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(By Public Information Office)

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## **HIGHLIGHTS :**

### **UN/ Agencies**

#### **UN commits to renew mine action efforts**

(*Khartoum Monitor*) UN agencies have renewed commitments to supporting the process of mine clearance, mine risk education and assistance to those affected by landmines.

Speaking on the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, UNMAO's Jim Pansegrouw said that these efforts are vital to help the people of Sudan receive the full dividends of peace.

He highlighted the achievements of the mine action activities in Sudan.

*Please also refer to the statement by UNMAO attached separately*

#### **UN to support landmine victims**

(*Juba Post*) UNMAO will soon start supporting victims of landmine in southern Sudan, says the UNMAO Programme Officer Elena Rice.

Speaking at a press conference held at the UN-OCHA conference hall recently, she said plans are underway next month in coordination with the Khartoum office to support landmine casualties in southern Sudan who are believed to number over 2,000.

Rice was responding to the Southern Sudan De-mining Committee Programme Officer Peter Duku who said that the SSDC had no plans at the moment to support survivors of landmine blasts.

#### **UN truck convoy attacked near Kapoeta**

(*Juba Post*) On 28 March a convoy of UN-contracted trucks carrying food items was attacked near Riwoto village, north of Kapoeta.

The convoy was heading to Pibor town in Jonglei State when unidentified armed men opened fire but the drivers refused to stop.

No casualties or looting was reported.

### **Envoys to brief Security Council following visit to Khartoum**

(*Rai AlShaab*) The Security Council will discuss on the 16<sup>th</sup> of this month a report to be presented by envoys Eliasson and Salim on the outcome of their joint mission to Sudan.

Sudan's ambassador to New York said that the envoys will also be presenting their views on possible solutions to the problems in Darfur. He said that African Union Commissioner Alpha Oumar Konaré is also expected to brief the Security Council on the issues of Darfur and other concerns of the African continent and will hold talks with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

### **Sudan obstructs aid workers because of denouncing rights violations– UN**

(*SudanTribune.com*) The UN humanitarian chief told the Security Council today that Sudan blames aid workers in Darfur for inappropriate political activities but in fact government does not tolerate people who speak about violation of humanitarian rights.

In a briefing before the UN Security Council Wednesday on his trip Sudan\*, Chad and Central Africa Republic, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, John Holmes said Sudanese officials repeatedly suggested that some NGOs engaged in inappropriate “political” activities in Darfur.

Holmes furthermore considered such accusation as “insidious pressure on agencies and discriminations between supposed “good” and “bad” ones, to cease.”

*Please refer to the separate attachment on USG Holmes’ statement*

## **The Transition Debate**

### **AU official stresses no failure in African peacekeeping mission in Sudan's Darfur**

(*Peoples’ Daily*) Sam Ibok, head of the AU team charged with implementing the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), stressed on Wednesday while talking to the semi-official Sudanese Media Center that his pan-African organization's peacekeeping mission in Sudan's western region of Darfur had not failed in spite of difficulties.

"The AU force's mission has not failed but is only facing difficulties, and the force needs the logistic support which will help to continue its mission," Ibok was quoted as saying.

The world community should provide the logistic assistances to the AU troops according to agreements reached between the Sudanese government, the AU and the United Nations, he stressed.

Ibok, meanwhile, denied that he had asked an interference of the UN peacekeeping force in Darfur, referring to the AU force's ability to prevent the hostility in view of its right of self-defense.

*SudanTribune.com* reports that African Union forces need increased U.N. logistical assistance and more sophisticated defensive weapons to cope with the dangers in Darfur, a top AU official in Sudan said on Wednesday.

Sam Ibok, head of the AU team charged with implementing a peace agreement in western Sudan, said the support included planes.

"We need more defensive weapons. AK-47s and the other weapons we have are not enough," he told Reuters.

Ibok said he was not calling for the immediate deployment of U.N. troops to help the AU, a move he said would require the consent of the Khartoum government.

But he said the recent attack on AU forces in Darfur demonstrated their vulnerability.

### **UN to deploy additional 21 military experts in Darfur**

*(SuadnTribune.com)* The United Nations will deploy 21 additional military expert and 10 civilians in Darfur in the framework of the light support package to the African peacekeepers in Darfur, the UN said today.

The UN informed the tripartite mechanism meeting that 21 additional military staff officers and 10 civilian staff members have been recruited as part of the Light Support Package staff to be deployed in support of AMIS.

The joint committee between Sudan, the United Nations and the African Union discussed in a meeting held at the premises of the Foreign Ministry implementation of the light support package, which is extended by the UN for the AU mission in Darfur, the UN Mission in the Sudan said Wednesday.

