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Highlights

SPLM, Umma Party sign declaration of principles

Local dailies report the Umma Party and the SPLM yesterday signed a ten-point declaration of principles (DoP). According to **Al-Sahafa**, the DoP stressed the need for full democratic transition. The two parties affirmed that self-determination was a right for the people of the South and it should be facilitated to take place on schedule and its result, whether unity or secession, should be respected.

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports Al-Mahdi told journalists in Juba that the memorandum of understanding did not include an alliance with the SPLM during upcoming elections, saying it was premature to talk about alliance but he did not rule it out.

However, **Sudan Tribune website** 5/9/09 reported the two sides agreed on Saturday in Juba to form a political alliance before the next April elections.

Mr. Mahdi said last Thursday he was against any attempts to sabotage the right of self-determination for the people of Southern Sudan.

The agreement included the perspective of the two parties on the issues of elections, referendum, good neighborliness, attractive unity and human rights.

"We have come together as two parties to contribute to help our country get out of the national crisis we are in," said SPLM Secretary General after the signing of the agreement, adding "We are also putting together our efforts to ensure free and fair elections in our country, so that our people can choose their own government in a free and democratic process."

The alliance deal was inked by GoSS VP President Riek Machar and Nasser El-Deen Al-Hadi Al-Mahdi, the deputy Chairman of the Umma party.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by the SPLM Chairman and FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit and Sadiq Al-Mahdi, a former prime minister and the head of the Umma party. Salva Kiir and Sadiq Al-Mahdi shook hands and then embraced each other.

We are committed to self-determination – VP Taha

Addressing NCP conference on thought, culture and information yesterday, VP Ali Osman Taha reiterated Government's commitment to the right to self-determination for the South, **Local dailies** report. According to **Al-Sudani**, Taha criticized unnamed bodies who claim state's Africanism. "We are not Africans. Those seeking to force it on us can secede. Let them take away part of this soil to realize their Africanism," he said.

UN, government say humanitarian situation in the south stable

HAC Commissioner Hassabo Mohamed Abdul Rahman and DSRSG/RHC Ameerah Haq yesterday discussed the humanitarian situation in the South and the efforts underway to address the situation based on the joint report presented earlier in Juba, **Al-Sahafa** reports.

The meeting confirmed stability of the humanitarian situation in the South by virtue of joint efforts made by the concerned bodies. The meeting also discussed the humanitarian situation

in Darfur, affirming stability of the situation in the region. The humanitarian situation in Southern Kordofan was also the focus of the meeting.

Meanwhile, **Radio Miraya** 5/9/09 reported that GoSS Cabinet agreed to form a Food Security Council under the chairmanship of GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit. GoSS Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Samson Lukare Kwaje said that the current food security situation in Southern Sudan was alarming.

The Governor of Jonglei State, State Kuol Manyang, said that the two towns of Pibor and Akobo are affected by food shortages. He told Miraya that the situation was caused by the lack of rain and food items in the markets, and that even cattle were dying from disease.

Manyang appealed to the concerned humanitarian agencies to intervene. However, Governor Manyang said in order to maintain security in the State the internal routes should be rehabilitated, adding it is difficult to maintain security if the people are isolated.

In a related development, **SMC** 3/9/09 reported UN agencies started air-dropping of food items in western Equatoria, Jongeli and Upper Nile states in southern Sudan. The ministry of humanitarian affairs ordered concerned bodies to coordinate efforts to bridge the food gap in the south.

SMC has learned about an intervention by UN agencies, ministry of humanitarian affairs and some Arab countries to address the food crises in the South estimated to cost US\$44m.

Administration reaches consensus on policy towards Sudan - Gration

Radio Miraya 5/9/09 -The U.S. Special envoy to Sudan, Scott Gration, has said that the U.S. administration has reached an agreement concerning the U.S. policy towards Sudan. He told journalists that his country reached an agreement on a broad framework on what he called "incentives and pressures" on dealing with Sudan Government, adding President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton were in close proximity to sign the final version of the plan.

JSR Adada resigned to protest against six-month renewal

Sudan Tribune website 5/9/09 — The former head of the Joint African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) resigned from his post after it had been renewed for six months instead of one year.

Rodolphe Adada stepped down from his duties as UNAMID chief on August 31. UN Secretary General accepted his resignation and wished him continued success in his "future role with the Government of the Congo."

