

All Darfur peacekeepers will be African

by UPI

KHARTOUM, Sudan -- African Union Chairman Alpha Oumar Konare said Monday all 26,000 peacekeepers deployed in Sudan's Darfur region will come from African countries. Under a U.N. Security Council resolution, an agreement on the force's composition was to be agreed upon by Aug. 30, a BBC correspondent reported. Konare met with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir in Khartoum Monday. Bashir had resisted having non-African soldiers in his country, but Konare said the issue had been resolved. "I can confirm today that we have received sufficient commitments from African countries that we will not have to resort to non-African forces," Konare told the BBC. Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria and Senegal have promised to contribute manpower to the force, the report said. So far, there are 7,000 AU forces in the area, which has been racked by violence for the past four years. Aid agencies estimate 200,000 people have been killed in fighting between government-backed militias and the region's black population. Another 2 million have been displaced, with many fleeing to refugee camps in Chad.

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