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(By Public Information Office)

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Highlights

UN/ Agencies

[Ashraf Qazi gets acquainted with latest developments of the peace agreement \(SUNA\)](#)

Khartoum, April 7 (SUNA) The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Sudan Ashraf Qazi has said in a statement to SUNA following his meeting with Assistant of the President of the Republic Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie at the Republican Palace Monday that they discussed all issues pertinent to the assistance being extended by the United Nations Mission in Sudan to the two parties of the peace agreement.

Qazi pointed out that he would submit a report to the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon during his coming visit to New York on the latest developments of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the mandate of the United Nations mission in this regard.

He described the meeting as good and useful, pointing out that he took note on the keenness of the two partners to exert all possible efforts to make unity attractive.

[UN questions SPLA's forces demobilization \(Al-Rai Al-Aam\)](#)

(Al-Rai Al-Aam) UNMIS FC at press conference yesterday warned of collapse of CPA if conflict over Abyei persists.

The Force Commander said the situation in Abyei was tense and UNMIS was denied access to the north and south of the area.

The Force Commander said UN was verifying the number of forces SPLA claimed to have been demobilized and reintegrated. He said SPLA claimed to have demobilized 17608 while UN verified only 6.8 saying SPLA should account for the remaining soldiers.

[U.N. has 14 days to verify troops build-up in Sudan's disputed Abyei](#)

(ST) April 7, 2008 (KHARTOUM) – Sudan's former foes have granted UN peacekeeping mission 14 days of unhindered access to Sudan's oil-rich Abyei region to help stem escalating tensions which threaten to undermine a landmark 2005 north-south peace deal.

Tensions have risen in Abyei since a prominent south Sudan politician, Edward Lino, arrived late last month on a mission that the north condemned as a unilateral appointment of a local administrator without presidential approval.

"Because of the tensions that have arisen... (both sides) lifted their restrictions for a period of 14 days," UN force commander Lieutenant General Jasbir Singh Lidder told a news conference in Khartoum on Monday.

Government forces previously prevented access north of Abyei town and the Sudan People's Liberation Army impeded access from the south, denying the UN a "coherent picture," the commander added.

Since last week both the former rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the National Congress Party (NCP) have accused each other of moving troops into Abyei town, the central Sudanese state's capital.

While Abyei posed a big challenge to implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, Lidder said the problem should not be solved through the military.

"It's a political issue which has to be resolved politically," Singh said. "None of these political claims should manifest in any military muscle flexing on the ground."

"It requires a lot of ... flexibility from both parties." He added.

Singh said the mission had verified almost 97 percent of the northern army's redeployment north but only 10.8 percent of the SPLM's.

The 2005 accord laid out a timetable for the separate north and south armies to withdraw to their respective sides of the 1956 border, which the U.N. mission should monitor.

Underlining mediation difficulties, even those figures are hotly disputed by both sides with the SPLM saying some northern troops stayed in the south hoping to reintegrate into society. However they kept their arms as the demobilisation programme has not yet begun.

The SPLM says the original figure it gave the United Nations was too high and thousands of troops moved during the rainy season unverified by the peacekeepers.

They also refuse to move their troops out of two central areas until the presidency in Khartoum issues a decree to determine how many troops from both sides can remain, as the deal prescribes.

Singh said the main problem was the north-south border had not yet been mapped, creating disputes over where troops should redeploy to.

Under the 2005 deal ending the 20-year conflict the south should get 42 percent of Abyei's oil wealth. But the SPLM says it has received nothing, putting the lost revenue at more than \$1 billion.

UNMIS FC: situation in Abyei is tense, needs political solution

(Al-Khartoum) UNMIS Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Jasbir Singh, at press conference yesterday said the situation at Abyei was tense and needs urgent solution. He said political efforts rather than military were required to resolve the problem.

UNMIS Force Commander warned of collapse of CPA if parties to the conflict in Abyei resort to a war.

He said UNMIS in Abyei was not allowed access to the north and south of the area to monitor ceasefire.

UNMIS FC General Singh warns parties to conflict in Abyei against sticking to violence to resolve the issue

(Akhbar Al Yom) UNMIS FC held a press conference yesterday at the end of his tenure.

Lt. Gen. Jasbir Singh warned the parties to the conflict against sticking to violence as a means to resolve the problem and called on the parties to allow UN free movement in the area.

He said SAF redeployed by about 97.2 % which was good while SPLA redeployed by 28% but UN verified about 11% of the forces.

UNMIS FC: Movement of Edward Lino to Abyei with a large force increased tension in the area (Al-Sudani)

(Al-Sudani) UNMIS Force Commander said JDB accepted a request from UN to play a greater role in assisting JIUs to undertake their task.