Sudanese President Omer Al-Bashir disclosed last Thursday that Adada had quit his job to protest UN refusal to renew his contract. "Adada resigned embodying the dignity of the African man," he said.

"Adada resigned after the UN renewed him for six months only instead of one year as it is the rule and he preferred to quit his post because he felt it as disapproval of his two year action in Darfur," a UN official told Sudan Tribune on condition of anonymity from New York.

He hinted that officials at the UN were not satisfied with his performance and his last April's report irritated them.

Reacting to Adada resignation, the AU Executive Council expressed "concern at the way the decision of renewing Mr. Adada's contract was handled by the UN Secretariat," said a statement issued in Tripoli on August 31 but obtained by Sudan Tribune today.

The African Union urged "the UN Secretariat to ensure that all decisions relating to the senior management of UNAMID are taken after due consultations with the AU Commission and to avoid recurrence of such situations."

The UN's move against the first Congo national to hold a high ranking position in the international organization, was seen by the African Union as violation of the principle of joint responsibility with regard to the management of UNAMID.

The AU Executive Council also reaffirms "the shared responsibility of the AU and the United Nations in ensuring the strategic leadership to UNAMID and encourages the Commission to fully play its role in this regard."

Irish FM visits Sudan for talks over kidnapped aid worker

Sudan Tribune website 5/9/09 — Irish Foreign Minister Micheal Martin is traveling to Sudan for talks over the kidnapping of aid worker Sharon Commins who was abducted two months ago in the troubled region of Darfur.

Ms Commins, 32, and her colleague Ugandan Hilda Kawuki were taken from a compound run by the GOAL aid agency in North Darfur town of Kutum by six armed men on July 3

The kidnappers have made a two million US dollar ransom demand for their release. But, the Sudanese government refused to pay it saying it would encourage them to abduct more foreign aid workers in the future.

"We believe that the best chance of a satisfactory result being achieved rests with the Irish Government impressing upon their Sudanese counterparts the absolute seriousness of this situation," said Goal's CEO John O'Shea.

Sudanese security service arrest Darfuri activist in Khartoum

Sudan Tribune website 4/9/09 – Sudanese security service arrested a Darfuri human rights activist in the capital Khartoum, holding him incommunicado and without charge or trial for a week, a rights group said.

In a statement released from Khartoum, the Sudanese Human Rights Activists Forum (SHAF) said the security service arrested on August 30, Abdel-Majeed Saleh Abakr Haroun, Darfuri campaigner and held him in custody without charge.

Haroun, who is a leading member of Darfur Democratic Forum, "was on his way to meet with Darfuri girls that had been raped in the beginning of 2008 to follow up their cases."

SHAF condemned the arrest and expressed great concern and fear for the health and life of Abdel-Mageed saying security apparatus exercise torture and cruel treatment against detainees from Darfur activists especially after the rebel attack on the Sudanese capital on May 10, 2008.

Rights groups said rape and other forms of sexual violence in Darfur are being used as a weapon of war in order to humiliate, punish, control, intimidate and displace women and their communities.

Rebels abduct five people in Sudan's Darfur region

SUNA 3/9/09 - JEM has abducted representatives of Karbari Camp for Darfur refugees inside the Chadian territories to an unknown place.

The spokesman of SLM -Mini Minawi, Zal-Nun Sulayman, said that the abductees were Al-Tijani Shatta Galab, 52 years, Khalil Dosa Abd-al-Rahman, 48 years, Wardi Husayn Janabu, 37, Muhammad Ibrahim Sulayman, 35 years, and Abdallah Husayn Shayno, 33 years.

He said that the five abductees have earlier met with official of the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA) with regard to the voluntary repatriation at Ambaro area in Darfur.

Darfur rebel faction says not participating in upcoming polls

Miraya FM, 4/9/09 – SLM/MM has said it would not participate in the upcoming election in protest at the 5th population census results. Minni Minnawi also blamed the government of National Unity for what he described as delay in implementing the DPA's security arrangements.

Editorial: The generals have got it right

The **Economist**, 3/9/09 - Fewer people are dying in Darfur. But the need for a regional settlement is as urgent as ever.

Festering conflicts in faraway places tend to follow a familiar trajectory. At first there is worldwide moral outrage; next, earnest promises that "something must be done"; then, when rapid solutions fail to work, bafflement and finally a sense of hapless resignation. That sequence is common in Africa: think of Somalia and Congo. Now there is a danger that the benighted region of Darfur, in western Sudan, may join the list of seemingly insoluble problems.

