

02 April 2009

www.unmis.org



Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

Local News Headlines

- Ousted NGOs will not be allowed in even if they apologised – Al-Bashir (*local dailies*)
- Parties' Council voices support for Al-Bashir presidential candidacy (*Akhbar Al-Youm*)
- Interior mulls elections security (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- MoFA slams France on statements over Arab League resolution (*Al-Wattan*)
- Ministry to develop Sudanization plan – State Minister Ahmed Haroun (*Al-Sahafa*)
- Three hundred million Sudanese Pounds for the Abyei Area Administration (*Al-Sudani*).
- DDR Commission launches second phase (*Al-Wattan*)
- VP Taha discusses civil service slots for southern Sudanese (*Khartoum Monitor*)
- VP Kiir in Malakal (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- 45 million square meters of mines cleared (*The Citizen*)
- WB grooms Sudanese for senior positions (*The Citizen*)
- SPLM delegation to meet with UNDSG (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- South Darfur grants land to UNAMID (*Al-Wattan*)
- Dollar expected to rise more against Sudanese Pound (*Al-Intibaha*)
- SLM-MM asked to expedite integration of forces (*Al-Sahafa*)
- SSLA orders change in SPLA (*The Citizen*)
- Southern Sudanese politicians fear for region's future (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- SPLM will not be affected with Akol out of the party – SPLM Spokesperson (*Akhir Lahza*)
- Constitutional Court backs death ruling for editor's murder (*Al-Wattan*)

Websites/International Headlines

- US envoy wants friendship, cooperation from Sudan (*Reuters*)
- AU Panel on Darfur visits Sudan for peace talks (*AFP*)
- Sudan launches mediation to reconcile Somali factions (*Sudan Tribune website*)

NOTE: *Reproduction here does not mean that the UNMIS PIO can vouch for the accuracy or veracity of the contents, nor does this report reflect the views of the United Nations Mission in Sudan. Furthermore, international copyright exists on some materials and this summary should not be disseminated beyond the intended list of recipients.*

Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

Highlights

Local Arabic and English Language Press

Ousted NGOs will not be allowed in even if they apologised – Al-Bashir

Local dailies report that President Al-Bashir has reiterated his rejection to allow the expelled NGOs to return to Sudan and his threats to expel any other organization that does not respect local laws or departs from its mandate. He told a large gathering that received him at the airport in Khartoum yesterday that he participated at the Doha summit to discredit those who thought he would not travel abroad. "I will continue to participate in meetings abroad whenever that is necessary," he said.

The Sudanization plan, he said, will continue as scheduled and expressed confidence that local NGOs would be able to fill the gap. "The Sudanese Red Crescent Society alone now carries out 45% of voluntary work in Darfur and the others could clearly fill in the gap within the one year period," he said.

Al-Wifaq meanwhile reports that President Al-Bashir will travel to West Darfur next Tuesday. State Governor Al-Sannousi Bashir said that Al-Bashir will inaugurate the Zalengei power plant and other development projects.

Meanwhile, and ahead of the arrival today of the US Special Envoy to Sudan, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq told reporters yesterday that meetings with the US Special Envoy will not cover the issue of the ousted NGOs. He said that talks between them will focus on the Darfur conflict, the factors that led to its outbreak, western intervention and Chadian support for the Darfur rebels in addition to the implementation of the CPA, border demarcation and the forthcoming election, reports **Al-Wifaq**. He said that the NGO ouster will not be discussed even if the envoy wanted to open discussions on that issue.

Parties' Council voices support for Al-Bashir presidential candidacy

The head of the Political Parties and Organizations Council, Aboud Jabir Saeed, has proposed that March 4 (the day the ICC issued the arrest warrant for President Al-Bashir) be declared a public holiday because "it also marks a unique day when national unity was manifested," reports **Akhbar Al-Youm**. He lauded President Al-Bashir's show of bravery in attending the Doha summit and said that the Council affirms its position in support for the nomination of President Al-Bashir as candidate for the Presidency of the Republic in the forthcoming elections.

Interior mulls elections security

Quoting "informed sources at the Interior Ministry", **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports that the Ministry of Interior is holding discussions on security plans for the forthcoming general elections. A central committee has been established in Khartoum and sub-committees at states levels to carry out the security plans for the elections.

In a related story, **Al-Wifaq** reports that the National Elections Commission has confirmed that donors from the UN, USAID and other international organizations are planning to set up a fund for financial and technical support for the electoral process in Sudan as per earlier commitments. Sources reveal that Commission recently held talks with donors on capacity building for voters and party representatives and support for the process. They also reveal that the Commission has set up an integrated awareness and capacity building strategy.

