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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

## Headlines

- SC deploras deadly attacks against civilians in southern Sudan (**UN News**)
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- Aid groups say Sudan took millions during expulsions (**Reuters**)
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- Doha talks to resume mid August – negotiator (**Al-Wifaq**)
- Infantry troops from Burkina Faso join UNAMID (**UN News**)
- Eleven drown as river boat sinks in Sudan (**Reuters**)
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- New MFA spokesperson says ready to cooperate with media (**Al-Khartoum**)

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# Highlights

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## **UNSC deplores deadly attacks against civilians in southern Sudan**

**UN News Centre** 4/8/09 reported Security Council members today condemned the “grave attacks” in southern Sudan this weekend that have killed at least 185 people, many of them women and children.

Ambassador John Sawers of the United Kingdom, which holds the rotating Council presidency this month, said the attacks were especially concerning given that they seemed to target women and children and involved the use of sophisticated weaponry.

Mr. Sawers, speaking on behalf of Council members, stressed the need for the protection of civilians and measures to ensure humanitarian relief can reach those people in need.

They also said they support the joint efforts of the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), the Government of Southern Sudan and local authorities to investigate the causes of the violence and to prevent any retaliatory attacks.

If the attacks continue, Mr. Sawers warned, they could jeopardize the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the wide-ranging pact from 2005 that ended the long-running and brutal Sudanese civil war between north and south.

Today’s remarks from the Council echoed a statement issued yesterday by a spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in which he voiced extreme concern at the situation and directed UN officials to provide aid and assistance to the victims of the violence.

**Reuters** 4/8/09 reported analysts said the extensive targeting of women and children, and the number of dead, mark a worrying new development in this year's violence.

GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit has blamed political agitators whom he said want to show that the south cannot run itself ahead of a promised 2011 southern referendum on separation from northern Sudan.

South Sudanese and U.N. officials had hoped the recent onset of the region's rainy season would reduce the violence, as heavy downpours restricted access to remote villages. But there has been less rain than usual this year and the violence has continued.

Meanwhile, **Sudan Tribune website** 4/8/09 reported GoSS VP Dr. Riek Machar today condemned the tribal fighting and violence in semi-autonomous region saying GoSS would not tolerate irresponsible killing of civilians.

"The government of Southern Sudan will not tolerate this careless act that claimed the innocent lives of 173 women and children in Akoba County while more innocent people were also killed by foreign culprits in Western Equatoria. The government will do everything in its capacity to apprehend these criminals," He said.

Machar further said that the killing in Akobo County is “evidence that justifies the government’s policy to carry out the most awaited disarmaments of civilians with illegal arms.”

He called upon the UN to air-drop humanitarian assistance to affected population in Jonglei because Moreng Village is not accessible during the rainy season either by land or by river.

In a related development, GoSS Interior Affairs Minister Gier Chuanq has accused unnamed elements of being behind tribal conflicts in the south, saying they supply tribes with arms and ammunitions, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports. "They are enemies of peace. They do not want the implementation of the CPA," he said.

### **NCP objects election monitoring by "hostile countries"**

**Local dailies** report the National Elections Commission (NEC) yesterday held a consultative meeting with representatives of the political parties. According to **Al-Sahafa**, the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) which was represented in the meeting by the Deputy Chairman Nafie Ali Nafie voiced reservations on the participation of unnamed countries in observing the upcoming elections, saying they are "hostile".

Meanwhile, the NEC denied that it has submitted an election budget to the UN, saying it has just submitted a preliminary budgetary plan to the Presidency and is awaiting the clearance of the Ministry of Finance.

During the meeting, the NEC handed over copies of distribution and delimitation of geographical constituencies to the representatives of the political parties and asked them to submit their appeals and objections within a month.

While NEC member Gen. Al-Hardalo said a full-time and trained police force would be tasked to secure the upcoming elections in coordination with UNMIS troops, NCP Deputy Chairman Nafie Ali Nafie said UNMIS mandate is confined to the South only and it should not extend beyond that.

According to **Al-Ayyam**, Nafie said his party was for international monitoring of the elections but it has reservations on the participation of some countries which, he said, are not neutral.

**Miraya FM** 4/8/09 reported that the Deputy Chairman of the National Electoral Commission, Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, revealed that the commission received a number of requests from international organizations to monitor the upcoming general elections, saying the NEC will study these offers in order to hold fair and transparent elections in accordance with international standards.

### **Aid groups say Sudan took millions during expulsions**

**Reuters** 4/8/09 - Aid groups yesterday said Sudan had taken millions of dollars from them in seized assets and enforced redundancy payments after expelling them in retaliation for a war crimes case against the president. The Sudanese humanitarian affairs ministry said it had acted within regulations.

Three of the expelled groups told **Reuters** Sudanese authorities had taken about \$5.2 million of their assets -- including computers, vehicles, stock and equipment -- and more than \$9 million in payments to local staff who lost their jobs because of the government shut-down.

