



# Southern Sudan News Bulletin

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## **Highlights:**

- Peacekeepers' Day celebrated in Juba
- Human Rights Rapporteur visits Juba
- Sudan elections deferred to 2010
- Unexploded Ordnance kills two children in Aweil Town
- Traditional leaders' conference convened in Bentiu

## **Sector I – Juba**

### **Peacekeepers' Day celebrated in Juba**

On 29 May, UNMIS celebrated the International Day of UN Peacekeepers in Juba. Among the activities coordinated by the UNMIS Public Information Office (PIO) in southern Sudan to commemorate the day was a free medical check-up for women and children at the Al Shabah Children's Hospital that was conducted by the UNMIS Bangladeshi army contingent's medical team. The UNMIS Child Protection Unit facilitated the arrival of the children at the hospital in conjunction with the Juba Orphanage and the international non-governmental organization (NGO) Confident Children of Conflict.

A project designed to rehabilitate the outpatient clinic of the children's hospital was inaugurated by the Central Equatoria State Minister for Health, Huda Micah Laila, who represented Governor Clement Wani Konga at the event. UNMIS will implement the project with the participation of its engineering section and the Bangladesh army's engineering contingent.

The day's events kicked off with a march for peace through the streets of Juba.

### **Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Visits Juba**

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Sudan, Dr. Sima Samar, visited Central Equatoria State on 27 May and held discussions with the acting governor, representatives of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), internally displaced persons (IDPs), civil society groups, former kidnapping victims of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), UN agencies and NGOs. The discussions focused on various human rights abuses perpetrated by the LRA.

Separately, an African Union delegation on post-conflict reconstruction and development visited Juba and Yei and discussed political, security and developmental conditions in the area with UNMIS and state authorities.

### **Elections postponed to February 2010**

Sudan's National Elections Commission announced in a press conference on 2 April its

decision to postpone the start date of the upcoming national elections until February of next year.

According to the revised electoral calendar, polling for both the executive and the legislative elections will now take place between 6 and 21 February 2010. The electoral period is supposed to last for about 10 months, starting with the delineation of legislative constituencies' geographical boundaries between 15 April and 15 May of this year. Voter registration is slated to occur between 2 June and 1 July, and the announcement of the final elections results will take place on 27 February 2010.

While it welcomed the announcement, the SPLM has underscored the importance of adhering to the timetable for the 2011 referendum.

### **Resolution of conflict between Bari and Mundari communities**

As part of the ongoing mediation process between the Bari and Mundari communities who have clashed north of Juba, the Central Equatoria State government has formed a task force headed by its advisor on local government affairs, Henry Danga. He will lead a fact-finding mission to the area of conflict and will be joined by a delegation drawn from the Council of States, various state representatives and the UN.

Recommendations based on the findings of the mission will be reviewed by the communities' leadership for possible adoption.

### **US special envoy to Sudan visits Juba**

The recently appointed US special envoy to Sudan, retired Gen. Scott Gration, paid a two-day official visit to Juba from 5 to 7 April and met with the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) President, Salva Kiir Mayardit, and other senior government officials.

Gration's arrival in Juba follows earlier official visits to Khartoum and Darfur. A visit to Abyei has also been scheduled for the envoy.

## **Sector II – Wau**

### **Unexploded Ordinance kills two Children in Aweil Town**

On 10 April, an Unexploded Ordinance (UXO) exploded in Aweil town, killing two children near the Joint Integrated Unit (JIU) barracks area.

According to Aweil police chief Philip Madut Tong, the area continues to pose a serious threat to people living in the vicinity of the JIU barracks. Formerly a Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) garrison, the area was never declared free of UXOs and mines after SAF moved to the north. The United Nations Mine Action Office in Wau has been informed of the matter.

### **Domestic Election Observation and Voter Education Workshop in Wau**

On 11 and 12 May, the UNMIS Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) attended a workshop on domestic election observation and voter education that was organized jointly by the Washington-based National Democratic Institute and the newly established Sudanese Network for Democratic Election (SuNDE), a nationwide network of domestic observers.

In a related development, the UNMIS Gender Unit, Human Rights Office and EAD joined the PIO section in a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) awareness workshop for 60 participants in the Cueibet County payam of Wullu. The participants included the Cueibet County Commissioner, the local head of the Southern Sudan Police Service and traditional chiefs.

### **Disaster Contingency Planning Workshop conducted**

A two-day inter-agency disaster contingency planning workshop was held in the city of Aweil from 19 to 20 May. The workshop was organized by OCHA and attended by the UNMIS Recovery, Return and Reintegration (RRR) section and the Civil Affairs Division (CAD).

Other participants were drawn from UN agencies, NGOs and state ministries, and the workshop identified seasonal floods, border conflicts, disease outbreaks and high numbers of returnees as the main challenges that faced Northern Bahr el Ghazal State in 2007 and 2008. Those disasters were blamed for loss of life, displacement especially along the state's border, crop failure, economic disruption, hunger and the spread of disease.

