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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

Over 160 dead in Jonglei massacre

An unknown number of armed Murle tribesmen raided a Lou Nuer village near Akobo County in Jonglei state over the weekend killing over 180 people and injuring some 31 others, **local dailies** and **international news agencies** report.

Akobo Commissioner Goi Jooyul Yol, appearing visibly shaken at a press conference in Bor Town on Monday morning, detailed that 100 women, 50 children and 11 SPLA soldiers are among the dead in Akobo. "Of the 29 wounded, 3 are SPLA and the rest are civilians," he said.

"Dozens of children and women are still missing and most are believed to be either killed or abducted – by the attackers," he said adding that a "thorough" search by local authorities is underway. The Commissioner later revised his figures saying that the death toll has reached 185 with some 31 people injured. He further said that reports are still arriving.

UN forces deployed to Akobo pulled out last week "failing short to making meaningful impact" there, the County leader said. SPLA has too, failed to control the situation.

Akobo Commissioner Jooyul called for the "immediate disarmament" of all communities in Jonglei "and particularly the Murle before next dry season in order to save lives."

"The people of Akobo are trying to survive by all means," the commissioner said. He complained that the food airlifted to Akobo by UN is insufficient and the fight for living in that "hostile environment" proved dangerous.

The County leader calls for humanitarian assistance "without hindrance as the only viable solution to the Akobo misery."

In New York the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, noting "with extreme concern" the 2 August attack in Akobo, condemned the reported killing of civilian and SPLA soldiers and directed the UNMIS to "extend all possible assistance to those affected by this heinous act and work with local authorities to restore calm."

The Secretary General called upon the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) to bring to justice those responsible for these events and take the necessary measures to protect civilians across Southern Sudan.

Khartoum 'arming Sudan militias' – SPLA officer

A general in South Sudan's army has told the **BBC** the government in the north is arming militias accused of being behind recent ethnic violence.

Maj-Gen Kuol Deim Kuol said his SPLA army was trying to disarm the local population but was being hampered by the continuing supply of weapons.

"There must be a force somewhere, a force that keeps arming these militias, a force that keeps sending ammunition to the militias," Maj-Gen Kuol told the BBC's Network Africa programme. "There is not another force in this way that can keep arming and sending ammunition to the local population apart from the Sudanese army and the [northern governing] National Congress Party," he said.

Call for disarmament after massacre

(**IRIN** – 03/04/09, Juba) The weekend inter-ethnic attack that has left dozens of women and children dead near Akobo in Jonglei State demonstrated the urgent need to disarm communities

in the region, an official said.

"The attackers targeted people who were looking for food," a local NGO worker in Akobo told **IRIN** on 3 August. "Many of the injured have gunshot and panga [machete] wounds." Following the 2 August attack, he added, some people were moving west of Akobo town or towards the Ethiopian border, where they hope they can be safer and "find something to eat".

Akobo County Commissioner Goi Jooyul Yol said the 2 August dawn attack occurred at Geni River in Mareng, 40km southwest of Akobo. "The victims, mostly women and young children, had camped in the area for three weeks in search of food by forming fishing [camps] along Geni river, while being watched over by two dozen police and army for protection," he said in a statement.

Some 65 civilians and 12 army officers, who died, were buried by the river on 3 August. "Dozens of children and women are still missing and most are believed to be either killed or abducted by the attackers," he said.

"The authorities are still searching for survivors by beating drums and checking the river and the woods for more dead...There is an urgent need of disarming all Jonglei communities and particularly the Murle before the next dry season in order to save lives." The attack cut supplies to the more than 19,000 displaced Lou Nuer people in Akobo, who had fled earlier clashes with the Murle in April in which 250 were reportedly killed.

Armed groups kill 8 people in Yirol-West County

The Commissioner of Yirol-West County in Lakes State, Agok Manyiel Dhieu, told **Miraya FM** that there are security breaches despite the presence of disarmament forces in the region. Agok added that armed youth groups have killed people in Yirol-West, Nyibor and other areas. He pointed out that 8 people, mostly women, were killed last week.