Few of the continent's conflicts have provoked as much moral expostulation as when, in 2004 and 2005, the truth emerged about the Sudanese government's brutal suppression of an uprising there. The fighting has lasted longer than the Second World War. Some 300,000 people have been killed and nearly 3m displaced (see article). A durable settlement looks unlikely any time soon. In international forums a sense of Darfur-fatigue has spread. The world's desire to be shot of the problem may help explain the widespread reporting of a story that Martin Agwai, a Nigerian general who is stepping down as commander of the UN's peacekeeping force in Darfur, said that the war was "over".

General Agwai said no such thing. He rightly pointed to the end of the full-blown confrontation between well-marshaled rebel forces and a Sudanese army that had mastery of the skies and could bomb the recalcitrant rebel villages at will. But he also explained that, in the past three years, the nature of the fighting has dramatically changed.

Gone is the neat division between attacker and defender. Instead there is a messy and poisonous plurality of rival groups, tribes and bandits; some co-operate with the government, others with the assorted rebels. Allegiances are fickle, loyalties easily bought. The two original rebel groups have fragmented into at least 20 factions. The International Criminal Court at The Hague has indicted Sudan's president, Omar al-Bashir, for war crimes in Darfur. But it has also accused three rebel leaders of similar crimes. Even the notorious janjaweed, an Arab militia that served as proxies for the Sudanese army, are now as likely to fight each other or even to turn on the government if they have not been paid on time. It is wrongheaded nowadays simply to tag the rebels as "good" and the Sudanese government forces as "evil".

Although the death rate is sharply down, chaos on the ground still prevails—and could easily become much bloodier again. More parts of the region are unsafe for aid workers. It is harder to

negotiate safe passage with increasingly unpredictable armed groups. General Agwai was promised 26,000 troops. He still has only 17,000. They cannot ensure humanitarian workers secure access to the region, so the food and medical handouts on which some 2.7m Darfuris survive often fail to get through. A political solution is as sorely needed as ever.

Fortunately, another general, this one formerly of the American air force, is providing fresh political momentum. Scott Gration, Barack Obama's energetic new special envoy to Sudan, believes that the best chance of peace for this divided country remains the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in 2005 between the Islamist government in Khartoum, in the north of the country, and the former rebels of south Sudan, who are quite separate from the Darfuris, and had been fighting their northern masters for most of the past half-century. The CPA offers a new deal for the whole of Sudan, including national elections to be held next year and the possibility of secession for the south following a referendum promised for 2011. But it has been under severe strain partly because of intertribal fighting in the south.

Mr Gration is using his political clout to force both sides to stick to their agreements under the CPA, thus offering hope that the peace will stick and that the south will be allowed to split off peacefully, if it chooses to. He has also enjoyed some success in softening the Sudanese government's stance on Darfur, for instance by persuading the regime to allow in other aid agencies to replace those expelled in retaliation for the issuing of the ICC's arrest warrant for Mr Bashir in March. Some of Mr Obama's people think Mr Bashir's indubitably nasty regime should be further isolated and squeezed by economic sanctions. Mr Gration, by contrast, favours a wary but active engagement with Sudan's government in the hope that it will be more co-operative and less brutal in Darfur and the south. At the moment Mr Gration's approach seems to be yielding results and should be supported.

Whatever general Agwai states, the war in Darfur is not over

De Volkskrant (The Netherlands) 3/9/09 - The war in Darfur is not over, this in contrast with the statement made by general Agwai at his farewell saying that there is no longer a "real war" in Darfur. "It is not very significant from a military point of view," said Agwai. "You now have more to do with security issues, banditry." He surprised everyone with his statement. Agwai however did not say that the rainy season is approaching, a period when the fighting always decreases. Besides, Darfur has still not agreed on a cease-fire, comments de Volkskrant. According to aid group Oxfam the fights are "certainly not stopped".

But it was not just Agwai. At the African Union summit in Libya it was stated that only "criminal acts" occurred in Darfur. Now would be the time to help the peace process so that the Darfuri can live in peace and stability. Libya wants the lead, but has the "burden" of neighboring Egypt, which along with the United States attempts to bring the rebel groups together. According to U.S. envoy to Sudan, Scott Gration, and Washington will soon have a new policy for that country.

