

Sudan

The crisis in Darfur, a timeline

Last Updated July 14, 2008

[CBC News](#)

In 2003, militants accused the government of President Omar al-Bashir of neglecting the region and oppressing black Africans in favour of Arabs in the state of Darfur. Over half of the people in the area are subsistence farmers, with the rest being nomadic or semi-nomadic herders.

The government, caught by surprise by the militants' attacks, had very few troops in the region. In response, it mounted a campaign of aerial bombardment in support of ground attacks by an Arab militia, the Janjaweed, that it had recruited from local tribes.

More than 2.5 million people have fled their homes since the fighting began.

Donating to Darfur

Some organizations accepting donations for Darfur:

- [UN World Food Programme](#)
- [UNICEF](#)
- [Oxfam Canada](#)
- [Médecins Sans Frontières](#)
- [Genocide Intervention Network](#)

The World Health Organization has warned that a major health catastrophe could erupt if the necessary funds and supplies are not made available to fight disease and malnutrition in the region. The United Nations describes Darfur as the "worst humanitarian crisis" in the world.

Here is a timeline of events since fighting began:

July 14, 2008

The prosecutor of The Hague's International Criminal Court files genocide charges against al-Bashir, alleging he orchestrated the violence that has devastated Darfur and left hundreds of thousands dead.

- CBC Story: [Sudanese president charged with genocide](#)

April 22, 2008

UN reports death toll of 300,000 after five years of conflict.

- CBC Story: [Death toll hits 300,000: UN](#)

Aug. 24, 2007

Amnesty International says it has photographs that prove the Sudanese government continues to deploy military equipment in Darfur in "breathtaking defiance" of a UN arms embargo.

- CBC Story: [Photo evidence of Sudan breaking UN arms ban: Amnesty](#)

Aug. 23, 2007

Nuala Lawlor, the acting charg ½ d'affaires for Canada in Sudan, and her European Union counterpart are expelled from Sudan. No reason is given, though Sudan's official news agency reported that government officials believed Lawlor had been meddling in Sudan's internal affairs.

One week later, Canada expels a Sudanese diplomat as a response to Lawlor's expulsion.

- CBC Story: [Sudan expels top Canadian, European diplomats](#)

July 31, 2007

After months of talk, the UN authorizes a peacekeeping force of nearly 20,000 international troops, specialized military observers and police to augment the nearly 7,000 African Union troops in Darfur.

France and Britain are to lead and organize the new force, which will be under the command of both the UN and the AU.

The cost of the mission is expected to top \$2 billion US in the first year but the resolution authorizing the peacekeepers has been watered down to the point where the new force will not be allowed to seize and dispose of illegal arms, but only to monitor their use.

- CBC Story: [Security Council approves peacekeeping force in Darfur](#)

June 17, 2007

Oxfam, one of the world's largest aid agencies, announces it will permanently withdraw from the Gereida refugee camp in Darfur because it no longer believes its aid workers can be protected.

More than 130,000 people are sheltering in the Gereida camp, one of the largest in the troubled region. The Oxfam announcement follows an attack on aid workers six months earlier. More than 120 were withdrawn from the country at that point.

May 29, 2007

U.S. President George W. Bush announces further economic and diplomatic sanctions against Sudan over the Darfur situation. The measures list 31 companies that are doing business with Sudan, in some cases supplying arms. It is now illegal for any U.S. citizen or company to do business with these 31 enterprises.

The U.S. is almost going it alone at this point. China and other Security Council members criticize the sanctions and even Britain, while toying with the idea, does not go along.

May 29, 2007

The leaders of Sudan and Chad sign an agreement in Saudi Arabia to stop the fighting from the Darfur conflict along their 1,000 km border.

May 18, 2007

The UN Human Rights Council accuses Sudan's security forces of "indiscriminately" killing more than 100 people in large-scale attacks in southern Darfur since January.

- CBC Story: [UN rights body accuses Sudan of Darfur killings](#)

Jan. 10, 2007

New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, acting as an emissary for an international Save Darfur Coalition, negotiates a 60-day ceasefire with al-Bashir. But the ceasefire lasts only a short time. Rebel groups, claiming they are still being attacked by government forces, want no part of it.

Dec. 3, 2006

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan blames the Sudanese government for the continuing violence. He says, "They are refusing to let the international community come in and

assist. They will be held individually and collectively responsible for what is happening and what happens."

