



UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN  
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**(By Public Information Office)**

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**IN THE NEWS TODAY:**

- **AMIS-UN Transition**
  - No justification for intervention in Darfur, says Kiir
  - Arab League calls for calm study of UN decision on Sudan
  - UN troop move needs Sudan okay - Arab FM
- **UN**
  - UN movements restricted in eastern Sudan
- **CPA**
  - SPLA redeployment to points below the 1.1.'56 line to resume next week
- **GoNU**
  - Cabinet declares Monday and Tuesday public holidays in Khartoum
- **Arab Summit Meeting**
  - Sudan denies boycott of summit by some Arab leaders
  - Arab ministerial meeting endorses 22 draft resolutions for summit
  - Proposals for an Arab-African force in Darfur
  - Arab diplomatic efforts to block the US from pressing for international peacekeepers in Darfur
- **Darfur/ Abuja talks/Chad**
  - Sudan says peace in Darfur before end of April
  - Obasanjo receives Sudanese parties in Darfur talks
  - China backs Sudan's efforts to resolve Darfur crisis - envoy
- **Other Developments**
  - Ministry of Justice threatens suit against Uganda over chopper crash
  - NDA and NCP agree to hold regular meetings

## **HIGHLIGHTS:**

### **AMIS-UN Transition**

#### **No justification for intervention in Darfur, says Kiir**

(*Sudan Vision* – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) Vice-president Salva Kiir Mayardit says the Sudanese government is keen to urgently resolve the Darfur problem within the AU's efforts.

In a meeting with the Arab League Secretary-General last Sunday, the V-p said there is no justification for a foreign military intervention in Darfur after the mandate of the AU has been extended.

He expressed appreciation for the efforts by the Arab League to support the implementation of the CPA and for development in Sudan.

#### **Arab League calls for calm study of UN decision on Sudan**

(*Xinhua/ST* – 26<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) Secretary General of the Arab League (AL) Amr Musa on Sunday called for a calm study of a recent UN Security Council resolution on speeding up steps to replace African peacekeeping troops in Sudan's western Darfur region.

Speaking to a press conference on the sidelines of an Arab foreign ministers meeting currently held in Khartoum in preparation for an upcoming Arab summit, Musa said, "The resolution needs a calm study on how to cope with Darfur issue."

The AL chief asked the parties concerned to consider how the resolution would encourage the peace talks between the Sudanese government and Darfur rebel movements, whether it would help to achieve a success of the negotiations and to what extent it would maintain Sudan's sovereignty.

The UN resolution would help the Arab countries to push forward the Darfur peace talks, which are held in the Nigerian capital of Abuja, said Musa.

The resolution, which was adopted unanimously by the 15-Nation Council on Friday, would give Secretary General Kofi Annan until April 24 to prepare a range of options for a United Nations operation in Darfur.

The UN resolution has called for faster preparations for the African Union to hand over its peacekeeping mission in Sudan's western Darfur region to the UN.

However, the resolution has drawn strong criticism of Sudanese officials, who said that it sent negative signals to the Darfur rebel movements.

On Saturday, Sudanese Foreign Minister Lam Akol told reporters that the UN resolution indicated a wrong reading of the international organization for a recent decision taken by the African Union Peace and Security Council to extend the African forces' mandate until Sept. 30.

In addition, Ghazi Salaheddin, Advisor of the Sudanese president, also stressed that the UN resolution "will complicate political settlement of the Darfur crisis and worsen humanitarian and security situations in the region."

### **UN troop move needs Sudan okay - Arab FM**

(*AFP/ST* – 26<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) Arab nations are expected to refuse to endorse any deployment of UN troops in Sudan's troubled Darfur region without the approval of the Khartoum government, according to a draft summit resolution.

But the stance, being drawn up ahead of an Arab summit in the Sudanese capital opening Tuesday, nevertheless falls short of Khartoum's demands for full Arab backing for its rejection of any international forces in Darfur.

The text directed UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, working with the AU and in consultations with the council "to expedite the necessary preparatory planning for transition" from the AU force known as AMIS to a UN operation.

The move was welcomed in Washington as a step toward ending the violence in Darfur.

But Sudan wants Arab backing for the the African Union mission "to abort attempts to handover its tasks to international forces," Foreign Minister Lam Akol told fellow ministers on Saturday.

The draft resolution being debated by Arab foreign ministers at preparatory talks for the two-day summit however falls short of an outright rejection of the US-backed UN plans.

It urges "Arab countries to provide financial and logistic support to the African Union mission to enable it to pursue its tasks," according to a draft copy viewed by AFP.

It also demands "African Arab countries to strengthen their participation in the AU troops in Darfur."

But it only stresses that the deployment of foreign troops "should have the approval of Sudan's government."

Arab countries appear to have been taken by surprise by the timing of the Security Council decision.

"(This resolution) needs a calm examination to figure out how to deal with it," Arab League secretary general Amr Mussa told reporters Saturday.

He said discussions were ongoing with the Sudanese government "to reach an agreement over the issue."