Aid agencies fear that the Darfur issue will be left out in this new policy, because of the focus of de US on a second issue: southern Sudan. The autonomous region made peace in 2005 with the regime in Khartoum and may, according to the agreement, vote for independence in 2011 in a referendum. Khartoum does not agree on that, also because the oil rich areas of southern Sudan. The US wants better relations with Khartoum because of the cooperation of intelligence agencies to identify Islamic terrorists.

It is likely that there will be new violence in Southern Sudan with the referendum coming. Violence largely caused by the machinations of Bashir's government just as it previously did in Darfur. In 2005, the war in the South was called to be "over" now the same in Darfur. That

sounds good. But is not true, comments de Volkskrant.

25 people killed after clashes in Upper Nile

Sudan Tribune website 5/9/09 — Some 25 people have been killed and dozens were wounded in clashes in the Upper Nile region of south Sudan, a SPLA spokesman said on Saturday.

Fighters from the Shilluk ethnic group attacked an ethnic Dinka settlement in Bony-Thiang, north of the state capital Malakal, early on Friday, killing 20 people, the SPLA said.

In a retaliatory attack, the Dinka launched a raid on nearby Shilluk village of Bon, killing five people including a woman and two children.

The southern Sudan army said the attackers were part of a militia belonging to the SPLM-DC led by Dr. Lam Akol.

However, Akol dismissed the accusation saying it is part of SPLM campaign to distort the image of his party after a successful founding convention.

SPLM practicing “intellectual terrorism” – Lam Akol

SPLM-DC leader Lam Akol has described FVP Kiir's statements on unity and secession as contradictory, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports. “They are making conflicting statements on unity and secession, these people do not know what to do,” he said. Akol, who was speaking at a press conference yesterday, claimed the government of southern Sudan has failed to manage matters in the south. He said GoSS was practicing “intellectual terrorism” against the *Jellaba* (northerners Arabs) and the NCP. “They are blaming insecurity in the south on the NCP but in fact they are the cause of the incidents,” he said.

Mr. Akol described the upcoming political parties' meeting in Juba as a forum intended to block elections, saying his party would contest elections in Southern Sudan.

Al-Ayyam reports Akol dismissed SPLM's allegations that his party was behind the Friday killing of some 25 Dinka tribesmen in Upper Nile State. SPLM Spokesperson Kual Deim had accused the SPLM-DC leader of arming Shilluk tribesmen.

According to **Al-Watan**, Akol said the situation the South was far too worse than during wartime, citing mismanagement by what he called SPLM-Kiir as the reason. He categorically denied the presence of militias belonging to the SPLM-DC, saying Kiir has been proved unable to manage matters nationally and regionally, adding that corruption in the South was mushrooming.

Sudan Vision reports SPLM-DC denied any connection with the incidents that occurred in Upper Nile area which claimed the lives of a number of citizens and cattle were looted.

A statement by the SPLM-DC affirmed that the areas where the incidents took place were under the SPLA control. The statement hinted that the SPLM-DC might resort to the judiciary should the SPLM fails to substantiate its charges.

Armed elements block road between Upper Nile & Blue Nile stat

Radio Miraya 5/9/09 -The commissioner of Renk County Deng Makuei Kak said that White Nile state authorities on Friday managed to reopen the road that links the state to the Upper Nile. He said elements from the national defense force and Sudan armed forces had on Thursday

blocked the road and prevented cars and traveling buses from exiting or entering Reng.

Miraya FM was unable to reach the Sudan Armed forces for comments on this issue.

SPLM, NCP to discuss Juba forum

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports NCP official Mohamed Mandour Al-Mahdi as saying that the NCP and the SPLM would meet during the next two days to discuss NCP's participation in the political parties' forum in Juba. He said the meeting would decide the question of the NCP's participation in the forum, claiming the forum's reports and recommendations were prepared even before it kicks off.

Al-Mirghani is DUP's presidential candidate

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)'s Political Sector as saying that the party's leader Mohamed Osman Al-Mirghani would contest upcoming presidential elections.

Meanwhile, DUP spokesperson Mr. Hatim Al-Sir said his party would not participate in the upcoming political parties' forum in Juba. However, he denied that the decision was intended to please the NCP.