- CBC Story: [Iraq worse than civil war](#)

Nov. 30, 2006

Annan asks for \$4 billion US to help millions of people in 29 countries "whose lives have been crippled by conflict and calamity." The largest request is \$1.2 billion for Sudan, about one-half of which would go to Darfur.

- CBC Story: [Annan appeals for nearl US\\$4 billion for aid to 29 countries](#)

Nov. 29, 2006

UN Human Rights Commissioner Louise Arbour says, "The government of Sudan and militias aligned with them, some still actively supported by them, continue to be responsible for the most serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law." She says the "atrocities" qualify as crimes because of their nature and scale.

- CBC Story: [Arbour blames Sudanese government for Darfur atrocities](#)

Nov. 28, 2006

The UN Human Rights Council votes 22-20 to reject a resolution from the European Union and Canada telling the Sudanese government to prosecute those responsible for killing, raping or injuring civilians in Darfur.

- CBC Story: [UN rights council rejects EU-Canadian resolution on Darfur atrocities](#)

Nov. 16, 2006

African, Arab, European and UN leaders reach a tentative agreement with Sudan to let a joint African Union and United Nations peacekeeping force into the Darfur region as early as next year. The force could be as large as 27,000.

- CBC Story: [Tentative deal reached for a joint peacekeeping force in Sudan's Darfur region](#)

Nov. 13, 2006

The United Nations pledges about \$77 million US in personnel and equipment to the African Union force in Darfur. The package includes military and police advisers, communications equipment and tools like night-vision goggles.

- CBC Story: [UN pledges US\\$77 million for cash-strapped African Union force in Darfur](#)

Oct. 19, 2006

UN envoy Jan Pronk is ordered to leave Sudan after posting comments about the Sudanese military on his personal blog. The government-run Sudan News Agency says Pronk showed "enmity to the Sudanese government and the armed forces."

- CBC Story: [Sudan ejects UN envoy over blog](#)

Oct. 19, 2006

The Sudanese government announces that it's willing to discuss having the UN provide support for the African Union's peacekeeping force. The Sudanese government has previously called the UN's peacekeeping plans a "neo-colonial" move. About 150 UN military and logistical advisers will arrive in Darfur as reinforcements for the African force.

- CBC Story: [Sudan willing to see African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur bolstered](#)

Sept. 28, 2006

The UN chief in Sudan says the government is unlikely to let UN peacekeepers in the country anytime soon. He said the international community should push for the African Union force of 7,000 to remain in the region indefinitely. The UN resolution called for 20,000 peacekeepers to replace the ill-equipped and underfunded AU forces, which had trouble restraining the conflict.

- CBC Story: [UN Chief in Sudan says UN peacekeeping mission to Darfur unlikely](#)

Sept. 26, 2006

Liberal Senator Peter Stollery says Canada's military contribution in Africa is disgraceful. There are 64 Canadian staff officers, ceasefire observers and military trainers serving in operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Sierra Leone.

- CBC Story: [Senator slams sparse Canadian military presence in Africa](#)

Sept. 21, 2006

Prime Minister Stephen Harper addresses the United Nations. Liberal MP Keith Martin and Bloc Québécois Leader Gilles Duceppe criticize Harper for failing to focus attention on the plight of Africa, including refugees in Darfur, poverty and AIDS.

- CBC Story: [Harper focusing too much on military aspect of Afghan mission: Liberals](#)

May 23, 2006

A report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights says the Sudanese government is not keeping its pledge to stop attacks on black African civilians. The report says the government and rebels must respect the ceasefire, and the militia in Darfur must be disarmed.

Another report, by Amnesty International, says the crisis in Darfur is being ignored as nations such as the U.S., China and Russia put their own security concerns ahead of human rights issues.

- CBC Story: [Violence worsening in Darfur](#)

Prime Minister Stephen Harper announces that Canada will increase its aid to Darfur by \$40 million.

- CBC Story: [PM increases aid to Darfur by \\$40 million](#)

May 22, 2006

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan says, in a report to the UN Security Council, that Sudan's government is violating international humanitarian law by barring fuel, food and relief aid to civilians in the strife-torn province.

May 16, 2006

The UN Security Council unanimously votes to send a team to Darfur to prepare for a UN force to take over peacekeeping from African Union soldiers.

- CBC Story: [Security Council sending team to Darfur to pave way for peacekeepers](#)

May 5, 2006

Two rebel groups refuse to sign a new peace plan, but a third faction of the Sudan Liberation Army agrees to sign the deal. The Sudanese government also accepts the proposal.

