

UNITED NATIONS



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**Office of the Deputy Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Southern Sudan**

**UNITED NATIONS TO BOOST CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION IN SOUTHERN SUDAN**

(Juba: 19 May 2007): The Deputy Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Southern Sudan, David Gressly, announced today that the second United Nations Civil-Military Coordination Workshop in the Sudan will take place from 31 May to 02 June. The training will be conducted in Rumbek, Southern Sudan, thanks to funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

“Effective civil-military coordination mechanisms are essential to addressing current humanitarian needs as well as recovery priorities in Southern Sudan”, said Mr. Gressly. “Demining, reconstruction of bridges, delivery of aid to the most vulnerable, and overall logistics support to humanitarian and recovery operations, cannot succeed in Southern Sudan, without coordination among the United Nations peacekeeping force and humanitarian organizations”. The United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), established in 2005, currently has a military contingent of almost 9,400.

The Workshop, which will assemble some 25 participants from civilian and military components of the United Nations and partner organizations, will aim to identify and discuss the main issues in civil-military coordination in the Sudan, to review the current status of such coordination in United Nations peacekeeping missions, and to analyze its role in the context of humanitarian emergencies.

The participants will take part in simulations, where the concepts, principles and guidelines of civil-military coordination will have to be applied to specific scenarios and situations.

“Civil-military coordination is a dialogue between civilian organizations and the military during a humanitarian operation. To strengthen this dialogue, we must have some understanding of the operating procedures of our military or civilian counterparts”, explained Marie-Sophie Reck of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which has a whole section based in Geneva as part of its Emergency Services Branch (ESB), dedicated to this discipline. “Information sharing, for example, is a key element in coordinating our efforts, in order to avoid overlaps or gaps in our response”, she added.

In the Sudan operations, priority topics include the use of military assets for community projects, armed escorts for humanitarian workers, information-sharing on a variety of topics including security issues and road data.

During the 2006 acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) outbreak, good coordination between the United Nations peacekeepers and humanitarian organizations in Southern Sudan allowed for a successful response. Humanitarian organizations were able to use military communications networks in order to report data and raise requests for medication, while they also provided treatment to the military. At the present time, peacekeepers offer to provide armed escorts for travel in the most volatile areas of Southern Sudan, to the United Nations and partners.

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