



Office of Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sudan
UN Resident and Humanitarian Co-ordinator

The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Condemns Attack on UNHCR Personnel in West Darfur

Khartoum, 1 May 2007: United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Manuel Aranda da Silva strongly condemns the temporary abduction of six (6) staff members of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the hijacking of the refugee agency's vehicles by unknown armed men in Um Shalaya, West Darfur.

Six UNHCR staff members in a two-vehicle convoy, clearly marked with the UN refugee agency's logo, were attacked yesterday morning while they were on their way for a routine visit to Um Shalaya refugee camp, located approximately 80 km west-south-west of El Geneina. The attackers drove away with the UNHCR staff members and dropped them off somewhere between El Geneina and Saraf Umra. After several hours of search carried out by the UN with the assistance of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and the Government authorities, the staff members were located near Saraf Omra, which is located East of Geneina, near the border between West Darfur and North Darfur state, where they were brought by truck by the local population. None of the staff members was hurt.

The United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator wishes to thank the Government of Sudan and the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) for their support in the efforts to locate the missing staff. He expresses particular appreciation for the assistance provided by AMIS Sector 3, headquartered in Geneina, and the AMIS Group Site located in Mornei. AMIS provided the UN search team with two (2) Armored Personnel Carriers, five (5) other vehicles and over 40 personnel. One Government representative and one SLA/MM representative also were part of the AMIS team which assisted in locating the staff members.

The United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator expresses grave concern over the repeated attacks on humanitarian personnel and assets that put at risk the ongoing humanitarian efforts to assist millions of people in Darfur. He urges all concerned to act swiftly to end such acts, which are in flagrant breach of International Humanitarian Law and principles, and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

For further information please contact:

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