

**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN****UNMIS**Media Monitoring Report, 10 April 2007

(By Public Information Office)

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HIGHLIGHTS :

UN/ Agencies

IOM, UNHCR repatriated more than 14,000 in 2007

(*Khartoum Monitor*) The IOM and the UNHCR repatriated more than 14,000 refugees in 2007 from Ethiopia, Kenya and the CAR and are facilitating the repatriation of sudanese refugees from countriies of asylum, says IOM Public Relations Officer Brigit Hussfeld.

Hussfeld said that in general, medical screening, escorting and transportation is handled by the IOM while the UNHCR is in charge of registration in the countries of asylum, establishing way-stations and reception facilities.

She added that the duty of dispersing the residents into sudan is sharged by the IOM, UNHCR and their NGO partners.

Sudan to investigate allegations of Darfur rapes

(*SudanTribune.com*) Sudan will investigate a U.N. report into allegations government soldiers raped women in Darfur, the justice minister said Saturday, but criticized the report for failing to present details.

The U.N. report said uniformed men had perpetrated at least 15 cases of rape or sexual assault in December in Jebel Marra, a region in the east of Darfur. Rape, it said, appears to have been "used as a weapon of war to cause humiliation and instill fear in the local population."

Justice Minister Mohammed Ali al-Mardi said the testimony detailed in the report, released Friday by the U.N. High Commission for Human Rights, would be investigated.

"We are ready to investigate whatever complaints are made against the government," he said of the testimony collected by 30 U.N. human rights investigators working in Darfur.

The minister said, however, that many of the allegations were unsubstantiated and missing details and facts.

The Transition Debate

Sudan accepts Heavy Support Package for Darfur

(*AMIS Daily Press Digest*)The Addis Ababa meeting comprising AU, UN and GoS was held yesterday. Meanwhile, there was a clash between Sudan's Armed Forces and the Chadian soldiers in Western Darfur. These made headlines in today's local dailies.

Sudan has announced its consent to the Heavy Support package offered by UN, which includes the deployment of a Hybrid Force under the command of AMIS, reported the local dailies.

According to local press reports, the Tripartite Addis Ababa Meeting has agreed to the dispatch of technical experts to Darfur shortly to consider the deployment of 2,500 African troops, 6 helicopters, monitoring equipments and military machinery, including communication devices, as part of the Heavy Support package.

AlSahafa daily quoted Sudan's Deputy Ambassador in Addis Ababa, who described the meeting as productive. According to him all the Parties have agreed on the items on the lists of the Heavy Support Package, and that UN and AU have agreed on the reservations Khartoum expressed with regards to arming the helicopters with offensive weapons in addition to identifying the party responsible for operating the communication devices.

The Sudanese Deputy Ambassador was further reported to have said that the participants in the meeting approved Sudan's request that all the forces to be deployed in Darfur should be recruited from within the continent, and in the event that this was not feasible recruits should be from friendly countries which Sudan agrees to.

The Sudanese diplomat further stated that the AU Commission Chairperson, Konare will head for New York this week to meet with UNSG to discuss the material support needed for the UN-support Support packages.

Within the same context, *Akhbar Alyoum* daily quoted the Chief of UN Peacekeeping Operations in Africa as saying that he informed the Sudan government of the UN position concerning the deployment of 4,107 civilian staff under the supervision of the African Union. He adds that \$21 million was spent on the Light Support Package, while \$300 million has been earmarked for the Heavy Package.

He stated that this was the first time UN provides heavy support to non-UN forces, affirming that the joint vision the three Parties have reached at the meeting is considered as a strong push to the peace process in Darfur, as well as it confirms the Parties keenness to reach a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Darfur region.

On the other hand, the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Said Djinnit, announced at the press conference he held yesterday that GoS expressed some reservations and raised some questions, which the AU and UN responded to.

Ambassador Djinnit added that GoS has agreed to the content of the second support phase except for one item, which he declined to identify. He, however, noted that the Sudanese delegation has agreed to give its reply on that point within a few days after consulting with their government.

Meanwhile, the paper said that a member of UN delegation described the agreement of the three Parties as very important, but according to him they are still halfway with regards to the reinforcement of AU Forces in Darfur.

On its part, the Sudanese delegation to the meeting described the sessions as positive and dominated by a spirit of understanding and transparency, expressing hope that this will contribute to the issue of recommendations and decisions.

SLM rebels reject African role in Darfur peace process

(*SudanTribune.com*) The different factions of the Sudan Liberation Movement announced Monday their rejection of any role of the African Union in the resolution of Darfur crisis. Also, they suspend cooperation with the AU mission in Sudan and its troops.

SLM factions said Sudanese military planes bombed on Monday April 9, the site of a meeting of SLM military commanders. “This site is only known to the AU”, said Êsameldin Elhag the SLM spokesperson. The statement accused the AU troops of providing Sudanese authorities military information about their sites and the movement of the rebel troops.

Accusing the AU of lack of impartiality, the rebel statement said the African body failed to denounce the repetitive attacks carried by the government forces and its militias. Also according to the rebels, the AU failed to monitor the ceasefire “violated recurrently by Sudanese government” or to protect Darfur civilians.

