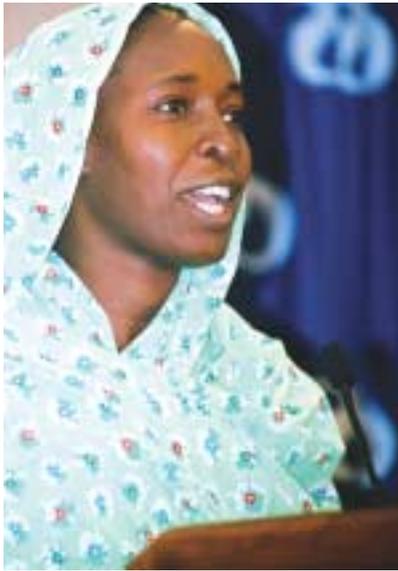iii "UN commission finds Sudanese Government responsible for crimes in Darfur." *UN News Center* 1 February 2005.
iv United Nations Security Council Resolution 1590, 24 March 2005.
v   "Sudan: Donors Must Boost Protection Force in Darfur." *Human Rights Watch* 8 April 2004.
vi *Inclusive Security, Sustainable Peace: A Toolkit for Advocacy and Action*, London: Hunt Alternatives Fund and International Alert, 2004. 16 May 2005 < http://www.womenwagingpeace.net/toolkit.asp>.

Supporting Inclusive Peace Negotiations

Amna Adam, Manager, United Nations Development Program sub-office Geneina, Darfur (photo by Victoria Stanski)
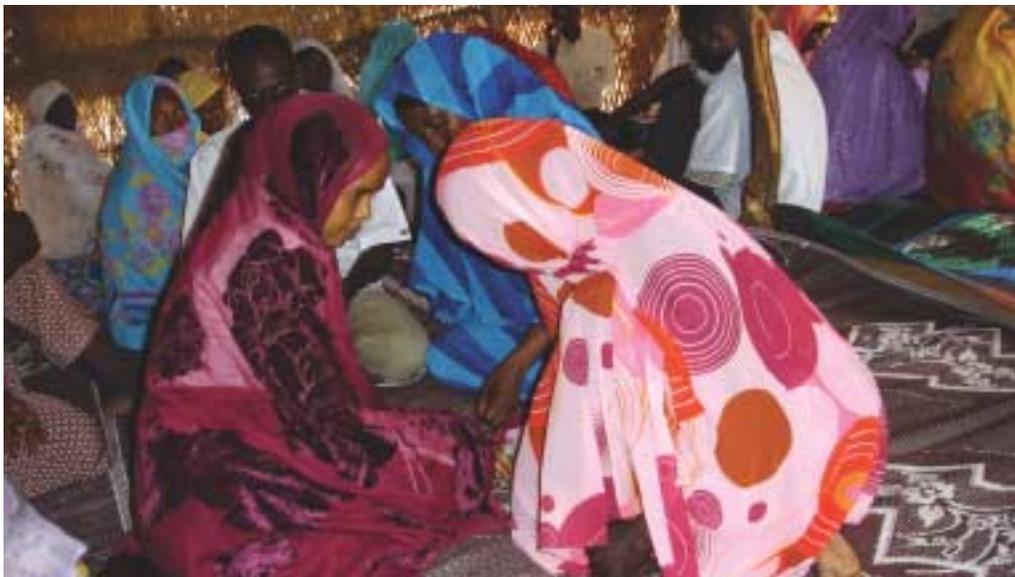
Repeated attempts to hold negotiations on Darfur have failed to produce results, as the widespread violence, destruction, and humanitarian crisis persist. There is an urgent need for a new approach to resolving the conflict. The resumption of the AU talks in Abuja, Nigeria provides an opportunity to create a more inclusive peace process in Darfur that includes women—as parties to the conflict, members of delegations from foreign governments, and key civil society stakeholders.

To date, women have been marginalized from peace negotiations on Darfur despite the reality that they comprise more than 60 percent of the population, have been disproportionately affected by the conflict, and are actively working across conflict lines to end the violence. Women's inclusion in the current process would infuse the talks with fresh insight and skills. Women are often able to build a conciliatory, trusting atmosphere by reaching out across ethnic and conflict divides. They help ensure that negotiations consider issues of human security in addition to broader issues of power and control.[vii] Involving stakeholders from civil society and women's groups will help ensure that a future peace agreement is accepted by the population and implemented.