- CBC Story: [Two of three rebel groups scorn Darfur deal](#)

April 30, 2006

A deadline for peace talks passes without a deal. Report says the agreement is hung up on two issues: the disarmament of rebel militia and the integration of rebel forces into

the Sudanese security forces. The African Union agrees to a 48-hour extension of the deadline.

- CBC Story: [Militants given an additional 48 hours to accept Darfur peace proposal](#)

April 28, 2006

The head of the World Food Programme says rations to Darfur will be cut in half. James Morris says a funding shortfall is to blame.

- CBC Story: [UN agency cuts Darfur refugees' rations](#)

April 25, 2006

The United Nations Security Council imposes sanctions on four people from Sudan accused of involvement in the Darfur conflict. The move freezes the men's assets, and prevents them from travelling internationally.

- CBC Story: [Security Council passes sanctions in attempt to resolve Darfur conflict](#)

April 14, 2006

Chad breaks diplomatic ties with Sudan, accusing the Sudanese government of supporting rebels in the capital. A rebel attack April 13 left 350 people dead. Chad's president says Sudan supported the attack, in order to destabilize the country. Sudan denies the charges.

- CBC Story: [Chad breaks diplomatic ties with Sudan](#)

April 13, 2006

Chad's president Idriss Deby accuses Sudan of backing a rebel attack in the capital N'Djamena. Deby says mercenaries hired by Sudan are trying to disrupt the May 3 presidential election, and take control of the country. About 200,000 refugees fleeing the fighting in Sudan are living in Chad.

- CBC Story: [Troops quash rebel attack on capital of Chad](#)

March 20, 2006

NATO says it would support a United Nations force in the region. NATO isn't pledging troops, but logistical and training support for a UN mission.

- CBC Story: [NATO proposes UN role in Darfur](#)

December 23, 2005

Neighbouring Chad declares itself to be in "a state of war" with Sudan. The Chadian government blames Sudanese rebels for an attack on the border town of Adre on Dec. 18 that killed 100 people.

Nov. 22, 2005

Yet another round of peace talks begins in Nigeria. Talks so far have failed to make much progress.

- CBC Story: [Sudan peace talks to resume under cloud of division](#)

November, 2005

The first of 100 Canadian armoured personnel carriers are allowed into Sudan. The armoured Grizzlies are to help soldiers of the African Union enforce a truce between the government-backed Arab militias and African southern rebels. The vehicles have been sitting in Senegal for months waiting for the Sudanese government to allow them entry. Canadian personnel trained the African soldiers to operate the carriers.

- CBC Story: [Armoured Grizzlies on their way to Sudan](#)

Oct. 14, 2005

The United Nations orders non-essential staff out of the West Darfur region. A spokesperson cites ongoing fighting, and violence directed at aid workers as the reasons for the pullout.

- CBC Story: [UN pulls most staff out of Darfur](#)

Sept. 15, 2005

Another round of peace talks begins in Nigeria. Representatives of the Sudanese government, and the two main rebel groups participate, but one faction of the SLM group boycotts the talks.

June 6, 2005

The International Criminal Court announces that it will launch a formal investigation into suspected war crimes in Sudan's Darfur region. It is expected to be the largest investigation handled by the court since it was established in June 2002. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has given the ICC a list of 51 people, including top Sudanese government and army officials, militia leaders and army commanders, suspected of slaughter and rape in Darfur. Sudan is not expected to help the ICC. It has insisted on prosecuting any suspects itself.

- CBC Story: [International court to probe Darfur war crimes](#)

March 31, 2005

The UN Security Council votes to allow the International Criminal Court to try people accused of war crimes in Darfur. The U.S. agrees not to use its veto power to overthrow the ruling, although the country opposes the UN court in The Hague.

March 29, 2005

The UN Security Council approves a travel ban and an asset freeze for individuals accused of committing crimes in Darfur. The sanctions will apply in 30 days to individuals who will be identified by a special UN committee made up of representatives from all 15 member countries of the Security Council.

March 28, 2005

Sudanese government says that 15 military and security officials have been arrested on charges of murder, rape and the burning of villages in Darfur. This is the first time arrests are made for crimes committed in Darfur. The government wants to try the accused in Sudanese court.

March 25, 2005

The UN Security Council fails to pass a resolution that would end the crisis in Sudan. Sanctions against the Sudanese government have not been agreed upon. The vote on the French draft resolution that would bring war criminals to trial in the International Criminal Court has been delayed.

