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## **Bush and Sudan's Leader at Odds Over Sending U.N. Troops to Calm Darfur**

By Warren Hoge

UNITED NATIONS — President Bush challenged world leaders on Tuesday to overcome Sudan's unwillingness to let United Nations peacekeepers into Darfur, but Sudan's president reiterated his objection to any forces other than those from the African Union.

"If the Sudanese government does not approve this peacekeeping force quickly, the United Nations must act," Mr. Bush said in a speech to delegates of the General Assembly. At stake, in addition to the lives of people in Darfur, he said, was "the credibility of the United Nations."

Mr. Bush also announced the appointment of Andrew S. Natsios, a former administrator of the Agency for International Development, as special envoy for Darfur.

Sudan's president, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, responded defiantly to Mr. Bush, telling a news conference that there was no possibility he would accept United Nations troops. "We, under all conditions, totally reject a transition from the African Union force to a U.N. force," he said.

The Security Council last month authorized formation of a force of 22,000 soldiers and police officers under United Nations command to take over patrolling Darfur from the underfinanced and poorly equipped troops from the African Union, which has admitted its inability to curb the violence in the ravaged region.

The United States circulated a new draft resolution here on Tuesday that would extend a separate United Nations force now finishing its work in southern Sudan for six months to help a new force in Darfur.

More than 200,000 people have died in Darfur and 2.5 million have been forced from their homes in a campaign that the United Nations calls the worst human crisis and the Bush administration labels genocide.

Mr. Bashir suggested that while he was adamant about barring the United Nations, he would consider a continuation of the African Union force, whose mandate expires this month, with added logistical and equipment help from the outside.

The African Union's Peace and Security Council is to meet here on Wednesday and is expected to take up a proposal to extend the force for three months. The United States and Denmark have organized a meeting of foreign ministers to discuss Darfur on Friday.

Mr. Bashir has even threatened to attack United Nations forces if they try to enter Sudan.

The resolution only “invites the consent” of the Sudanese government to the new force, but United Nations officials argue that they would be unable to persuade countries to contribute soldiers to a mission that did not have the cooperation of the host country.

Much of the violence against black African villagers in Darfur has been attributed to government-armed Arab militias known as the janjaweed, but Mr. Bashir said that the instigators were foreign rebels, operating out of Eritrea and Chad, and that the Sudanese government was the victim.

He also argued that the terms under which the United Nations force was being proposed matched those underlying the American-led force that invaded Iraq in 2003. “The functions are a typical replica of the coalition forces in Iraq, the same competencies, the same mandate,” he said.

Increasingly defiant under questioning, Mr. Bashir alleged that the reports of deaths and displacements in Darfur were “fictions” spread by international aid groups and Jewish organizations to raise money to benefit Israel.

Commenting on the international campaign that has arisen to try to end the violence in Darfur, Mr. Bashir said, “Those who made the publicity, who mobilized the people, invariably are Jewish organizations.”

Opening the session on Tuesday morning, Secretary General Kofi Annan, who retires on Dec. 31, bid farewell with a somber look at the world that focused on the Middle East and Africa, his home continent.

“Sadly,” he said, “once again the biggest challenge comes from Africa, from Darfur — where the continued spectacle of men, women and children driven from their homes by murder, rape and the burning of their villages makes a mockery of our claim, as an international community, to shield people from the worst abuses.”

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