UNMIS Force Commander said the movement of Edward Lino to Abyei with a large force increased tension in the area and has called on the two parties to denounce violence and be patient to resolve the problem and commended the cooperation of the two parties to implement Abyei Protocol.

The Force Commander made the statements at a press conference he held yesterday at UNMIS HQs.

GoS: UN is to blame of delay of deployment of hybrid troops in Darfur

(Al-Sudani) The Government expressed displeasure over the delay of deployment of the hybrid troops in Darfur and blamed UN for delaying transportation of troops to the field.

The Foreign Office spokesperson, Ambassador Ali Al-Sadiq, said some African countries were ready to send troops to join UNAMID in Darfur but their transportation was being delayed.

He added that the African countries had met the required number of troops and there was no need for additional soldiers.

[Messeriya: peace in Abyei depends on revocation of experts' report](#)

(Al-Wahda) The Messeriya tribe considered SPLA's setting up of administration in Abyei as untimely escalation of the situation.

The Messeriya have declared that permanent peace would be achieved only if the experts' report was revoked.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

[No return to war again in Sudan – Bashir](#)

(ST) April 7, 2008 (KHARTOUM) – Sudanese President Omer al-Bashir, renewed his commitment to the implementation of signed peace agreements saying that no return to war again in the country.

President al-Bashir delivered on Monday the State of the Republic address before a joint session of the National Legislature, the National Assembly and the Council of States.

Bashir began his speech saying he will stick to its commitment to the signed peace agreements and will not allow any political difference to influence and interfere with political stability and economic development of the Sudan.

"With the spirit of national responsibility, which we all assume, we declare with confidence that there is no return to war again, no matter how opinions are different and convictions are varied, logic should prevail, and peaceful negotiation will win" al-Bashir said.

These statements comes while the two partners of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement trade accusation of troops build-up in the disputed Abyei and following the three months of clashes between the SPLA and the Misseriya militia and the arrival of the SPLM appointed representative to the area.

He exhorted Sudanese to not waste their time in political controversies and dedicate their efforts for the economic development.

"We have continued to strive to follow up the implementation of the obligations of the [Comprehensive] Peace Agreement and we urged continuously the international community to meet its obligations for its application, but the weak response did not prevent us from mobilizing our national energies to restore what the war-ravaged and create a supportive environment for the launch comprehensive development in all affected-war areas." He said.

The CPA parties seem resolved to contain the growing tension generated by the row over Abyei and to settle peacefully the

Despite the peace deal, North-South tensions over the area have never truly subsided. An international group of experts marked Abyei's borders in 2005 but their report was rejected by the northern National Congress Party (NCP).

Abyei lies just north of the boundary line between north and south Sudan set by Sudan's British colonial rulers in the early 20th century. But the line is disputed, and the SPLM wants the area incorporated into their autonomous zone, created by the 2005 peace agreement.

Sudan's north-south civil war killed 2 million people. Under the 2005 peace accord residents of Abyei will choose to join the north or south in 2011, when the entire south will vote on secession from the north.

[Lawyers raise doubt over confessions of journalist killers](#)

(ST) April 7, 2008, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The lives of 10 Darfuris convicted of killing a prominent Sudanese journalist in 2006 are hanging in the balance as their lawyers struggle to prove that their confessions were extracted under torture.

The case has thrown the spotlight on court proceedings here and prompted concern that other capital sentences might be unsafe.

The 10 men were sentenced in November 2007 for beheading Mohamed Taha Mohamed Ahmed, the well-known editor of the daily al-Wifaq newspaper. Taha was accused of blasphemy in May 2005 for publishing an article questioning the origins of Prophet Mohammad. These charges were later dropped, although angry crowds called for the death penalty.

All the men immediately appealed their sentence, but on March 8 the appeal was rejected. Their only recourse now is through the constitutional court.

The difficulty with allegations of torture is overcoming the hurdles set in the way of presenting a credible case.

To begin with, it is imperative that victims of torture are examined as early as possible in the proceedings.

"Too often, prisons and courts delay medical examinations so that torture cannot be proven," said a medical doctor who works for a human rights organization. "Signs of torture disappear very quickly, and the perpetrators usually avoid leaving big scars."

In addition, for a medical examination to be admissible in court, it must be carried out by persons from a government hospital appointed by the judge in the case. Examinations carried out by the staff of human rights organizations or independent hospitals are not acceptable.

Concerning the Taha case, the judge ruled that a medical examination could be carried out after the initial hearing had taken place. However, the legal team of the Darfuris never lodged an official application for the examination.

