

Darfur needs \$8 billion for recovery and development projects

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November 1, 2012 (KHARTOUM) - Darfur region needs some eight billion dollars to achieve rehabilitation and development projects; said the regional authority as preparations are taking place to hold a donors conference next December.

Sudan and former rebel Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) signed a framework peace document called Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) in July 2011, but Darfur Regional Authority (DRA) is facing many challenges due to the lack of funds and the recent surge of violence.

The federal government failed to honor its financial commitments to implement the dispositions of the peace document particularly the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. But also, foreign donors say they are discouraged by restrictions imposed by security services to visit the region.

In a press conference held at Khartoum airport upon his return on Wednesday from Doha where a donors conference is scheduled for December, Ibrahim Madibou, DRA spokesperson told reporters that 8 billion dollars was determined after studies carried out by the government and international partners.

He added that the identified projects aim to achieve development projects and provide services to encourage the return of IDPs and refugees to their villages in Darfur.

Madibou, who was a former member of the rebel Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) and a signatory of Abuja peace deal of 2006, admitted that the DRA is facing many challenges but refused to speak about failure of the Doha document.

He further expressed hope that the donors conference will be successful, stressing on the active participation of the international community in the assessment of recovery and development projects.

He further called on the finance ministry to release the money (\$200 million) the government committed itself to pay for reconstruction projects and return of refugees and IDPs. He pointed out that the ministry did not deliver the funds despite a presidential directive to disburse it.

He also called on the holdout rebel groups to join the peace process and praised the signing of goodwill and cessation of hostility agreement between the government and a breakaway faction of Justice and Equality Movement last October in Doha.

An European delegation visited Darfur last month to inspect the progress achieved in the implementation of the peace deal. The European diplomats complained, according to the DRA, from the obstruction exerted by security service preventing them from visiting the region.

However, the head of the authority Tijani Al-Sissi discussed the issue with the director of security and intelligence services and a joint committee was formed to deal with such complications.

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