March 16, 2005

The United Nations is withdrawing all its staff from part of western Sudan after threats from the Janjaweed militia in Darfur. The UN is pulling back to El-Geneina on the border with Chad.

March 15, 2005

The number of people who died from disease and malnutrition in Darfur could be as high as 350,000, says a senior UN official. That number is about five times the official World Health Organization estimate. It is difficult to tell how many have perished in the violence.

March 2, 2005

A New York-based human rights agency says a top Janjaweed militia member told its researchers the Sudanese government directed and supported attacks on Africans in Darfur. The Sudanese government continues to deny involvement.

Feb. 4, 2005

UN special envoy for Sudan Jan Pronk calls for a larger international military force to Darfur. He tells the UN Security Council it's the only way to stop the raging violence. The council debates whether war crimes trials should be held at the International Criminal Court, or could be, given the U.S. opposition to this court.

Feb. 1, 2005

The United Nations stops short of calling the violence in Darfur "genocide," in a new report. It does hold the Sudanese government and Arab militia responsible for atrocities committed against the African population.

Jan. 26, 2005

African Union observers accuse the Sudanese air force of bombing villagers in southern Darfur.

Jan. 12, 2005

Jan Pronk, UN special envoy to Sudan, says the civil war in Darfur has killed up to 100,000 people and warns, "We may move into a period of intense violence unless swift action is taken and new approaches are considered."

Dec. 14, 2004

Two aid workers from the British charity Save the Children are killed when their convoy comes under gunfire. The UN suspends humanitarian operations in response to the attack. Save the Children would pull out of Darfur a week later.

Oct. 15, 2004

The World Health Organization says at least 70,000 people have died since March 2004 as a result of poor conditions in refugee camps. Refugees have died of diarrhea, fever and respiratory disease, WHO says. The toll does not include those killed in ongoing violence.

Sept. 22, 2004

In his first speech as prime minister before the United Nations General Assembly, Paul Martin criticizes the world's slow reaction to the violence in Sudan, saying the UN has been bogged down with the legal definition of "genocide."

- Related: [Paul Martin at the UN](#)

Sept. 19, 2004

Sudanese President Omar el-Bashir says he isn't afraid of sanctions threatened by the United Nations. "We are afraid neither of the UN nor of its resolution," he says.

Sept. 18, 2004

The UN Security Council unanimously approves a resolution that says Sudan could face sanctions unless the country stops the violence in Darfur. The resolution also supports expanding the role of multinational African Union troops in Sudan.

Sept. 15, 2004

Talks between the Sudanese government and the two main rebel groups in Darfur break down after three weeks.

Sept. 14, 2004

Under pressure from China, the U.S. eases its threat of oil sanctions against Sudan, revising its motion to the Security Council to say the UN "shall consider" punitive action, rather than "will take."

Sept. 13, 2004

The World Health Organization says between 6,000 and 10,000 who fled their homes in Darfur are dying each month.

Sept. 9, 2004

U.S. President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell say the violence taking place in Darfur qualifies as genocide. "We urge the international community to work with us to prevent and suppress acts of genocide," Bush says in a statement. Sudan would later reject the charge.

Aug. 30, 2004

The UN deadline for the Sudanese government to disarm militias and pull them back from Darfur expires.

Aug. 23, 2004

The Sudanese government meets with representatives of rebel groups in Abuja, Nigeria, in hopes of ending the fighting in Darfur. The talks are sponsored by the African Union.

Aug. 15, 2004

About 150 Rwandan soldiers arrive in Darfur to be stationed in six regions containing large refugee camps, including some in neighbouring Chad.

Aug. 6, 2004

A UN human rights investigator says there is "overwhelming evidence" the Sudanese government is complicit in the killing of civilians in the Darfur region.

Aug. 4, 2004

About 100,000 demonstrators march through Khartoum in a protest, sponsored by the Sudanese government, against the UN resolution demanding an end to violence in Darfur.

Aug. 2, 2004

The UN begins dropping food by air into the Darfur region.

July 29, 2004

The U.S. introduces a draft resolution threatening sanctions against Sudan if the government doesn't pull back militias in Darfur. The U.S. later softened the wording of the resolution after some members of the U.N. Security Council expressed concerns over the word "sanctions."

July 22, 2004

In a unanimous vote, both houses of the U.S. Congress declare that "the atrocities unfolding in Darfur, Sudan, are genocide." The resolution passes 422-0 in the House of Representatives and passes without dissent in the Senate.