"We need better training for solicitors in Sudan," said Sadiq Absul Salam, a psychologist who works at the Khartoum Center for Human Rights. "They need to know how they can deal with torture cases and how they can bring this evidence to the courts."

Kamel Omar, the lead defense attorney, has repeatedly insisted that the confessions are invalid because they were obtained through torture. Omar was arrested and detained overnight for making these allegations, and he has refused to speak to IPS about the case.

However, his claims have been echoed by Mohamed Sherif, who worked on the case last year before resigning from the legal team.

"I think it is quite evident that torture did take place and that any sign of torture must throw into doubt the admissibility of the confessions," he said.

There is some debate about whether torture is an endemic part of the Sudanese legal system, or whether the cases that have come to light simply represent isolated incidents.

Many human rights lawyers in the country claim that torture is a serious problem in Sudan, although due to client confidentiality issues they are often unable to provide concrete examples to substantiate these allegations. The Sudan Organization Against Torture, a London-based campaign group, also asserts that those who carry out torture in Sudan generally escape justice because they are part of the law-enforcement establishment.

However, Abdel-Moneim Osman — rapporteur at the Advisory Council for Human Rights, a governmental body — rejected the notion of institutionalized torture.

"Sudan is one of the countries with the lowest number of torture cases," he said. "The only reason that human rights lawyers in Sudan talk about torture so much is for their own political ends and to garner international sympathy."

He insisted that the trial of Taha's killers was carried out fairly and that the claims of torture are unfounded. The convictions, he added, do not only rest on the confessions of the defendants, but also on hard evidence — although he was unable to produce this immediately.

Osman has just presented a report to the government calling on Sudan to sign up to the United Nations Convention Against Torture. But human rights lawyers and organizations say authorities should spend less time talking and more time taking action against alleged torturers.

"We must take steps to bring all those involved in torture to justice," said a lawyer who declined to be named. "Until we root out all forms of torture in the country, we cannot be certain that the sentences handed down are the correct ones."

Those convicted for the Taha killing are being held at Kobar prison in Sudan's capital, Khartoum. Five other inmates of this institution, all farmers, were executed in February for the killing of another farmer in 2004.

In 2005, Human Rights Watch estimated that there were some 300 on death row in Sudan. According to a recent Amnesty International report, Sudan is the African nation that carries out the most executions each year, with more than 65 people having been put to death in 2006.

[Salim and Eliasson arrive in Khartoum](#)

(Al-Rai Al-Aam) UN and AU Special Envoys, Eliasson and Salim Ahmed Salim, arrived in Khartoum yesterday to begin consultations for pushing Darfur peace process forward.

The two envoys will begin their mission with a meeting with Presidential Assistant Nafe Ali Nafe to be followed by meetings with Foreign Minister Deng Alor, First Vice President Salva Kiir in Juba on Wednesday to familiarize themselves with the SPLM efforts to bring Darfur rebel factions on board.

[Participation of national NGOs in DDR program approved](#)

Khartoum, April 7 (SUNA)- The preparatory committee of the Round Table Conference, which is to start session Wednesday, agreed in its meeting held here Sunday, on vision of the Sudanese national organizations to participate in implementation of the national plan of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program in Sudan prior to discussing it within the agenda of the conference.

State Minister at the International Cooperation Ministry and chairman of the preparatory committee Prof. Alais Niyamil, affirmed completion of preparations for the conference, praising the role of the UN and its initiative of holding the conference to discuss the issues of peace in Sudan and to submit them to the donors conference in Paris at the end of the current month. Member of the national council for coordinating DDR programme, Dr. Abdel-Rahman Aboudom said the international community is required to carry out its duty fully in implementing the programs which were identified to support peace in Sudan.

Dr. Aboudom asserted importance of the conference after completion of the legal procedures of the programme by the national council of the DDR coordination and north and south Sudan commissions. Chairman of Sudan Council of Voluntary Agencies (SCOVA), Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed Ibrahim, said that the roles of the organizations will be determined in the conference.

[President Al-Bashir affirms government keenness to complete compatibility of laws with Constitution in Early Next July](#)

Khartoum, April 7 (SUNA)- President of the Republic, Field Marshal Omer Al-Bashir, has affirmed the government keenness to complete harmonization of all the laws with the Constitution before early next July.

Addressing the opening sitting of the Sixth Session of the National Legislature Monday, President Al-Bashir said that the bulk of the legislative work in the three years that followed the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was a big one, indicating that the Council of Ministers alone has approved during this period 59 law bills, with participation of all the state's organs and the civil society institutions.