Presidency of the Republic to mull AAA fate

The head of the Finance Committee at the Abyei Area Legislative Assembly, Fiyol Mathiang, said that a delegation from Abyei held talks yesterday with State Ministry at the Presidency, Idries Abdulgadir, and the Director-General of Commissions, Ali Hamid, **Al-Sahafa** reports. Fiyol, who heads the delegation, said that the officials assured them that the Presidency has issued directives to all relevant institutions to facilitate the implementation of the PCA ruling on Abyei. He also said that the State Minister informed them that the Presidency would soon consult over the fact of the incumbent Abyei Area Administration to decide on whether or not to appoint a new one. Mathiang also said that the delegation from Abyei turned down an offer from the Presidency to pay one month salaries to AAA employees. He pointed out that the delegation has requested some SDG8.5 million to cover for employee salaries.

SAF repulses JEM attack near Babanousa, Southern Kordofan

The SAF clashed recently with Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) fighters around Samoua area near Mujlad, Southern Kordofan causing heavy losses on the JEM. Five SAF soldiers were injured during the clashes, **Al-Sahafa** reports. A government official reports that authorities have decided to defer an UNMIS-sponsored visit of representatives of the governments of the US, the UK, Norway, Holland, Italy, Kenya and Ethiopia and of the AU and the Arab League as a result. The delegation was traveling to Southern Kordofan to appraise progress in the implementation of the PCA ruling on Abyei.

On his part, JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim told **Reuters** that the JEM forces were on an administrative mission when they were attacked by the SAF. **Al-Wattan** also quotes a prominent Misseriya tribesman as saying that there are reports that the JEM commander who led the attack was killed in the clashes.

JEM seeking to recruit disgruntled Misseriya tribesmen

JEM elements in Mujlad, Southern Kordofan, seeks to recruit the Misseriya, leveraging on the anger that some Misseriya tribesmen have expressed following the PCA ruling on Abyei to sources told ***Al-Rai Al-Aam***. The sources have called on authorities to be vigilant because there are reports the JEM is also using money to lure Misseriya youths to join their ranks.

Joint military operations against LRA fruitless, VP Machar says

Joint military attacks by Uganda and DRC against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have not fulfilled the expected results of forcing LRA leader Joseph Kony to sign a peace deal with the Ugandan Government, GoSS Vice President Riek Machar told ***Miraya FM***. The VP added that a delegation from the LRA will soon be arriving in Juba to discuss the matter. He also urged all sides to intensify political communications to convince Kony to sign the agreement.

NEC endorses geographical constituencies

The National Electoral Commission endorsed the distribution, demarcation and announcement of geographical constituencies of all states in Sudan, yesterday, ***Radio Miraya FM*** reports. The head of the NEC Registration Department, Mukhtar Al-Assam, told a press conference in Khartoum yesterday that the NEC will meet with representatives of political parties and political forces today to update them on the special arrangements for the elections. He also said that the NEC would open its doors for one month to receive objections and appeals on the distribution of these constituencies.

Morality Police to sue Arman

Morality Police may institute legal measures against SPLM-Northern Sector leader Yassir Arman, ***Al-Rai Al-Aam*** has learnt. Sources say that the Morality Police may file charges against SPLM's Yassir Arman over recent statements he made at an SPLM rally in Jebel Auliya, south of Khartoum, in which he said that girls are being harassed by the Morality Police.

In another development, Spokesperson for SPLM-Northern Sector, Keji Germelili, said yesterday that the Northern Sector was united under the leadership of Yassir Arman. She was responding to recent reports of a rift in the party's ranks, reports ***Al-Khartoum***.

Protests outside court as Lubna Hussein faces lashes over trousers

(***AFP*** – 04/08/09) The trial of Lubna Hussein was adjourned today, as police used tear gas to disperse hundreds of demonstrators outside the Khartoum court. The judge decided to adjourn it to September in order to determine whether Lubna Ahmed al-Hussein, who also works with the United Nations, has legal immunity, defence lawyer Jalal al-Sayyid said.

Hussein told a hearing last week that she wished to waive her UN immunity but, in apparent disagreement within her defence team, a lawyer argued that she had immunity and asked the judge to ignore Hussein's wishes, Sayyid said.

The judge will defer the issue to the Sudanese foreign ministry ahead of her next court date on September 7, he said.

Police dispersed hundreds of women and activists from Sudanese opposition political parties who demonstrated in support of Hussein outside the court house after they tried blocking a road, an AFP correspondent reported.