Recommendations:

• *Ensure that all peace talks relating to Darfur include women representatives from political parties and civil society, and ensure a minimum 30 percent representation of women among all negotiating parties;*

• *Offer capacity-building workshops for leaders of all parties and civil society on negotiations that incorporate attention to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and conflict transformation;*

• *Conduct regular consultations with women's groups to create consensus around a women's agenda and incorporate women's priorities into the peace process;*

• *Involve women as mediators in the negotiations;*

• *Promote Track II and Track III negotiations with women and civil society leaders to enable broad-based conflict transformation in Darfur;*

• *Ensure that women are consulted in the drafting of a peace agreement for Darfur, including in all decisions relating to wealth and power sharing;*

• *Require a minimum of 30 percent women's participation in all commissions and committees that are established to implement the final peace agreement for Darfur; and*

• *Enlist the support of women's organizations to inform the population about the negotiations and the terms of the peace agreement and to assist in building public support for its implementation.*

vii Anderlini, Sanam Naraghi, and Stanski, Victoria. "Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Reconstruction." *Inclusive Security, Sustainable Peace: A Toolkit for Advocacy and Action.* London and Washington: Hunt Alternatives Fund and International Alert, 2004. 16 May 2005 <http://www.womenwagingpeace.net/content/toolkit/section2.pdf>.

Girls at refugee camp, Darfur
(Photo by Linda Mason)

Woman at refugee camp, Darfur (Photo by Linda Mason)

"Rape has been used as a weapon of war in the Darfur conflict. We, Sudanese women, have been leading the effort to care for survivors and to push for increased security, but we urgently need support so that we can stop the violence against women and bring the perpetrators to justice."

- Dr. Sidiga Washi, Dean of Family Studies at Ahfad University for Women and President of the Babiker Badri Scientific Association for Women's Studies.

Involve Women in Refugee and IDP Camp Planning and Administration and Return and Resettlement Efforts

Women comprise at least 75 percent of the two million refugees and IDPs from Darfur living in refugee and IDP camps and squatter settlements. Women face increased burdens as heads of household, have difficulty accessing healthcare and education, and find few economic opportunities during the return and resettlement process. In addition to the burdens they face as refugees and displaced persons, rape and sexual violence are rampant. The majority of the attacks occur when women leave the relative safety of the camps to gather firewood, food, and fodder. The camps rarely provide sufficient security to protect women and have insufficient services for rape survivors. IDP women face additional hardship due to the inconsistent and inadequate management of IDP camps by the Sudanese government.[viii]

As the majority of refugees and IDPs, women have valuable knowledge about how to create safer, healthier refugee camps and effective resettlement processes. Despite their victimization, women have organized as heads of NGOs and as members of networks to support refugees and IDPs. The international community and the Sudanese government should bolster women's efforts and leverage their expertise. Women must be fully included in the planning and administration of refugee and IDP camps as well as in the return and resettlement process.

Recommendations:

• *Include women in the design, monitoring, management, and evaluation of camps, and institute a quota of at least 50 percent female camp managers;*

• *Ensure that women comprise at least 50 percent of program planning and implementation committees for refugee and IDP assistance (including programs for water and sanitation, shelter, and health care), repatriation, and resettlement;*

• *Consult with women and women-led NGOs working on these issues, and hold meetings with them on a regular basis;*

• *Issue women registration documents in their own names; ensure that the documentation women receive provides them with the legal grounds to participate in assistance programs, to access needed services, and to exercise political rights;*

• *Involve women in all decisions related to camp security and implement their recommendations;*

• *Reach out to women's civil society groups in planning for return and ensure that they have technical and financial capacity to support the return process;*

• *Finance skills training, legal services, and economic opportunities for women in camps and in the return communities;*

• *Disaggregate data by gender and age whenever feasible; and*

• *Involve women and women's organizations in educating the population about programs and services in the camps and in the processing of returns.*

[viii] "UN Human Rights Experts Deplore Recent Killings During Dislocation of Displaced Persons in Sudanese Capital." United Nations 20 May 2005.

Creating Gender-Sensitive Accountability and Reconciliation Mechanisms

In Darfur, sexual violence is a pervasive strategy and weapon of war; women and girls are being attacked to dehumanize them, to humiliate their men, and to destabilize their communities.[ix] In addition to killing, women have experienced abduction, sexual slavery, rape, torture, and forced displacement. As noted by Roger Winter, assistant administrator, United States Agency for International Development, "These acts raise questions about the community's long-term ability to survive and reestablish itself."[x] Impunity is the second half of the problem. As noted by High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour, "There is no structure in place in Darfur that is able to seek, on [women's] behalf, appropriate justice and healing. As a consequence, there is no deterrent…"[xi]

In January 2005, the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur released its report to the UN secretary-general. The Commission found that the Government of Sudan and militias conducted attacks on civilians, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, and concluded that these acts could constitute crimes against humanity. The UN Security Council, in Resolution 1593, referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) provides an important example of how women can contribute significantly to the judicial process as judges, witnesses, investigators, and staff.[xii] Their skills and insights should be similarly leveraged and included in the case of Sudan.

