



OFFICE OF UN RESIDENT AND HUMANITARIAN CO-ORDINATOR
FOR THE SUDAN

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RCHC/SUD/Note 32

NOTE TO MR. EGELAND

Darfur – Flash Update on Humanitarian Actions Underway

1. As you know, I have been having a flurry of high-level meetings with GoS on Darfur access. Following the most recent meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the State Minister of Humanitarian Affairs (recent Notes refer), we were informed today that access to Darfur would be immediately made available.
2. To test this assurance, we have today activated our Darfur Contingency Action Plan and taken the following actions:
 - Identified and prepared a Rapid Response Team (RRT) of 13 UN staff (8 internationals + 5 nationals) from our Office here (including 3 recently-arrived secondees from DFID, USAID and OCHA-Geneva) for immediate deployment to Darfur.
 - Chartered a 40-seater commercial plane (all WFP planes are busy ferrying visiting VIP delegations from several donors) to go into Darfur on 13 February – subject to travel clearances being received from GoS. We have offered the empty seats on our plane to any humanitarian agencies – including NGOs – that want to go into Darfur at the same time.
 - All UN agencies are on full standby to follow up immediately on the deployment of the initial team with relief materials and further presence on the ground.
3. The above immediate response (first 10 days) is planned to be followed up by a sustained action of expanded presence and delivery (assuming access and security). To this effect, we have:
 - Contracted (with UNSECOORD advice) 2 additional international security officers dedicated to Darfur – to arrive in the Sudan as soon as their visas can be obtained (funding comes from Netherlands via the UNDP Trust Fund arrangement which has been setup).
 - Requested OCHA-Geneva to mobilize the UNDAC system to provide up to 7 people as soon as possible.
 - Requested DFID, and the Norwegian Refugee Council to provide further surge capacity in the nearest future. We have also notified IHP member countries of the possible need to draw down support modules. (Our plan is to have 6 international and 12 national humanitarian staff and 2 international security officers deployed continuously in the field, backed by 2 internationals in Khartoum).
4. Donor and inter-agency coordination locally is well organized and supported. I am grateful to all staff here in OCHA and other UN agencies, who are working so hard together as a team.

Dr Mukesh Kapila