On emerging from the court, which was closed to reporters, Hussein again insisted she wanted to be tried and said she had resigned from her job in the UN's media office in Sudan.

"The court should not have delayed the trial," she told journalists.

The Times reports that scores of women protested outside court room in support of Ms. Hussein. Ululating women carried banners and headbands with the message, "No return to the dark ages," and shouted slogans against laws which ban dress deemed indecent. Riot police armed with batons moved in to clear the streets around the protesters. "We are against this law. It is against women, against Islam and against human rights," said Zainab Badradin, one of the women in the crowd.

"Her main argument is that her clothes are decent and that she did not break the law," defence lawyer Nabil Adib Abdalla said.

"Failing that, we will ask for a stay of the proceedings to challenge the trial in the constitutional court ... We are saying the law is so widely drafted that it contravenes her basic right, her right to a fair trial," he added.

AU Panel to hold talks in Libya with armed groups

Al-Sahafa reports that the AU Darfur Panel is due for talks today with Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi in the Libyan capital today. Spokesperson for SLM-Unity, Mahjoub Hussein, intimates that members of the Panel would also hold talks with representatives of the Darfur armed movements while in Libya to discuss the step the Panel has taken to help realize equality and peace in Darfur.

Gunmen kill local leader of North Darfur camp

(**Sudan Tribune website** – 03/08/09, El-Fasher) Unknown gunmen killed on Sunday the Abu Shouk IDP camp traditional chief and his wife near the capital of North Darfur state, El-Fasher. Abu Shouk camp is the home of some 90,000 residents forced from their homes by more than five years of violence. The Umda Omer Adam Isaac and his wife were killed in their house inside the camp in the evening.

The IDPs complain of night attacks inside the camps by unidentified assailants. Generally, they accuse government-backed militias but in this case there are no details about who killed them.

In a meeting with North Darfur Governor Othman Kibir, the head of the UNAMID, Rodolphe Adada, called on the Sudanese Government to investigate the incident and bring those responsible to justice. He also paid a visit to families of the deceased at Abu Shouk camp where he expressed condolences on behalf of UNAMID. UNAMID has been working with all Darfuris and that "today, this death is like losing a member of our own family," he said.

JEM says Sudan's rejection to release POWs proves lack of credibility

The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) has slammed the rejection of the Sudanese government to release its fighters as a precondition to the signing of a ceasefire agreement, reports **Sudan Tribune website** (03/08/09). The JEM described these preconditions as another example of a lack of credibility from Khartoum and "proves the existence of a power struggle within the NCP over the way forward to solve the Darfur conflict".

"They agreed with us that the detained JEM members are prisoners of war and accepted to exchange them," said JEM official spokesperson, Ahmed Hussein Adam, in a telephone interview with **Sudan Tribune**.

"Mustafa Osman Ismail is maneuvering to strengthen his position within the party," he said. According to the JEM spokesperson, Ghazi Salah Eddin who is in charge of Darfur file, "does not have the upper hand over the talks" stressing "this struggle between the different NCP factions would hinder the peace process".

Asked whether they would join the meeting, Ahmed said they have not received an invitation for this meeting.

Commentary

“Insanity in the name of the Shariah” (Commentary by Austrian newspaper *Die Presse*)

The paper reports that Lubna Hussein, former journalist and now working for the UN, was to be punished with 40 lashes for wearing pants in public. But she wanted to bring this to court and mobilised colleagues and half of the diplomatic corps in Khartoum to show not only the court, but also to the entire world how grotesquely the shariah was interpreted in Sudan. Also UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, a man who has not really stood out for his courage so far, supported Ms. Hussein. He made clear that “Flogging is against international human rights standards”.

The Differences within the US Administration on Sudan (Commentary by *Al-Ayyam*'s Board Chairman, Mahjub Mohamed Saleh)

The American position on Sudan acquired a prominent place in the US press this week, as the topic that has stirred the first public dispute inside Obama Administration. Moreover, the dispute is between the officials closest to President Obama, namely Susan Rice and Scott Gration, the two advisers most intimately linked to American policy.