The newly recruited military and civilian staff members are still in Khartoum and will be deployed to Darfur upon availability of office and living accommodation.

The UN indicated that it soon will communicate in writing the Foreign Affairs Ministry the list of the staff members, including information on their nationality, prior to their deployment to Darfur.

The next meeting of the Tripartite Mechanism will be held at AMIS Headquarters on 18 April.

### **UN chief briefs Saudi leader on efforts for Darfur**

(*AlSahafa*) The official Saudi news agency reports that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon briefed over phone yesterday the Saudi leader on UN efforts for peace in Darfur and efforts for a meeting of the stakeholders.

The Saudi leader expressed appreciation for the UN efforts in that regard.

### **China believes Sudan sanctions inevitable - UN diplomat**

(*SudanTribune.com*) Despite pleas from Secretary-General Ban to allow "space" for diplomatic negotiations with Khartoum, America and Britain are set to impose measures to punish Sudan for its defiance of the Security Council.

"Sanctions are being prepared," a senior American diplomat said yesterday, speaking on condition of anonymity about the latest Security Council manoeuvrings. America is also considering sending a high-level envoy to Khartoum in the next few days to ratchet up the pressure, another diplomatic source said.

Chinese and Russian diplomats advised caution yesterday, citing Mr. Ban's plea to delay the imposition of sanctions. "Let me have some political space to deal with this dialogue" with Khartoum, Mr. Ban told reporters Monday.

"I don't think there is appetite in the council for sanctions right now," Russia's ambassador to the United Nations, Vitaly Churkin, told The New York Sun yesterday.

But a new military cooperation deal signed yesterday between Sudan and its most important ally, China, may indicate that even Beijing believes sanctions are inevitable.

China is "willing to further develop cooperation between the two militaries in every sphere," the defence minister, Cao Gangchuan, told Sudan's Joint Chief of Staff, Haj Ahmed El Gaili, who was on a week-long visit to Beijing yesterday, according to the Xinhua News Agency.

In addition to the agreement, however, Chinese officials also pleaded with Sudan to accept the Security Council's plan for placing 22,000 U.N.-backed troops to protect victims in Darfur. A U.N. diplomat said yesterday's signing was a "pre-emptive strike" by Beijing, which, he said, is seeking to sign as many deals as possible before it is forced to join the rest of the council in imposing economic and military sanctions on Khartoum.

Ban's plea for more time got a cool reception from US special envoy for Sudan Andrew Natsios who met with him on Monday. According to an article by the Washington Post, Natsios suggested to Ban that a failure to act quickly could push Congress to adopt harsher measures.

The article quoted one US official as saying that Natsios cited bills that would support the right of states to divest their financial holdings in companies that do business with Sudan and ban those firms from tapping U.S. capital markets.

The Washington Post also quoted senior US officials that the Bush Administration has decided "to stop watering down U.N. resolutions before they are even introduced," and that "this time they will ask for what they want" including military and economic sanctions without fearing objections by China, a veto wielding member of the security council. Beijing voiced its objections to any sanctions on Sudan during in a closed meeting with other Security Council members on the issue last month [*follow the links for the full text on the above stories* [China believes Sudan sanctions inevitable - UN diplomat](#); [UN Security Council to discuss Sudan sanctions](#)].

## **CPA**

### **Petroleum Commission to hold first meeting today**

(*AlRai AlAam*) State Minister Tilara Deng of the Presidency of the Republic says today's meeting of the Presidency will solely be dedicated to discussions over solutions to the Abyei issue.

The GoSS Minister of Presidential Affairs says on the other hand that despite the fact that the issue of the Abyei boundaries remains a question mark, the parties have agreed on the need to establish Interim Authority for Abyei. He also said that the meeting on Abyei will be followed by the first meeting of the Petroleum Commission following a long break.

### **MP says Nuba Mountains may slip back to rebellion**

(*Alwan*) Speaking before parliament, an MP pointed out that the proliferation of arms in the Nuba Mountains is a security threat to the region and that this and a lack of development may cause the area to slip back to rebellion.

He called upon the federal government to take precautions and expedite the implementation of the relevant security arrangements in the state.

He pointed out that the Sudan is being targeted from all quarters and that it was important therefore to take the necessary security, economic and social precautions.

## **GoNU**

### **Defence minister says SAF prepared to protect Sudan from foreign intervention**

(*AlHayat*) Defence minister AbdelRaheem Hussein says the SAF is ready to defend the country against foreign intervention. He pointed out that any talk of the inability of the AMIS to carry out its peacekeeping role in Darfur is just meant to add more credence to the deployment of a "hybrid" force to Darfur.