President Al-Bashir referred to the remarkable enhancement of Sudan relations with the friendly countries in the Arab, African and Asian countries, along with the international and regional funding institutions. He said that the external funding to Sudan jumped from 428 million dollars in the year 2003 to 853 million dollars in the year 2007, at the percentage of 99% He said that the number of general education institutions in the country has increased to more than 20,000 institutions. President Al-Bashir pointed to the continuous efforts for enhancement of the capacity building through implementation of 32 projects in this regard, referring to the utilization of modern technology in universities and higher education institutions. He affirmed the state's concern with providing free of charge medical treatment for emergency, kidney dialysis and children and maternity diseases, as well as combating diseases and epidemics, providing medicines, expanding implementation of the preventive medicine and primary health care programmes.

[China launches de-mining training course for Sudan](#)

(ST) April 7, 2008 (NANJING) — A humanitarian de-mining training course for Sudan sponsored by the Chinese government was inaugurated here on Monday in Nanjing, capital of the eastern Jiangsu Province.

About 20 military officers from north and south Sudan were participating in the six weeks of training at the University of Science and Technology of People's Liberation Army.

In addition to being a concrete measure that China is actively taking part in international de-mining assistance, it is also an important step in providing Sudan with humanitarian aid.

It showed the Chinese government's firm support for the national reconciliation process in Sudan, its willingness to further develop friendly and cooperative relations with all Sudanese and an active attitude to help the African country's construction and development, a China Foreign Ministry press release said.

China is also donating detection and mine sweeping equipment to Sudan when the training is over.

GoSS

[Child abduction resumes in Sudan's Bor](#)

(ST) April 7, 2008 (MAKUACH, Jonglei) – Armed gunmen abducted two children and wounded another man at Aliang, in Jale Payam about 40 miles north of Bor town Friday, Bor county commissioner said Sunday April 6 at Makuach Boma, 20 miles east of Bor town. It is the first occurrence in four months.

Commissioner Abraham Jok Ariing, at his briefing to SPLM members, at county congress convection, said the two children's abduction occurred in the middle week and the abductors over powered an attempt to recover them (children).

Mr. Ariing attributed the abduction to Murle tribesmen.

"They (Murle) have started the abduction," he said stressing that it is time Bor community prepare to defend her territory. The commissioner cautioned Bor citizens on foreign land invasion which, he says, is uncultured.

Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) minister of legal affairs, Justice Makuei Lueth – a born from Bor, blamed the GoSS of not following his advice. "I told them to restrain the notorious son and ask the discipline one to stop fighting," Justice Makuei said referring to Bor and Murle clans as discipline and notorious sons respectively. Both leaders argued Bor citizens to remain calm as they push forward with GoSS disarmament speed.

Bor community lost thirty-seven (37) children in 2007 to cattle raiders, believed to be Murle tribesmen, and many more died in cattle raiding attacks, child abduction and ambushes launched by Murle, Bor community leaders revealed while briefing villagers at the congress. The leaders promised an end to Murle atrocities.

A child abducted in November 2007 returned to his parents in January 2008. It is unclear whether state government or the South Sudan army trying disarmament in Pibor, Murle's town, will return these children.

Insecurity curved when Lt. Gen. Kuol Manyang assented to the position of governorship in December 2007, after citizens criticized his predecessor Philip Thon Leek of inability to maintain peace in the state.

Disarmament process, spearheaded by governor request to GoSS President Salva Kiir started in December 2007 but Bor leaders say it is very slow or not virtually successful.

Darfur

14 killed during Janjaweed attacks in three towns – Darfur rebels

(ST) April 7, 2008 (PARIS) — Khartoum backed Janjaweed militia have killed 14 civilians today in attacks and looting in three towns in North Darfur, a rebel military spokesperson said today.

Abdel-Rahman Adam Nimer, the military spokesperson of the Sudan Liberation Army led by Abdelwahid al-Nur told Sudan Tribune by satellite telephone that the

Janjaweed militia for the second day continued their attacks in the North Darfur State killing 14 civilians.

"The Janjaweed killed 4 persons in El-Fasher and wounded other 15, in Tawila they killed 4 and wounded 7 civilians and in Kabkabiya they killed 6 civilians and wounded other 16." Nimer said.

He further added that the assailants burnt the market of Kabkabiya, also known as Janjaweed capital in Darfur.

The rebel spokesperson said that the militia looted the markets and killed the population in total impunity

Yesterday the Governor of North Darfur State, Osman Mohamed Yusuf Kibir, said the attack on the market of El-fasher was isolated act; pointing out that the Military Area Command and the leadership of the Border Guard forces have been able to contain the situation completely within two hours.

He further said that the necessary administrative measures have been taken against individuals who opened fire randomly at citizens in El-Fasher market.