The rebels pointed out that Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, Alpha Oumar Konare, backed the position of the Sudanese government opposing the UN resolution 1706.

On April 7, Konare said that Darfur peacekeepers would be African with an African command and that the UN’s participation would be limited to the fields of administration, funding, as well as technical and logistical support. While the resolution 1706 speaks about the deployment of UN troops in Darfur.

The SLM factions demand that AU forces should ask for prior permission before circulation in the territories controlled by its troops. They also prohibit flight of AU planes over their positions [*follow the link for the full text [SLM rebels reject African role in Darfur peace process](#)*].

US envoy to Sudan to testify before US Congress on ‘Plan B’

(*SudanTribune.com*) The committee on foreign relations at the US senate is scheduled to conduct a hearing named ‘Darfur: A ‘Plan B’ to Stop Genocide?’ next Wednesday. The committee has invited Andrew S. Natsios, President Bush’s Special Envoy to Sudan to testify.

The US has threatened Sudan with a 'Plan B' if it doesn't agree to the proposed deployment of a "hybrid" force of 20,000 United Nations and AU peacekeepers and police officers. Natsios revealed that the sanctions include restricting dollar transactions with companies doing business in Sudan and imposing an asset freeze and a travel ban on three Sudanese figures.

Natsios has declined to elaborate publicly on the other aspects of 'Plan B' during his testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on Darfur last February. He offered a classified hearing to US lawmakers on the 'Plan B' if needed. It is not clear whether Natsios will unveil any new information on Sudan's proposed sanctions package during the upcoming hearing.

CPA

Sudanese delegation explores tribal leaders' position over Abyei

(*SudanTribune.com*) A delegation headed by the deputy leader of the security and intelligence service, Maj Gen Mohamed Atta, visited Abyei and al-Mujlad on 5-6 April and held consultations with the Nazir [*local chief*] of the Dinka Ngok tribe Kual Deng and the chief of Miseiriyah tribe, Babo Nimir on their positions over the implementation of the Abyei Boundaries Commission (ABC).

The delegation has to present a report on the issue to the meeting of the presidency next Thursday April] 12 to decide on, *AlSahafa* daily reported.

Babo Nimir of the Miseiriya tribue said that he had suggested setting up a joint council between the Dinka and Misariyah to occupy the administrative vacuum in Abyei, which resulted following the expulsion of the administrative unit from the area by civil society organizations linked to the Dinka.

He added that he had informed the security delegation that there was no chance his tribe would forgo the area although they could compromise on Abyei south of Bahr al-Arab in order to resolve the struggle.

On his part, the Dinka chief pointed out that he had informed Maj-Gen Atta's committee that the Dinka were prepared to guarantee citizenship rights for any side or individual if implementing the Abyei protocol was a fundamental part of the committees efforts.

He further said that pastoral nomads do not affect Dinka rights in the area and they can guarantee their historical right of movement north-south according to the rainy seasons. Adding that "our problem remains with those who reject Dinka's rights in Abyei", they fear to loose the oil rich region if the south separate and this people avoid speaking about, he underlined.

GoNU

Highlights on the visit by China's Special Envoy Zhai Jun

(Compiled from BBC Monitoring and the local press) Visiting Chinese Special Envoy and Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun visited Darfur last Saturday where he held talks with local officials in el-Fasher and Nyala. He met governors Kibir and Atta-el-Mannan of North and South Darfur respectively, was briefed of the situation in the region and inspected three refugee camps where he held talks with local residents and refugees.

He pointed out that China was very concerned with the Darfur issue and had provided humanitarian assistance.

The Special Envoy had earlier held talks with President Bashir during which the two exchanged views on bilateral relations between the two countries, Darfur and other issues of mutual concern.

He expressed wishes that the Sudanese government could show more flexibility on a plan proposed by former UN chief Annan on Darfur, continuously improve the humanitarian situation and speed up the political process in Darfur.

President Bashir highly praised relations of cooperation and friendship between Sudan and China and declared his government's acceptance in principle of the Annan plan. He said that the Sudanese government was willing to hold more consultations with UN and the AU and on the implementation of the former SG's plan.

Army truck explodes in Sudan, no casualties - army

(SudanTribune.com; the weekend press) A large Sudanese army truck full of ammunition exploded in Khartoum on Saturday, but caused no casualties, an army spokesman said.

"The truck was shaken and this caused the explosion," the spokesman said.

He did not say what might have caused the blast. Al Jazeera television quoted an unnamed security source as saying the ammunition exploded because of the hot weather.

The state-run Sudanese Media Centre (SMC) quoted the official armed forces spokesman, Mohamed Aghbash, as saying in a statement that the accident took place inside an ammunition site.

Security forces cordoned off the area. Explosions could be heard for about two hours after the incident and further reports say the Khartoum Airport was temporarily closed for security reasons.

Reports today say the explosion has claimed the life of a young man who was at home when the incident occurred.