He pointed out that the US has more than 180,000 soldiers in Iraq but has failed to restore stability there and has indeed acknowledged its failure to do so. How then can it restore stability in the wide expanse that is Darfur?

The minister who was speaking before a meeting of the board of directors of an insurance company in Khartoum yesterday slammed the international community for using double standard on the problems of Sudan. He pointed out that about 13 international organisations had pledged funds for Sudan's recovery during the Oslo meet and the international community was present at the Abuja talks that led to the Darfur Peace Agreement but instead of meeting those pledges and obligations, turned to backing the armed groups.

The minister renewed vows that the Sudan will never hand any Sudanese over to the ICC.

### **Minnawi to quit govt if Sudan continues to reject Darfur force**

(*SudanTribune.com*) The president of the republic's senior assistant, chairman of the interim authority for the Darfur states and leader of a faction of Sudan Liberation Movement, Minni Arkoî Minnawi, said his movement would continue participating within the government under three main conditions. By allowing international forces to Darfur to provide humanitarian assistance, presenting suspects involved in humanitarian violations to the International Criminal Court and disarming the militia.

During Monday April 2 funeral procession of the ten members of his group killed at the end of the last month in clashes with the Sudanese police in Khartoum, Minnawi said "Am I apathetic and yet my family are in refugee camps?" He said: "I am more apathetic than that!!" I will not give up the three conditions".

He said the government did not present a clear view for containing the crisis in Darfur. He further said all solutions were impossible apart from an international protection.

Minnawi went on to say that the peace agreement "is not wrong but those who implement it were wrong". He hinted that he would resign from government by saying: "Conditions must be implemented, or else". He did not complete his statement and those present clapped.

### **Presidential aide discusses Darfur with US Congress delegation**

(*SUNA via BBC Monitoring*) In a statement to SUNA after a meeting with the visiting US delegation in his office at the Presidential Palace, Minnawi said the meeting discussed the Darfur problem with its security, political and humanitarian dimensions.

Minnawi said the meeting also discussed obstacles facing humanitarian organizations in Darfur and the situation at the IDP [internally displaced persons] camps.

Minnawi meanwhile also expressed regrets over the killing of five AU troops, adding that a fact-finding mission on the incident was present in Al-Fasher [southern Darfur] to find out the circumstance under which the incident happened.

### **Parliamentarians call for special session on Darfur**

(*AlRai AlAam et al*) The Darfur crisis featured prominently in yesterday's session of the National Assembly with MPs calling for a special session to be held on the issue at any of the towns of Darfur.

Parliamentarians discussing the President's address on the inauguration of this round of parliament said parliament should adopt an initiative on solutions to Darfur.

*Attached separately are highlights of what some of the MPs said on the issue.*

## **Southern Sudan/ GoSS/SPLM**

### **Two legal systems in southern Sudan leave system 'confused'**

(*Juba Post*) Two parallel legal codes operating in southern Sudan are causing serious confusion for the judiciary. The 1991 Khartoum and the 2003 SPLM laws are both operational in the region according to the interim constitution but the President of the Southern Sudan Court of Appeal says there are no clear guidelines as to which takes precedence.

Justice Kuk John said that in general, the 1991 Khartoum laws are associated with Islamist society and often relate to criminal cases while the 2003 SPLM laws look at civil society.

### **Southern Sudan sets terms for Malaysia's Petronas Oil for Unity State operations**

(*Juba post et al*) the GoSS has set new conditions for allowing Malaysian oil giants Petronas to extend its operations beyond Unity State, says Vice-President Riek Machar.

The Petronas concessions include parts of the southern states of Warrap and Jonglei but the VP says Petronas will have to employ more southerners, fund an independent study on environmental impact of their work, change the way they handle community development and abandon the practice of using central government troops for security.

### **Lord's Resistance Army strikes in Eastern Equatoria**

(*Khartoum Monitor*) The LRA has waged fresh attacks in Magwi County, Eastern Equatoria State.

SPLA spokesperson Mjr. Gen. Kuol Keim said the attacks occurred in the area between the Gordon hills and Aswa Bridge and pointed out that eyewitness accounts said that the attackers wore their hair in the Joseph Kony style.

A bus coming from Kampala was also attacked near Nimule where two SPLA soldiers held the attackers at bay until reinforcements came from SPLA units nearby.

"Is killing of innocent southerners a reward for mediation", spokesperson Kuol asked of the GoSS, the Uganda government and the Lord's Resistance Army.



## **State minister calls for solutions to squatter camps**

(Juba Post) The Central Equatoria Minister for Physical Infrastructure has warned GoSS President Kiir of the growing problem of squatter camps.