July 18, 2004

The SLA and JEM leave peace talks in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, refusing to negotiate unless the Sudanese government agrees to leave Darfur and to disarm the Arab Janjaweed militias. Talks, brokered by the UN and the African Union, begin on July 15, 2004, but degenerate into a shouting match.

July 14, 2004

Aid organization Oxfam warns of the "spectre of disease" and a cholera or malaria outbreak at refugee camps in Chad where heavy rains and limited toilet facilities have caused rapid deterioration in the camps.

July 12, 2004

The government sends a 1,025-strong police force to Darfur to maintain security, law and order, and to "uphold the sense of nationhood." Its main tasks are to protect refugee camps, set up security checkpoints along the border with Chad and safeguard

roads for the return of refugees. Eventually, the force will number 6,000 and include medics and traffic and riot police.

July 9, 2004

United Nations Commission on Human Rights says Arab militias, with links to the government, have destroyed food and water resources in the Jabal Marrah area in West Darfur, Sudan. The UNHCR says humanitarian organizations are still being denied access to the most affected areas.

July 7, 2004

The UN Security Council threatens to impose an arms embargo and a travel ban against Sudan unless the government takes measures to end the Darfur conflict. The council says it will start reviewing the proposal in late July.

July 5, 2004

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan ends his official visit to Sudan and warns of "catastrophic levels" of suffering. Annan pledges UN help for a ceasefire.

July 2, 2004

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell ends a two-day visit to Sudan and tells the Khartoum government that it can only expect normalization of relations with the U.S. if it makes immediate efforts to rein in the Arab militias in Darfur.

late June 2004

Aid organizations warn of mass rapes of women by Arab militia and of a new generation of displaced children.

June 24, 2004

American officials warn of genocide. "I can tell you that we see indicators of genocide and there is evidence that points in that direction," said Pierre Prosper, the U.S. ambassador-at-large for war crimes. Prosper said the U.S. government was "actively reviewing" the possibility that genocide was taking place in the Darfur region.

June 18, 2004

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan names former Dutch environment minister Jan Pronk as the UN's special envoy in Sudan

June 15, 2004

UN officials say every fifth child in the Darfur region is acutely undernourished. Many have dysentery, measles and high fever. Children in refugee camps are dying every day from starvation and exhaustion.

May 26, 2004

The Sudanese government and rebels from Darfur agree on sending the first international observers to the region. Eventually, up to 120 observers from the European Union, the U.S., the Sudanese government, the rebel movements and the Chadian mediators are deployed in Darfur.

May 24, 2004

A ceasefire agreement, brokered six weeks earlier, is broken as the government and the rebel factions blame each other for an attack killing 45 people in a village south of the state capital of Nyala.

May 2004

A UN human rights report says the Sudanese government and the Arab Janjaweed militias, who have been recruited by the government, have conducted a "reign of terror" in Darfur against the region's black African population. The report finds many human rights violations, including killings, rapes, pillaging, destruction of property and ethnic displacement.

April 9, 2004

The Sudanese government and the rebels sign a ceasefire, also agreeing to the deployment of African Union observers. The 45-day ceasefire will allow humanitarian assistance to reach several hundred thousand people affected by the fighting. The ceasefire is due to come into force on April 11.

April 2, 2004

Jan Egeland, of the UN Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief section, warns of a co-ordinated "scorched earth" campaign of ethnic cleansing by the Arab militias against Darfur's black African population.

March 2004

UN names Darfur the worst humanitarian situation in the world.

January 2004

Sudan sends its army to Darfur, causing thousands more to seek refuge in neighbouring Chad. The fighting escalates.

Dec. 23, 2003

UN High Commissioner for Refugees unveils plans to build safe camps in Chad away from the Sudanese border where refugee camps are being attacked. Almost 100,000 refugees are now in Chad.

Early December 2003

A fresh round of attacks by Arab Janjaweed militias-including the burning of villages, and murder and rape of civilians-prompts thousands of new refugees to stream into Chad.

Oct. 7, 2003

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees appeals for \$16.6 million US to help Sudanese refugees in Chad.

Sept. 4, 2003

The SLA and the government reach a ceasefire agreement. As part of the deal, the Sudanese government frees 54 prisoners suspected of being SLA members and agrees to address the rebels' complaint that the Darfur region is underdeveloped. Both sides soon accuse the other of breaking the agreement.

April 2003

Refugees begin arriving in eastern Chad to escape the conflict that erupts after members of the SLA and JEM begin attacking government forces and installations in the Darfur region of Sudan.