MoFA slams France on statements over Arab League resolution

Al-Wattan reports that MoFA Spokesperson Ali Al-Sadig lashed out yesterday on recent statements by the French Foreign Ministry over its criticism of the Arab League's show of support for Sudan's position on the ICC.

Ministry to develop Sudanization plan – State Minister Ahmed Haroun

Al-Sahafa notes that State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Ahmed Haroun, disclosed at a meeting yesterday with government officials in South Darfur plans by the ministry to develop the Sudanization plan for Darfur. He ruled out a return of the expelled NGOs and said there are no plans to invite other foreign NGOs into the country. Haroun expressed fears however over the less-than-expected response from some companies and donors in meeting their commitments towards the Sudanization plan but said that the government has set down some alternatives to this.

On the other hand, a report of the committee set up to take stock of the assets of the expelled INGOs has revealed the totals of 121 vehicles and 1.9 million US Dollars in bank deposits.

Three hundred million Sudanese Pounds for the Abyei Area Administration

The Ministry of Finance and National Economy has earmarked 3 hundred million Sudanese Pounds to pay off current liabilities in the form of employee benefits, and supplies and services for the Abyei Area Administration (AAA), reports *Al-Sudani*. The paper notes that State Minister for Finance, Al-Sadig Mohamed, also said following a meeting with the AAA that the Administration will be given ten vehicles and that discussions shall continue over the budget.

DDR Commission launches second phase

Al-Wattan reports that 2,254 combatants from the SAF and the PDF were demobilized at a ceremony in Kassala to flag off the second phase of the DDR programme in eastern Sudan yesterday. Kassala Governor Salah Adam said that the step comes in the footsteps of the success of the first demobilization campaign for the Eastern Front. He expressed appreciation to the donor community for their support for the programme. Representatives of the DDR Commission, the donor states and UNDP were among the attendance.

VP Taha discusses civil service slots for southern Sudanese

Discussions yesterday between VP Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, head of the Civil Service Commission Moses Machar and Minister of Labour Alison Magaya focused on possibilities for a 20% slot in the civil service for southern Sudanese as per the CPA, *Khartoum Monitor* reports.

VP Kiir in Malakal

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports that VP Salva Kiir travelled to Malakal yesterday to assess the situation following clashes there and in a bid to ease the border tensions between Upper Nile and Jonglei States.

SPLM delegation to meet with UN DSG

Foreign Minister Deng Alor has revealed that the SPLM delegation to the US will hold meetings today with the Deputy Secretary General of the UN, Asha-Rose Migiro, reports *Al-Rai Al-Aam*. The talks, he said, would focus on issues of peace in Sudan, the expulsion of the aid agencies from Darfur and its repercussions.

45 million square meters of mines cleared

Aid agencies have cleared some 45 million square meters of landmines, UNMAO reported in a statement Wednesday ahead of the International Day of Mine Awareness, *The Citizen* reports. UNMAO said that since 2002 they have been working to reduce dangers caused by landmines and ERWs.

WB grooms Sudanese for senior positions

The World Bank launched yesterday a four-month training course for 11 southern Sudanese, some of whom would be given positions in the institution, reports *The Citizen*. "One of the key objectives of the MDTF is build capacity," said Laurence Clarke, Acting World Bank Sudan Country Director and Manager for its southern Sudan office. "Our main objective is to fill the support staff position in the World Bank Juba Office with southern Sudanese," said Laurence.

South Darfur grants land to UNAMID

USG Susana Malcorra travelled to South Darfur yesterday where she held talks with Governor Ali Mahmoud, reports *Al-Wattan*. A UNAMID Press Release issued yesterday said that the Governor conveyed to the USG his government's acceptance to set aside land for UNAMID and to cooperate with the mission.

In another development, a UNAMID statement yesterday said that two unidentified gunmen entered the UNAMID compound in Mornei, West Darfur, demanding the keys to two UNAMID vehicles parked outside, *Al-Ahdath* reports. A UNAMID security officer managed to sneak out and notify the police but the two armed men fled with a VHF radio and a DVD.

Dollar expected to rise more against Sudanese Pound

Lawmakers have called on the Bank of Sudan to change the measures it instituted to curb the rise in price of the US Dollar against the Sudanese Pound saying that the current measures are not effective, *Al-Intibaha* reports. Experts expect the Sudanese Pound to fall below current levels against the US Dollar.