In addition to the need for accountability, there will be an urgent need for reconciliation in Darfur. Sustainable peace will depend upon the degree to which parties can reconcile the past and coexist harmoniously. Resolution 1593 emphasizes the need to promote healing and reconstruction and encourages the creation of institutions, such as truth and reconciliation commissions, involving all sectors of society. The experience of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa demonstrates how women specifically helped structure the transitional justice process and fostered national healing and reconciliation through their testimony and approaches to managing the TRC.[xiii]

Recommendations:

- *Ensure accountability for crimes committed against civilians, particularly women, by prosecuting rape, abduction, and sexual slavery as war crimes and crimes against humanity in accordance with international humanitarian law;*

- *Include equal representation of women as judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and investigators in all mechanisms set up to prosecute these crimes;*

ix   *Darfur: Rape as a Weapon of War—Sexual Violence and Its Consequences.* New York: Amnesty International, 4 October 2004.
x   Winter, Roger. "Humanitarian Crisis in Sudan." United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Washington, DC, 15 June 2004.
xi   Arbour, Louise. "Statement to the Security Council on the Situation of Human Rights in Darfur." United Nations Security Council. New York, 4 October 2004.
xii Mertus, Julie and Hocevar Van Wely, Olija. *Women's Participation in the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia: Transitional Justice for Bosnia and Herzegovina.* Washington, DC: Women Waging Peace, 2004. 1 October 2004 <http://womenwagingpeace.net/content/articles/BosniaFullCaseStudy.pdf>.
xiii Gobodo-Madikizela, Pumla. *Women's Contributions to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.* Washington, DC: Women Waging Peace, 2004. 16 May 2005 <http://www.women-wagingpeace.net/content /articles/SouthAfricaTJFullCaseStudy.pdf>.

Women participating in workshops in Geneina, Darfur organized by the United Nations Development Progran

Establishing Security and Keeping the Peace

The conflict in Darfur has devastated the region's economy, shredded its fragile social fabric, driven millions of people from their homes, and created an unstable environment filled with fear. A recent USAID report found that "98 percent of IDP households surveyed are currently unwilling to return to their villages of origin, mainly due to insecurity and lack of housing and land."[xiv] Though the AU has committed to increasing its force in Darfur, an urgent need remains to strengthen the mission's mandate to include the protection of civilians from violence. In addition, the international community should recognize the limited resources of the AU mission and provide it with adequate funding, technical and logistical assistance, and training.

Women's participation in the AU mission is integral to establishing peace and security and to helping the victims of the crisis. Evidence from Rwanda,[xv] El Salvador,[xvi] Sierra Leone,[xvii] and Burundi reveals the stabilizing role that women play in these processes. Therefore, women's needs and capacities as active partners must be considered and integrated into all layers of the AU mission, and their efforts to complement the mission should receive continual and systematic support.

[xiv] "Darfur: Humanitarian Emergency Fact Sheet #31." United States Agency for International Development, *ReliefWeb* 29 April 2005.
[xv] Powley, Elizabeth. *Strengthening Governance: The Role of Women in Rwanda's Transition*. Washington, DC: Women Waging Peace, 2003. 1 July 2005 <http://womenwagingpeace.net/content/articles/RwandaFullCaseStudy.pdf>.
[xvi] Pampell Conaway, Camille and Martínez, Salomé. Adding Value: *Women's Contributions to Reintegration and Reconstruction in El Salvador*. Washington, DC: Women Waging Peace, 2004. 1 July 2005 <http://www.womenwagingpeace.net/content/articles/ElSalvadorFullCaseStudy.pdf>.
[xvii] Carlson, Khristopher and Mazurana, Dyan. *From Combat to Community: Women and Girls of Sierra Leone*. Washington, DC: Women Waging Peace, 2004. 1 July 2005 <http://www.womenwagingpeace.net/content/articles/ElSalvadorFullCaseStudy.pdf>.

Recommendations:

- *Expand the mandate of the AU mission to allow peace-keepers to act preemptively to protect civilians, with specific attention to preventing further gender-based violence;*

- *Ensure that AMIS consults with women's organizations regularly and that a gender unit is established in the mission with adequate seniority, staffing, and resources to fulfill its role;*

- *Press for AU member states to recruit women as peace-keepers, human rights monitors, civilian police, and staff in the mission in Darfur;*

- *Incorporate gender training into the training cycle, including as part of "just in time" training for peacekeepers;*

- *Require all personnel in AMIS to receive training in human rights and the protection of women from gender-based violence;*

- *Ensure that forces responsible for guarding the refugee and IDP camps are fully trained and sensitized on gender issues and that they consult regularly with women in the camps in developing, implementing, and evaluating security measures;*

- *Establish mechanisms to monitor the conduct of the peace-keeping force to prevent and respond to problems of sexual exploitation and abuse against women; and*

- *Involve women and women's organizations in educating the population about the role and responsibilities of the peacekeeping mission.*