

Mission in Sudan lacks air transport

by UPI

KHARTOUM, Sudan -- The U.N.-African Union mission in Darfur has received commitments for most of its infantry needs but hasn't secured pledges for air transport, an official said. The African Union-U.N. mission updated the AU Peace and Security Council in Ethiopia, saying it needed medium utility and heavy transport helicopters and a lighter helicopter unit, the U.N. Integrated Regional Information Networks reported Thursday. "We are talking about attack and utility helicopters, heavy lift transport units," said Henry Anyidoho, the AU-U.N. deputy joint special representative-designate in Sudan. "These are still outstanding. We have not received any pledges." The U.N. Security Council said it was concerned about delays in getting the mission running, calling on members to provide the necessary air and ground transport units. After a closed-door meeting Wednesday, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also urged Sudanese parties to participate in the upcoming Darfur talks in Libya. "The council underlines its willingness to take action against any party that seeks to undermine the peace process, including by failing to respect such a cessation of hostilities or by impeding the talks, peacekeeping or humanitarian aid," Ban said in a statement.

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