SLM-MM asked to expedite integration of forces

Al-Sahafa reports that the Commissioner for the Security Arrangements (DPA) Mohamed Ahmed Al-Dabi has called on the Darfur Transitional Authority and the SLM-MM to expedite "serious procedures" for the reintegration of SLA forces into the SAF in line with the DPA Security Arrangements. Commissioner Al-Dabi was addressing soldiers at the Infantry Institute in Jibeit, eastern Sudan, yesterday.

SSLA orders change in SPLA

The Citizen The Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly Wednesday accepted changes proposed by the Cabinet to the SPLA Act, paving the way for either a civilian or military officer to take over the position of Undersecretary. The earlier version required a civilian for that post. The Act will now go to the GoSS Presidency for endorsement.

Southern Sudanese politicians fear for region's future

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports that participants at a conference of southern Sudanese politicians that kicked off yesterday in Kenana, central Sudan, issued a statement yesterday voicing support for the Arab League position on the ICC and expressing fears over the future of southern Sudan following the ICC warrant for President Al-Bashir. Participants at the conference expressed their readiness to take strong measures against any plot targeting Sudan. "No one has the right to arrest President Al-Bashir," Angelo Beida, spokesperson for the forum, at the opening session.

The forum also called on the armed groups in Darfur to join the peace process and voiced support for the Doha-led mediation effort.

Bona Malwal, one of the major participants at the conference, said that Sudanese have joined ranks despite their differences. The support they have shown for President Al-Bashir sends a strong message to the ICC and the west, he said.

SPLM will not be affected with Akol out of the party – SPLM Spokesperson

Akhir Lahza reports that SPLM Spokesperson Yien Mathiew told the press yesterday that the SPLM National Secretariat has irrefutable evidence that Dr. Lam Akol changed course from the SPLM positions. He said that the next meeting of the SPLM Politburo will discuss the issue pursuant to the SPLM constitution. The SPLM, he said, will not be affected should the Politburo decide to suspend Akol from membership.

Spokesperson Yien brushed aside as "fabrications" reports that Akol plans to establish a new political party.

Constitutional Court backs death ruling for editor's murderers

Al-Wattan reports that the Constitutional Court hearing on an appeal by the defence over a court ruling on the case of the slain editor-in-chief of **Al-Wifaq** daily have unanimously backed the death sentence served earlier.

Websites/International News Coverage

US envoy wants friendship, cooperation from Sudan

(Reuters) Khartoum, 02/04/09 - A new US Special Envoy told Sudan on Thursday he hoped for friendship and cooperation from Khartoum, indicating a shift in tone by Washington.

"I come here with my hands open. And it will be up to the Sudanese government to determine how they want to continue with the relationship. Hopefully it will be with hands of friendship and cooperation," envoy Scott Gration told reporters in Khartoum.

"Like all my American colleagues, I love Sudan," he said, speaking partly in Arabic on his first visit as special envoy to the country, which has faced heavy criticism from Western powers over the Darfur crisis.

AU Panel on Darfur visits Sudan for peace talks

(AFP) Addis Ababa, 02/04/09 – Former RSA President Thabo Mbeki, heading an AU panel on Darfur, is in Sudan for talks on the country's conflict-ravaged province, an AU statement said.

Mbeki, who arrived Wednesday, will meet with government officials in Khartoum and travel to Darfur for a "series of meetings with state officials, tribal leaders, IDP (internally displaced persons) representatives and senior leadership of UNAMID," the statement said.

Sudan launches mediation to reconcile Somali factions

(Sudan Tribune website) Khartoum, 01/04/09 - A Somali Islamist opposition leader Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys arrived to Khartoum where Sudanese government is brokering mediation to reconcile him with the Somali government and to end his exile in Eritrea.

Sheikh Aweys, who chairs the Asmara-based Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia, is the former chairman of the Islamic Courts Union that ruled Somalia's capital in 2006 until being ousted by Ethiopian troops. He was working with his former ally turned President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed.

Khartoum is attempting to use its good relations with Somali hardliner groups to convince them to end their war against the newly formed national unity government.

Somali media said Aweys was in Khartoum and held talks on Tuesday with two senior Sudanese officials. They said he was expected to fly to the Somali capital later to offer his support to the new government.

A source close to the opposition leader told **Reuters** Aweys was expected to arrive to the Somali capital within two weeks. Also a senior Somali source in Sudan confirmed Aweys was in the country, and said it was possible Ahmed might travel to Khartoum to meet him there.