The fact is that the Darfur issue has for the past five years acquired a momentum in internal American policies that exceeds Darfur's size and the size of Sudan because it has become an internal policy issue raised even during mid-term elections. It is an issue that has been adopted for various reasons by institutions, organizations, civil society groups, and research centres that have different agendas. The Darfur problem was interpreted and classified by each of these bodies according to its perspective. Some considered it similar to the genocide that took place in Rwanda and dealt with it from that angle, seeking to vent the guilt complex felt by the major countries because of the negative attitude they adopted towards the Rwanda events. They started to incite the international community from that perspective. Those are the ones who raised the banners of genocide. Others saw in it a conflict between the Arabs and Africans, so they mobilized Americans of African origin and appealed to the negative opinion about the Arabs since the 09/11 events. A third group had a humanitarian objective, so they focused on the humanitarian tragedy in order to attract financial support to their organizations which are active in that field. Others tried to attribute it to environmental degradation in order to spotlight the issues of the environment, scarcity of water resources, and desertification. Israel looked at it within the framework of its conflict with the Arab world. It revived the scenes of the Nazi Holocaust in order to stir sentiments it has continued to fan across the years. Thus diverse tribes in the international community with different agenda got together to kindle tragic events that we have created with our hands and did not have the political will to remedy them internally or provide the concessions required to deal with a real crisis from which the people of Darfur suffer. On the contrary, despite all these external parties that became active on the arena, we adopted wrong policies that further fanned the flames.

The Obama administration came to power with the Darfur problem acquiring these serious internal dimensions in the United States. Consequently it is not strange that confusion should appear in the ranks of the new Administration towards the problem and that there should be divergent views, especially since the situation on the ground in Darfur has started to show limited improvement with the erosion of the fighting somewhat and the reduction in the number of clashes and victims after various parties became exhausted. The problem has not been solved, but the exhaustion of all parties has reduced the violence of the confrontations. Official

figures have shown a reduction in the number of victims and this was mentioned in the reports of the United Nations and the US Administration and also in the observations of the new American envoy who has visited the province and met with the leaders of the armed groups, the local administrations, and UN representatives. This new situation has further increased the confusion of the new US Administration because it led the special US envoy to convictions that contradict the stereotyped portrait of Darfur that is embedded in the minds of others in the American Administration, led by Susan Rice.

But those who think these differences can lead to dramatic changes in the position of the American Administration are mistaken. The crisis still exists. The civil war is still going on. The militants still have their fingers on the triggers. The Chad-Sudan conflict is contributing to fanning the flames. The only thing that can produce a dramatic change in the American position is the Sudanese effort itself; the mutual concessions that can be provided and the radical solutions that the people of Darfur and the people of Sudan will propose themselves.

The matter will not stop at Darfur itself but will also involve the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement [CPA] between North and South, inclusive demarcation of borders, preparations for free and fair elections, and providing all the requirements for democratic transformation. Perhaps the latest statement by an official American spokesman yesterday that was cited by the official US radio "Radio Sawa" shows that the American Administration become aware of what the requirements of the coming phase are. Following is the full text of this statement: The spokesman for the US State Department B.J. Crowley said that the United States is undertaking a revision of its policy towards Sudan in the light of the existence of many dossiers that are of interest to the two countries. Crowley was responding Friday to a question on the official position on the statements made before Congress by the US Presidential Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration, about the lack of evidence that supports keeping Sudan on the list of nations sponsoring terrorism or proving involvement by the Sudanese government in war crimes. Crowley said that the terrorism-combating dossier is important for the two states. He added: "We have received cooperation from the Sudanese government in recent years that was much better than before in the domain of combating terrorism." Crowley said that the United States seeks full implementation of the CPA between North and South and the establishment of peace and ending the crisis in the Darfur Province. He said that he expected the revision will be completed within the coming weeks.

The US Congress discussed the situation in Sudan on Thursday, with the Special US Envoy to Sudan General Scott Gration testifying before the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee at a session during which legislators expressed concern at the conditions in Darfur and the fate of the CPA. Gration said that the United States was committed to the attainment of peace in Sudan. He said that the administration of President Barack Obama was working on two tracks to ensure full implementation of the CPA, which was signed in 2005, and establish comprehensive and lasting peace to ensure security and stability for Darfur.

These are the dimensions of the expected US policy that will be the focus of the coming dialogue.