Other expelled groups either declined to comment or said they hoped their assets would go to affiliated organizations that had since been allowed to set up or expand in Sudan.

Sudan's ministry of humanitarian affairs told Reuters officials had taken the assets of the ousted groups in March but said they had acted within regulations.

State minister for humanitarian affairs Abdel Baqi al-Jailani said officials were holding the goods "in reserve" for new aid groups when they came in to replace ousted groups.

"The NGOs (non-governmental organizations) signed an agreement that if they are expelled, their assets will be used by others," he said. "The assets are being held in reserve for the coming NGOs. They will be used by them."

The minister added the redundancy payments had also been made in line with regulations. "If they have any grievances, they can contact me and we are ready to negotiate."

The French arm of Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) said the expulsion cost it around 2 million euros.

"700,000 euros (\$1 million) of that was linked to a labour decree which we view as invalid, that we were forced into following," said Jane Coyne, MSF-France's former head of mission in Sudan.

Aid groups said they had been ordered to pay six months salary to former staff in compensation for the "aggressive termination" of their contracts, for some aid groups on top of contractual redundancy payments.

Aid officials said the government either froze their bank accounts, or ordered aid groups to hand redundancy payments to the government which then distributed it among workers.

"For me the six months, it is an abnormality. It was a penalty that was imposed on us," said Coyne.

She said another 791,800 euros went on normal redundancy payments, with the rest the cost of seized vehicles, laptops, cars, communications gear, and equipment.

"Of course, MSF views those assets as ours -- ours to use to provide services to the population. The government had no right to seize those assets."

MSF Holland spokeswoman Naomi Pardington said the group had to pay out 850,000 euros to staff in line with the MSF's own regulations, and another 650,000 euros enforced by the government, while it lost more than 790,000 euros of assets.

Oxfam GB spokesman Alun McDonald said Sudan took around £5 million (\$8.5 million) — more than £2 million in assets and nearly £3 million in redundancies and shut down costs.

### **Public Prosecutor to be requested to strip Arman of immunity**

**Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports the Community Security Police filed a case against SPLM leading figure and Parliament member Mr. Yassir Arman under sections 69/159 of the Criminal Act charging him of disturbing public safety and defamation. An Informed source told the paper yesterday that all necessary legal measures were taken, adding that a request would be submitted to the Public Prosecutor today to lift Arman's immunity to allow his trial.

SPLM leader and National Assembly Deputy Speaker Atem Garang described the move as "legal terrorism", according to **Al-Ahdath**.

### **Doha talks to resume mid August – negotiator**

**Al-Wifaq** reports head of the Government delegation to Doha talks Dr. Amin Hassan Omer as

saying that talks with Darfur armed movements in Doha would resume in mid August.

### **Infantry troops from Burkina Faso join UNAMID**

**UN News** 4/8/09 - The first infantry soldiers from Burkina Faso arrived today in Darfur to serve with the joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping mission in the troubled Sudanese region, as more blue helmets from three other countries prepare to join the force soon as well.

An advance party of 134 soldiers arrived in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur state, with another 133 scheduled to arrive next Tuesday, according to the mission (known as UNAMID). The remaining members of the infantry battalion – totaling more than 800 soldiers – are expected to be deployed by mid-September in El Geneina and Foro Baranga in West Darfur state.

Today's arrival means UNAMID now has 13,651 military personnel deployed across the region, or nearly 70 per cent of the authorized number of staff under the 2007 Security Council resolution setting up the force.

The mission also reported today that more troops from Ethiopia, Tanzania and Egypt are expected to be deployed in Darfur later this month, further boosting its strength.

### **Eleven drown as river boat sinks in Sudan**

**Reuters** 4/8/09 - Eleven men drowned when a boat that was carrying them sank on the river Nile near the Sudanese capital Khartoum on Tuesday, police reported. Officers said overcrowding on the boat was partly to blame for the accident which took place off Islanj island north of the city. A police statement said the boat was carrying 40 passengers as it crossed from the island towards the river's eastern bank. It added that divers were still searching for some of the bodies, but 29 passengers had survived.

"Police said the accident was caused by the severity of the current and the overloading of the boat," the statement said." People on the island said they had not seen an incident like it for more than 40 years."

### **Blue Nile Bridge to be closed on Friday and Saturday**

Khartoum Traffic Police has announced that the Blue Nile Bridge linking Khartoum and Khartoum North would be closed next Friday through Saturday for maintenance, ***Al-Sahafa*** reports.

### **New MFA spokesperson says ready to cooperate with media**

The new MFA spokesperson, Mr. Muawia Osman Khaled, told reporters yesterday that he was ready to cooperate with the media and journalists, ***Al-Khartoum*** reports. Mr. Khaled officially assumed his functions yesterday as MFA spokesperson.