Nontheles, Nimer further stressed that they cannot remain indifferent to "these barbaric attacks."

"We want to say that if the Janjaweed do not halt the murderous rampage, we would intervene to protect the population and no one can blame us for that." He said.

Yesterday the SLM leader Abdel-Wahdi al-Nur appealed the international community to condemn Sunday attack against El-Fasher market and to pressurize Sudanese government to disarm the militias in Darfur.

The Janjaweed who are organised by the government in para-military troops used to stage such attack to protest against delay or incomplete disbursement of salaries.

However it is the first time that the militias extend their protest-attacks out side the capital of North Darfur to Kabkabiya and Tawila. On October 10, 2006 the pro-Sudanese government militia attacked El-Fasher market followed by another attack against El-Fasher's cattle market on December 4, 2006.

[Yemeni Plane loaded with 16 tons of humanitarian aid to Darfur arrives at Khartoum Airport](#)

Khartoum, April 7 (SUNA) - A Yemeni plane, loaded with 16 tones of food stuff and medicines to the affected people in Darfur, arrived at Khartoum Airport Sunday. The Yemeni Ambassador to Khartoum, Hazaa Abdu Al-Dali, and the Commissioner General for Humanitarian Aid, Hassabo Mohammed Abdul-Rahman, were present at the airport to receive the Yemeni plane.

The Ambassador of Yemen said the assistance came in response to instructions by the Yemeni President, Ali Abdallah Salih, to affirm the solidarity of the people of Yemen with their brothers in Sudan as a reflection of the excellent relations at all the political and humanitarian spheres.

The Ambassador further hoped that Sudan's efforts under the leadership of President Omer Al-Bashir in the humanitarian aspects would improve the situations and realize peace and stability in Darfur. Meanwhile, the Commissioner General for Humanitarian Aid, Hassabo Mohammed Abdul-Rahman, expressed Sudan's appreciation to the people and Government of Yemen over the support which comes in response to their commitment during the Arab Conference for Supporting the Humanitarian Situation in Darfur, held in Khartoum last October.

He appreciated the support of the Yemeni brothers, which contributes in improving the humanitarian situations in Darfur, in a view that Darfur witnesses voluntary return of the internally displaced and refugees to their home areas. Answering a question about the current humanitarian situations in Darfur, Abdul-Rahman described the situations as good, referring to the voluntary return movement to a number of villages, affirming that the area is free from epidemics according to the indications of the reports of the UN. He pointed out that his recent visit to Darfur States aimed at inspecting the arrangements for the voluntary repatriation as well as the Arab and Chinese supports besides the donation of some of the national oil companies as well as the support of the Federation of the Sudanese Workers Trade Unions.

Miscellaneous

Government has failed to help South Sudan development - Turabi

(ST) April 7, 2008 (KHARTOUMR) — Sudan's government has failed to do enough to help the south develop since a civil war and risks renewed fighting if it does not spend more there, Islamist opposition leader Hassan al-Turabi said on Monday.

Turabi, who has remained influential despite a bitter split with President Omar Hassan al-Bashir in 1999, said after holding his Popular Congress party's convention in the south that there was a drastic lack of development despite the 2005 peace deal.

Turabi said that could discourage the south's people.

"If they are not happy there will be tension, there'll be anger and they'll rise against the government," he told a news conference in Khartoum. "Peace itself can be threatened."

Under the north-south deal, the south is meant to get about half the revenues from oil wells on its territory.

Turabi said the government in Khartoum should also spend money on roads, railways, airports, schools and hospitals to increase the appeal of unity. The south is due to vote in a 2011 referendum on whether to secede from the north.

Sudan's north-south war broadly pitted Khartoum's Islamist government against mainly Christian, animist rebels, complicated by issues of ethnicity, oil and ideology. It claimed 2 million lives and drove more than 4 million from their homes.

Embroiled in civil war on and off since 1955 the south had no infrastructure, no education and no trained civil service. Turabi has not said whether he would prefer Sudan to stay together or for the south to secede eventually.

The north-south peace deal did not end a newer conflict in Sudan's western Darfur region, which broke out in 2003 when mostly non-Arab rebels took up arms accusing central government of neglect.

Turabi said United Nations and African Union efforts had failed to bring peace to Darfur. He suggested that all Sudan's political parties should be gathered together with Darfur's factions for an agreement similar to the north-south deal.

"Take the same model in the south and apply it over there. We can overcome it before we break up and disintegrate," he said. Under the 2005 peace deal the south was granted a semi-autonomous government.

He said the population in Darfur was roughly the same as in the south, justifying a similar approach.