

**ICC judges set May 2014 as trial date for two Darfur rebel commanders**  
**Sudan Tribune**  
**6 March 2013**

(KHARTOUM) – The judges of the International Criminal Court (ICC) have decided that the trial for two Darfur rebel commanders accused of killing African peacekeepers will commence in May 2014.

Abdallah Banda Abakaer Nourain and Saleh Mohammed Jerbo Jamus each face three counts of violence to life in the form of murder, war crime of attacking a peacekeeping mission and pillaging.

The two men allegedly commanded a 1,000-strong rebel force in the Sept. 2007 attack, on the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS) base in Haskanita in North Darfur. They looted the camp of 17 vehicles, refrigerators, computers, mobile phones, ammunition and money.

Bahr Idriss Abu Garda, a third rebel commander, was cleared by the court from involvement in the massive attack which drew international condemnation.

Banda and Jerbo have not denied their role but contend that the AMIS base was a legitimate military target and as such the trial will be dedicated to arguing this issue before the judges.

The pair appeared voluntarily at the Hague-based court in June 2010 after a summons to appear was issued for them.

Even though the confirmation of charges hearing was concluded quickly in March 2011 the trial has yet to start as the ICC registry had trouble recruiting and training interpreters who spoke Zaghawa language used by the defendants.

Furthermore, the defense filed motions seeking to have the judges compel Khartoum to allow it to carry investigations in Darfur.

The judges reminded Banda and Jerbo to comply with conditions of their summons and also ordered the registry to coordinate with the Dutch government in transporting them when it is time for trial.

The ICC is investigating both sides of the Darfur conflict. Four others remain wanted for war crimes in Darfur: Sudanese Defense Minister Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein, South Kordofan governor Ahmad Haroun, pro-government Janjaweed militia leader Ali Kushayb and Sudan's President Omer Hassan al-Bashir, whom prosecutors accuse of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur.

Sudan refuses to recognize the jurisdiction of the court calling it a neo-colonial plot aimed at overthrowing the regime.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted resolution 1593 in March 2005 which referred the situation in Darfur to the ICC for investigations.