In a meeting with the president earlier this week, Minister Alikaya Aligo pointed out that squatter settlements are mushrooming across Juba and are causing health and security problems. Inhabitants, he added, include soldiers as well as civilians.

The minister noted that there was need to enable these people be relocated to well-planned housing.

## **Southern Sudan has 80% of vector-borne diseases, WHO says**

(Juba Post) Southern Sudan carries a massive 80% of the global burden of vector-borne diseases, the WHO reports.

Dr. Michaleen Richer, Acting Head of Office at the WHO, said that the GoSS will, with the help of Norway, build a hospital in each of the southern states.

The Director for NGO Affairs-GoSS, said they are changing their health strategy to try and reach more rural areas.

## **Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement**

### **S. Darfur governor admits government aircraft did bomb Wad Hajjam in South Darfur**

(Rai AlShaab) Governor Atta-el-Mannan of South Darfur admits that government aircraft did bomb Wad Hajjam in Burram Municipality but pointed out that this happened in error.

The governor who was addressing the inauguration of a 2-day tribal reconciliation conference in Nyala said that the death toll from clashes between government and armed groups and of armed robbery in S. Darfur has reached 3,696 and that there are no specific figures for the injured.

The SMC reports that the governor will also present a number of papers during the conference outlining the major causes of the tribal conflicts in the area and efforts to mend the social fabric and state support to such reconciliation conferences.

The conference is due to address the causes of recent tensions in South Darfur and the views of the native administration towards solutions to such issues.

### **Arab youths in Darfur blame Musa Hilal for detention of leaders of the Darfur Students' Front**

(*Rai AlShaab*) Leaders of the Arab Tribes in W. Darfur have called on Sheikh Musa Hilal to release key figures of the Darfur Students' Front whom he has detained for a month or so without any known reasons.

A prominent member of the students' front and of the W. Darfur Arab Youths warned Mr. Hilal will be held responsible for any harm that may befall their people. He pointed out that Hilal does not have the right to exercise the direct authorities of the security organs of state except in the cases of armed robbery and crimes. He said that Mr. Hilal has lost the support of the youths of the area and should immediately release the detained.

### **Sudan-Chad: Fear of reprisal attacks**

(*SudanTribune.com*) The weekend attack on two villages in eastern Chad is the worst assault in nearly six months in the region and relief officials worry that reprisals will follow, claiming more lives and triggering the flight of thousands of more people.

"We really haven't seen anything of this magnitude since October of last year," Matthew Conway, a spokesman for the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) told IRIN on Wednesday. "We're very concerned that it will lead to another round of reprisal attacks where one community feels it has to take some kind of vengeance on the other."

The attacks on the villages of Tiero and Marena left more than 70 people wounded and claimed at least 65 lives in the village of Tiero alone, said UNHCR.

"Eyewitness or survivor reports indicate that these are not solely foreigners" carrying out the attacks, Conway said. "There is implication of Chadian communities in these attacks. Some of these assailants are known to the victims. There is talk that this latest attack was some kind of vengeance attack for murders alleged to have been committed by the group that was under attack this weekend."

UNHCR said between 2,000 and 3,000 people had arrived at the Goz Amir refugee camp near the town of Koukou, about 45km east of the two villages, where they are receiving food and other aid. The camp shelters more than 19,000 Sudanese refugees from Darfur. The Chadian government said up to 8,000 people were displaced by the weekend violence [*follow the link for the full text Sudan-Chad: Fear of reprisal attacks; Chad must change stance against U.N. force - Amnesty*].

### **Other Developments**

#### **Khartoum students stage peaceful demonstration calling for arms-free capital**

(*AllIntibaha et al*) The Khartoum State Students' Union staged a peaceful demonstration yesterday under the theme, *Arms-free Khartoum*.

The students handed a memorandum to the Director-General of Police and to the Speaker of the Khartoum State Legislative Assembly calling for a Khartoum free of arms.

The Director-General of Police vowed to implement the disarmament plan for the capital and for all parts of the country.

### **Inmates strike in Omdurman women's prison**

(*AlWatan*) Inmates at the Omdurman prison for women have entered a hunger strike from the early hours of today in protest of a decision by prison authorities to transfer one of the prison officers to a different institution.

They pointed out that Mjr. Mohamed Sinnada was a very humane prisons officer and that they will plead to the authorities, the Minister of Interior and the Director-General of Police that he remains.

### **Al-Jazirah TV interviews Sudan's Al-Turabi on government, opposition**

(*BBC Monitoring*) Attached separately is the text of a report by Doha Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel Television in Arabic at 1326 gmt on 2 April of a live 12-minute interview with Hassan al-Turabi, secretary general of the Sudanese opposition Popular Congress Party, via satellite from Khartoum on the "Midday Guest" feature.