## **UN**

### **UN movements restricted in eastern Sudan**

(*Khartoum Monitor* – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) UNMIS' SSO/Public Information Officer Santha Kumaran has blamed the SAF and the SPLA for restricting UN movement in eastern Sudan and especially in the Hamesh Khoreib region.

He said that the restrictions do not however cover humanitarian organisations.

The UNMIS official said the SPLA had asked the SAF to assist them with logistics support to withdraw from the east and the SAF has agreed to help. “SPLA logistics requirements for the withdrawal will be clarified in the coming meeting of the CJMC”, Kumaran asserted.

UNMIS’ Unified Mission Analysis Centre also reported on 20<sup>th</sup> March that a UN inter-agency mission was stopped near Egadir by a joint government police/security unit that requested that the team be accompanied to their headquarters in Kassala.

The report said that the head of the National Intelligence and Security Service in Kassala was contacted and confirmed that UN agencies need to apply for permits from the Humanitarian Aid Commission to be approved by the NISS and the UN.

The UN team was eventually allowed to complete its assessment mission, the report noted.

UNMIS officials met with the *Wali* of the state the same day to discuss the SOFA and the recent humanitarian access incidents but the *Wali* said he had no information from Khartoum about the SOFA and its implementation and that all UN agencies except UNMIS staff travelling to Wad Sherifey were stopped at the checkpoint outside Kassala town and were asked to return as they had no travel permits.

National Intelligence and Security Service officers said they had not received instruction to allow UNMIS staff to travel to Wad Sherifey without travel permits.

## **CPA**

### **SPLA redeployment to points below the 1.1.’56 line to resume next week**

(*AlAyaam* – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) The Chief of Staff of the SPLA has disclosed that the SPLA and the SAF have formed a task force made up of 4 high ranking officers from each side to monitor the SPLA redeployment to southern Sudan.

Gen. Wayai Deng Ajack says the duties of the task force will include field verification of the redeployment process and solving the problems that may arise and it will report to the Joint Defence Board on the process.

The General said that the SAF has redeployed some of its troops from Bahr-el-Ghazal and Upper Nile but is yet to do redeploy from Equatoria and the regions around Juba as they withdraw some troops and replace them with others.

## **GoNU**

### **Cabinet declares Monday and Tuesday public holidays in Khartoum**

(*AlAyaam* – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) The General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers has declared Monday and Tuesday as public holidays for all government institutions located in the area between north of the Railway area (south of the Khartoum Teaching Hospital), the Omdurman bridges and the Armed Forces bridge (near the University of Khartoum’s main campus).

A statement issued yesterday by the Council of Ministers said that the decision to grant a public holiday as stated is to facilitate the passage of the entourage of the participants to the Arab Summit meeting along Nile Avenue and University Road.

The statement further notes that commercial banks, private and public companies, school examination centres and the other municipalities in Khartoum State shall not observe the public holiday.

## **Arab Summit Meeting**

### **Sudan denies boycott of summit by some Arab leaders**

(*Xinhua/ST* – 26<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) Sudanese President Omer al-Bashir denied allegation on Sunday that some Arab leaders would boycott the Arab summit due to be held in the Sudanese capital Khartoum on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Asked to comment on a media report that at least four Arab heads of state would be absent from the summit, Al-Bashir said that Sudan enjoyed excellent relations with all other Arab countries and "no Arab leader has taken a position against Sudan".

"Every Arab leader has his own circumstances, and we respect the circumstances which prevent any Arab leader from attending the summit," he added.

Sudanese media reported that the heads of state of Tunisia, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Egypt would not participate in the Khartoum summit.

However, journalists here were surprised by the arrival of Libyan Leader Muammar Gadhafi earlier on Sunday because he was reported to be absent from the summit.

Secretary General of the Arab League Amr Musa said last Thursday that the attendance of the summit would be "intensive" since no Arab leader had submitted to the AL secretariat an apology for his absence.

### **Arab ministerial meeting endorses 22 draft resolutions for summit**

(*AlAyaam* – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) The Arab League meeting at ministerial level endorsed yesterday 22 draft resolutions to be tabled before the summit meeting to kick off tomorrow.

Among these are resolutions to continue monthly funding of the Palestinian Authority and support for the AU forces in Darfur.

Foreign minister Lam Akol said he hoped the spirit in which they conducted the talks at technical levels in the last few days will continue to prevail in the summit meetings. He pointed out that the meetings underlined that the political solution be granted priority.

He also pointed out that the meetings did not discuss the recent UN Security Council resolution that gave the UN Secretary-General one month to prepare alternatives for safeguarding security in Darfur.

### **Proposals for an Arab-African force in Darfur**

(*AlSahafa* – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) President Bashir has expressed hopes that that forthcoming summit meeting of the Arab League will meet the aspirations of the common Arab man by culminating in resolutions that represent the bottom-line on issues fundamental to the Arab nation and to come up with a united stance.