The workshop urged participants to devise strategies for conflict management and set up early warning systems.

### **Sector III – Malakal**

#### **Traditional leaders' conference convened in Bentiu**

A conference of traditional leaders drawn from various parts of Sudan was held in the Unity State capital of Bentiu. The workshop was officially opened by GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit and attended by Vice President Riek Machar, a number of cabinet ministers, the governors of all ten states of southern Sudan, and senior members of the SPLM.

Among the key issues addressed by the conference were CPA milestones such as the census results, the upcoming elections and the 2011 referendum. Security issues were also discussed with special emphasis on the pressing need for civilian disarmament. The meeting also called for unity among the different southern Sudanese communities and condemned the ongoing tribal violence.

#### **SRSB Visits Upper Nile and Jonglei States**

The UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSB) Ashraf Qazi and Deputy Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Southern Sudan Lise Grande visited sector III from 29 to 30 May. During the visit the SRSB met with top leaders in Upper Nile and Jonglei states to assess the current overall situation in the area and, in particular, the security situation and the state of the peace process.

Among the people the SRSB met were Thon Mum Kijok, the acting governor of Upper Nile State, and Santino Ajang, speaker of the Upper Nile State Legislative Assembly. Mr Qazi also spoke with the Malakal-based JIU Division II commander and his deputy, Jonglei State governor Kuol Manyang, and the executive director and acting commissioner of Pibor County. Most of the issues under discussion concerned security, governance, peace building and conflict resolution, and humanitarian issues.

#### **Kenana Sugar Company dismisses 959 Workers**

The UNMIS Human Rights Office in Malakal opened an investigation on April 12 of circumstances surrounding the unilateral dismissal of 959 workers from the Kenana Sugar Company after reports surfaced that the corporation was facing a financial crisis.

The sugar company is a state-owned corporation based in the White Nile State town of Kenana. The terminated workers were ferried to the town of Al-Rank in the northern part of Upper Nile State. The workers and their families were reportedly taken to a church without food or water.

The unemployed workers said they lack the necessary resources to go back to their homes. The UN Country Team has been delivering food, water and other necessities to the dismissed sugar company workers in collaboration with authorities in the state.

#### **Humanitarian Affairs Under-Secretary-General visits Malakal**

UNMIS Sector III and the UN Country Team organized the visit of the Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Sir John Holmes, on 8 May. Holmes met with the acting governor of Upper Nile State at Malakal airport before travelling to Akobo County in Jonglei State to assess the humanitarian needs of communities displaced by the recent Jikany Nuer-Murle tribal clashes. The USG then proceeded to the Jonglei capital of Bor

where meetings were held with Governor Kuol Manyang.

#### **CPA workshop conducted in Jonglei**

UNMIS CAD staff members in Sector III held a CPA workshop in the Canal County payam of Khur Flus on 5 May in collaboration with other UNMIS substantive sections such as PIO, EAD and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. The workshop was attended by 55 people and included traditional chiefs, women and youth groups, religious leaders, and payam administrators.

The agenda items for discussion included growing tensions between the SAF and the SPLA components of the Malakal-based that have threatened local residents of Khur Flus, delays in demarcating borders at the time of Sudanese independence in January 1956, human rights and the civilian disarmament programme.

#### **Ministry of Local Government and Law Enforcement sacks over 300 employees**

On 1 May, the UNMIS Human Rights Office in Malakal received a complaint from a group of former employees of the Upper Nile State Ministry of Local Government and Law Enforcement who accused officials of arbitrarily dismissing over 300 civil servants at the Ministry because they had failed an examination held last year for all administrative officers working in the ministry. UNMIS Human Rights followed up with a meeting with the ministry's deputy director on 7 May. The deputy director confirmed that all those who failed the examination last year were sacked as part of a GoSS policy to downsize the number of public-sector employees throughout southern Sudan. Many so-called ghost workers receive government salaries without any proof of employment qualifications or attendance at the workplace. The GoSS introduced the examination in order to combat such corrupt practices.

#### **Assessment of Human Rights Situation in Linkuen Payam, Yirol County, Jonglei State in the aftermath of tribal violence**

The UNMIS Human Rights in Malakal visited the Yirol County payam of Linkuen on May 6 to assess human rights conditions and the overall security situation in the aftermath of recent tribal clashes in the area. The Yirol County Commissioner William Choll stated that an attack occurred on 3 May that left two people dead and four persons wounded. Choll added that the exact number of missing or abducted children had not yet been ascertained. According to the county commissioner, between 15,000 and 20,000 residents fled their homes on account of the fighting. UNCHR has been providing food and shelter to the displaced population, and a GoSS delegation has gone to the payam in a bid to facilitate a peace conference between Murle and Lou Nuer tribesmen.

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