Southern Sudan/ GoSS/SPLM

GoSS finance minister investigated over fraudulent car deals

(*AlHayat*) A committee formed by the GoSS to investigate alleged links to fraudulent car deals has started investigations with finance minister Arthur Akouein.

The Deputy Speaker of the GoSS legislative Assembly has also confirmed that Mr. Martin Malwal Arop who owns the Arop Trading Company, currently being detained, will also be interrogated alongside the owner of the company contracted for the procurements.

He said that the committee will table to the GoSS Legislative Assembly a detailed report on the proceedings once the legislative body comes out of recess in early May.

Grenade explodes in Wau

(*AlIntibaha*) Three people were killed and 7 others injured in Wau last Sunday as a result of a grenade explosion.

Eyewitnesses report that the incident happened when some people threw a hand grenade at a funeral gathering killing the three on the spot. The local authorities have formed a committee to investigate.

Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement

Government to hold talks with DPA non-signatories at month's end

(*AlSahafa*) At a meeting yesterday with the visiting Secretary of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Presidential Advisor Mustapha Osman says the Libyan capital will host at the end of this month talks between the Sudan government and DPA non-signatories.

The visiting Secretary of the Gulf Cooperation Council told reporters following the meeting that their views over solutions to the Darfur issue were in line with those of the Sudan government.

Minnawi testifies before committee investigating Omdurman clashes

(*Sudan Vision*) The committee set up to investigate the 24 March clash in Omdurman between SLM-MM elements and police set to work yesterday and listened to the testimony of Senior Presidential Aide Mini Minnawi.

The Minister of Interior is to testify later today and the committee will report to the Presidency once it winds up with the process.

Chad, Sudan trade accusations after border clashes

(*SudanTribune.com*) Chad said it routed a major rebel attack launched from Sudan on Monday to destabilize its government, but Khartoum accused Chad's army of killing 17 of its troops and threatened a strong response.

The accusations marked a deterioration in the volatile relations between the two central African neighbors, marred by violence spilling across the frontier of Sudan's Darfur region.

Chadian Information Minister Hourmadji Moussa Doumgor said a convoy of 200 rebel vehicles from Sudan was defeated after attacking army positions in the border village of Aldjirema.

At least eight Chadian soldiers and numerous rebels were killed, he said.

"Chad expects the international community to unequivocally condemn this enemy aggression led from Sudan against Chad and take appropriate measures to compel the Sudanese government to abandon its expansionist plans to destabilize Chad," the minister said in a statement.

However, Sudanese armed forces spokesperson Mohammed Aghbash said Chadian troops backed by 7 armored vehicles and 140 armed off-road vehicles has crossed the border and attacked Sudanese troops before being forced to withdraw.

Seventeen army and police personnel were killed while 40 others were wounded in the attack, which also left numerous civilian casualties, he said.

"We send a strong message to all traitors and those who seek to escalate the situation that the response would be strong and through all legitimate means," Aghbash said in the statement carried on the official Sudanese news agency SUNA.

A Chadian presidency official in N'Djamena, who asked not to be identified, denied the army had crossed the border or clashed with Sudanese forces.

Up to 400 feared dead in recent attacks in Chad-UN

(*Reuters via NewsEdge*) The United Nations refugee agency UNHCR said on Tuesday that up to 400 people are estimated to have been killed in Chad during cross-border attacks by Sudanese Janjaweed militia some 10 days ago.

The agency said last week that Chadian authorities had reported an initial toll of at least 65 dead in the March 31 attacks on two villages in eastern Chad, Tiero and Marena. But the new estimate followed a visit by a group of U.N. agencies to the remote area on Sunday.

"Estimates of the number of dead have increased substantially and now range between 200 and 400. Because most of the dead were buried where their bodies were found -- often in common graves owing to their numbers -- we may never know their exact number," UNHCR spokesperson Ron Redmond told a briefing.

Armed group abducts JEM political secretary from his house in Nyala

(*Rai AlShaab*) A group of 7 people stormed last Sunday into the Nyala home of Assim Ahmed Suleiman, the JEM political secretary, beat him, tied him up and left dragging him along to an unknown destination.

His car keys were taken under gunpoint and he was driven away by the abducters who later dumped him at a remote place from where he returned home. He reported the incident to the police and the local residents are calling on the police to investigate the incident in order to ensure there is no repeat of such an incident.

Other Developments

Hotel evacuated as second grenade is uncovered

(*AlSudani; AlWatan*) Police have for the second time uncovered a hand grenade in a toilet in a hotel in Khartoum south.

The hotel manager who requested anonymity and that the name of the hotel not be mentioned [AlWattan daily claims it is the Billal Hotel south of Khartoum] said that he saw the grenade and informed the police who then brought in explosives experts with sniffer dogs to comb the area for more explosives. No more grenades were uncovered in the search.

The manager says this is the second time in 24 hours that a grenade has been uncovered in the hotel's toilets. He believes the grenade may have been left by one of the soldiers who were recently booked into the hotel and said that the hotel would probably have to search members of the regular forces who book into the hotel in future for such explosive devices.