In a meeting with Arab presspersons covering the summit, President Bashir urged the Arab leaders to unite in rejecting international intervention in Darfur and reiterated government's rejection to a transition.

President Bashir said he looked forward to an Arab contribution in funding the AU forces in Darfur because “western funding is the soft spot”.

He said Afro-Arab states could also come up and contribute with their forces to the AMIS effort.

### **Arab diplomatic efforts to block the US from pressing for international peacekeepers in Darfur**

(*AlRai AlAam* – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) The Arab League has started diplomatic moves with concerned parties in New York in a bid to block the US from pushing for a quick deployment of international peacekeepers to Darfur.

Arab League Secretary-General Amru Musa reports that the representative of the Arab League at to the UN has confirmed that there seems to be a slight shift in Washington's position which may lead to an acceptance from the Sudanese government and the other parties concerned.

### **Darfur/ Abuja talks/Chad**

#### **Sudan says peace in Darfur before end of April**

(*ST* – 26<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) Sudanese Foreign Minister Lam Akol Sunday announced that reports coming from the Nigerian capital of Abuja affirm the possibility of reaching a peace agreement between the Sudanese government and the rebel groups in Darfur before the end of next April.

Akol said in a press conference at the end of the meetings of the ministerial council of the Arab League here Sunday that the chances for realization of peace in Darfur now are more than in any time before.

He referred to Arab supportive stance to Sudan concerning the problem of Darfur through extending financial and logistic support to the African Union's troops in Darfur and in order that Darfur issue will not be utilized for serving special agenda.

#### **Obasanjo receives Sudanese parties in Darfur talks**

(*ST* – 26<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Abuja**) Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, yesterday Saturday 26 March, received separately, the Heads of delegation of the Sudanese parties - the Government of the Sudan (GoS), the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).

The meetings were also attended by the Head of the AU Mediation Team, Sam B. Ibok, accompanied by Boubou Niang, Political Adviser to Chief Mediator Salim Ahmed Salim, and acting coordinator of the Wealth Sharing Commission., said the AMIS spokesperson Nouredine Mezni.

Obasanjo and the Sudanese parties exchanged views on the outstanding issues in the three negotiation frameworks (the Wealth Sharing, power Sharing and Security Arrangements Commissions), and the ways and means to overcome the difficulties encountered.

The president underscored his continued commitment to assist the Sudanese parties to reach a Comprehensive Peace Agreement, so as to bring the suffering of the people of Darfur to an immediate end.

He urged the parties to demonstrate an even greater spirit of give and take, especially as the talks have entered a final and critical stage, adding that there was no other viable option for achieving peace in Darfur, than a negotiated political settlement.

US President George W. Bush will receive Nigerian President Obasanjo for talks to include peacekeeping efforts in Sudan's troubled Darfur region, the White House said.

Bush will thank Obasanjo on March 29 "for his leadership as chairman of the African Union in the deployment of African troops in response to the genocide in Darfur," Bush spokesman Scott McClellan said in a statement.

### **China backs Sudan's efforts to resolve Darfur crisis - envoy**

(*ST* – 26<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) Chinese envoy to the Arab League said China backs Sudanese government efforts to resolve peacefully Darfur crisis in the framework of the African mediation.

The representative of People's Republic of China to the Arab League affirmed that the stance of his country towards Darfur crisis is clear where it calls for reaching peaceful solution as soon as possible to the problem and backs Sudan's efforts in this connection.

Interviewed by the state-run SUNA, the Chinese official underlined his country's support to settlement of Darfur issue in the framework of African Union's endeavors, expressing satisfaction over close cooperation between Sudan and African Union and the neighboring countries to reach a peaceful solution to the problem.

The Representative of China emphasized the necessity of respect of Sudan sovereignty. He indicated to close contacts between China and the African and Arab countries on the issue of Darfur and other issues of common concern in the international arena.

He added China was present in the African Summit conference, which was held in Khartoum last January.

He further added his current visit to Sudan comes in the framework of participation in the meetings of the Arab summit and that he is carrying a message from Chinese President to the President Omer Al-Bashir.

### **Other Developments**

## **Ministry of Justice threatens suit against Uganda over chopper crash**

(*AlAyaam* – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) The Sudanese Justice Ministry has threatened to institute legal measures against the authorities in Uganda should it be proved that the helicopter crash in which late John Garang lost his life was due to incompetence by the aircraft crew.

The rapporteur of the Sudanese team to the probe committee, on the other hand, says the return of the Sudanese team may be delayed for up to four days due to some conflicting views on the final format of the crash report.

He said the team will soon return to present its final report to the Presidency of the Republic.

## **NDA and NCP agree to hold regular meetings**

(*AlAyaam* – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. **Khartoum**) The National Democratic Alliance and the National Congress Party have agreed to complete the establishment of joint committee to follow up on the implementation of the Cairo Agreement signed between the two sides in Cairo last year.

Farouq Abou-Eisa, a prominent member of the alliance, says the two sides also agreed that the committees set down to work as soon as they are established.