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PEACEKEEPING CENTRE

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## **The Pearson Peacekeeping Centre to Help Fight Violence and Sexual Abuse in Darfur**

OTTAWA, ON (September 5, 2008) – The Pearson Peacekeeping Centre (PPC) has secured funding from the Government of Canada’s Global Peace and Security Fund to develop and implement a training program to enhance the operational effectiveness of African police and military personnel selected for the United Nations/African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), Sudan. An important element of the program will address violence and sexual abuse committed against women and children.

“Confronting sexual abuse and violence as well as bringing to justice perpetrators of these crimes are steps that are long overdue,” said Suzanne Monaghan, President of the PPC. “We are designing and delivering a program that specifically focuses on prevention, investigation, interviewing, evidence gathering and reporting of rapes and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence.”

The Centre has received \$3.95 million from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DEFAIT) to train up to 420 African police and 60 African military officers over the next six months to respond more effectively to peace and security challenges in Darfur. Several courses will be provided including training in United Nations policing skills for police officers from African countries; staff officer skills training for middle and senior level African military officers who will be working in United Nations mission headquarters; and police investigation skills for African police officers responsible for preventing and dealing with crimes of sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated against women and children in Darfur. Most of the courses are expected to be conducted in Kenya.

“Canada, through the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, is taking a leadership role to address the systematic violence against women, men, boys and girls in Darfur,” stated Ted Itani, veteran humanitarian delegate with the Red Cross Movement and the United Nations. “The enhanced knowledge and skills of police officers will increase the likelihood that a police investigation of rape and other types of violence, especially sexual and gender-based, will result in successful criminal prosecution.”

The Pearson Peacekeeping Centre is a Canadian-based institution dedicated to making international peace operations more effective through research, education, training and capacity building.

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