Increased International Activity and Decision-Making
_June 2004–September 2004_

Now that the Darfur ceasefire was signed, Darfur had entered the agenda of the Security Council and humanitarian aid was quickly expanding. The next months were dedicated to maximising the pressure on the Sudanese government to reign in the _Janjaweed_ and start political talks with the rebel groups. This chapter will look into the international attempts to achieve these goals.

### 7.1 Situation in Darfur

The disparity between the dire situation on the ground – 2 million affected by the conflict, 120,000 refugees in Chad, “mass starvation” looming ominously in the background and WFP Executive Director James Morris admitting he had “never seen people who are as frightened as those displaced in Darfur” – and the policies adopted at the UN emphasising gentle persuasion, solidarity and the outright avoidance of strong action against Khartoum, was palpable.

Despite the surge in media attention directed towards Darfur both regionally, nationally and internationally, with damning judgments of Sudan and

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1. UN News, 17 May 2004, "UN estimates 2 million Sudanese in Darfur area now affected by conflict."
2. UN News, 14 May 2004, "Sudan: UN in 'desperate need' of funds for Darfur refugees as rains approach."
5. See for example: The Daily Telegraph, 3 May 2004, “In this ravaged land, the old insanity of racism is breeding imminent catastrophe. Ethnic violence is ripping apart Darfur in western Sudan. Author Irvine Welsh, the first person to report from the region, sees the tragedy”; CNN, 12 May 2004, Christiane Amanpour. “Sudan's hellish humanitarian crisis”; de Volkskrant, 12 May 2004, “Sudan sluit vrede terwijl de volgende oorlog woedt; Oplaaiende strijd rond Darfur draait niet alleen om grotere autonomie, het gaat uiteindelijk om de macht in Khartoem” [Sudan secures peace while the next war rages; Conflict blazing in Darfur is not only about autonomy, it concerns power in Khartoum]; The Economist, 15 May 2004, “Fleeing the horsemen who kill for Khartoum-Sudan”; The International Herald Tribune, 15 May 2004, “A complex ethnic reality with a long history; Darfur”; The Boston Globe, 20 May 2004, “Stopping
the international response employing the term ‘genocide’ with increasing frequency, evidence suggests that such attention did not correlate to the intensity of violence on the ground. Of course attacks such as the Janjaweed incursion into a border-town in Chad continued, but in the weeks following the 8 April ceasefire the brutalities significantly decreased. Indeed, the preceding months of February and March witnessed some of the most devastating and blood-thirsty attacks in the entire Darfur conflict, whilst in April and May there were few reports of the mass rapes and other atrocities that had characterised those earlier months. It has been argued that this situation demonstrates the greater scrutiny of Khartoum as a result of the by-now wide international and public awareness of Darfur. In contrast, others such as UN emergency relief officer, Daniel Augstburger, on returning from Darfur, offered the opinion that the situation had calmed only “because there are no more villages to burn.” Whatever the truth, and the decrease in violence notwithstanding, disease, malnutrition and the other horrors that quickly follow the mass displacement of entire populations ensured that the death toll in Darfur continued to rise towards catastrophic proportions.

In Darfur itself, refugees and IDPs, terrified of the Janjaweed and fearing becoming the targets of attacks, and who had earlier refused aid for the same reasons now began to refuse to return home, preferring the relative sanctity provided by their squalid camps. Yet even this was being increasingly threatened as Chadian forces began to clash with the Janjaweed. The contradictions continued as reports of government bombings at the end of the month, and accusations by either side over the killing of civilians marked something of an official breaking of the 8 April ceasefire, while the African Union released a

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Sudan’s slow-motion genocide”; The Times, 18 May 2004, “Cleansing in Sudan may soon become genocide”; The Observer, 30 May 2004, “Empty villages mark trail of Sudan’s hidden war: Carter Dougherty reports from west Darfur, where Khartoum’s genocidal killers have made a million homeless”; The Washington Post, 30 May 2004, “The Darfur Catastrophe.”

6 Agence France Presse, 29 April 2004, “Sudan pro-government militia attacks Chad border town: official.”
7 See also Figure 1 in Chapter 1.
8 Agence France Presse, 12 May 2004, “Sudan’s Darfur calm because ‘no more villages to burn,’ UN official says.”
10 Associated Press, 9 May 2004, “Dozens killed as Chadian army battles Sudanese militia inside Chad.”