NCP, SPLM, US Special envoy to hold follow-up talks in Juba

Representatives from the NCP and the SPLM are to hold talks with US Special Envoy Scott Gration in Juba next Wednesday to follow up on discussions on the outstanding CPA's benchmarks, **Al-Ayyam** reports. Presidential Advisor Ghazi Salahudin will head the NCP's delegation while the SPLM side will be headed by Blue Nile Governor Malik Aggar. Reportedly, the meeting will focus on the dispute over the census results and the referendum.

South Sudan army to track down Ugandan LRA rebels in DRC

Sudan Radio Service 3/9/09 -The SPLA says that they are taking new measures to track down the rebel LRA inside the Garamba National Park in DR Congo. Garamba National Park is a dense forest in the DRC where the LRA troops gather to launch their attacks against southern Sudan, Uganda and the DRC.

Speaking from Juba on Tuesday, the SPLA spokesperson, Major-general Kuol Deim Kuol, told Sudan Radio Service that the SPLA would send additional troops to attack the LRA.

Women, children increasingly targeted in Southern clashes

IRIN 4/9/09 - Women and children are being increasingly targeted in the escalating attacks against communities in Southern Sudanese states, exacerbating the dire humanitarian situation, say officials.

"We have seen a drastic escalation in violence across Southern Sudan this year - from the Equatorial States besieged by LRA attacks, to the brutal clashes in Jonglei, Upper Nile and Lake States," Jonathan Whittall, head of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in Southern Sudan, said.

"The violent clashes are different to the traditional 'cattle rustling' that normally occurs each year," he said in a 3 September statement. "Women and children usually spared in this fighting, are now deliberately targeted and the number of deaths [is] higher than the number of wounded."

On 1 September, Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul Yak of the Episcopal Church said the church no longer viewed the clashes as "tribal conflicts", but rather as "deliberately organized attack[s] on civilians by those that are against the peace in Southern Sudan".

"This combination of violent attacks across the region aggravates an already dire humanitarian situation for the people of Southern Sudan," MSF warned.

"In the last six violent incidents that MSF responded to in Jonglei and Upper Nile States over the last six months... 1,057 people were killed in contrast to 259 wounded, with more than 60,000 displaced," the medical charity said. "This is new - the intention is to attack a village and to kill. The result is a population living in total fear, with significant humanitarian and medical needs."

Continuing violence, the Archbishop warned, could damage the smooth implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), under whose auspices elections are being planned for 2010 and a referendum on possible Southern autonomy in 2011.

"The timeframe given for the elections and referendum is already too short for the democratic processes to be effectively organized, and by the provisional dates chosen for voting... much of the South will already be suffering from logistics problems caused by the onset of the wet season," he warned in a statement.

"This is an indication to the citizens of the Sudan that the people on the ground are not being regarded or included in the politics of peace and that we are vulnerable to future violations of the CPA and an uncertain future for peace in the Sudan."

Separately, the UN World Food Programme warned that an urgent food security situation had been created in the region by poor rainfall, continued high levels of insecurity and high cereal and low livestock prices.

According to the recently released Annual Needs and Livelihood Assessment Mid-Year Review, about 1.5 million people in Southern Sudan face severe food insecurity, while aid delivery has been complicated by insecurity and poor roads.

Presidency's annual Iftar today

Akhbar Al-Youm reports that Presidency Minister Gen. Bakri Hassan Saleh has distributed invitations for the Presidency's annual Iftar which will be hosted today and will be attended by President Al-Bashir.

Rights group urges Sudan to drop charges in "trouser trial"

Sudan Tribune website 5/9/09 — Amnesty International on Friday urged the Sudanese government to withdraw the charges against a female journalist who risks 40 lashes for wearing trousers.

Lubna Ahmed Al-Hussein, who had been arrested with other Sudanese girls by the Public Order Police earlier in July for wearing trousers, was charged by the Public Order Police POP of "indecent" clothing and is facing up to 40 lashes and a fine of 250 Sudanese pounds (\$100).

The judge on August 4 adjourned the trial to September 7 so that the court can receive opinion of the Sudanese foreign ministry on whether her resignation from the UN mission in Sudan automatically revokes her immunity on the date the incident happened.

Amnesty International said in a press release issued last Friday the law used to justify the flogging of women for wearing clothes deemed to be "indecent" should be repealed.

"The manner in which this law has been used against women is unacceptable, and the penalty called for by the law – up to 40 lashes – abhorrent," said Tawanda Hondora, Deputy Director of

Amnesty International's Africa Programme.