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By Public Information Office

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Highlights

Main News

GoSS new resolution ‘messed up’ census plans, GoSS says will not take part in census unless concerns are addressed (Akhbar Al Yom)

Presidential Advisor Ghazi Salah Al-Din: GoSS decision on census is violation of the constitution and CPA (Akhbar Al Yom)

SPLM will be responsible for derailing CPA, conflict within GoSS is the reason for this decision: says State Minister at the Ministry of Information Kamal Obeid (Al-Wifaq)

(Akhbar Al Yom/Al-Wifaq) According to Akhbar Al Yom newspaper GoSS decision not to conduct census unless its concerns are addressed has ‘messed up’ census plans.

NCP leader and Presidential Advisor, Dr. Ghazi Salah Al-Din, reacted to GoSS decision on census describing it as violation of the constitution and the CPA.

NCP leader and State Minister for Information and Communication, Dr. Kamal Obeid, also reacted to GoSS conditions for conducting census in southern Sudan.

He said the decision was not surprising; it reflected lack of institutionalism within SPLM and revealed conflict and differences within the movement.

Dr. Kamal Obeid added that SPLM disrespected the commitment of its leader made at the Presidential meeting and SPLM alone would be held responsible for derailing the CPA.

Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) reluctantly agreed Wednesday to conduct the census next Tuesday, emphasizing that the process should not serve to determine wealth or power sharing

UN/Agencies

Ashraf Qazi urges the leadership of SPLM and NCP to quickly end census crisis

(Miraya FM)The Special Representative of the Secretary General to Sudan, Ashraf Qazi, discussed today with the President of southern Sudan government, Salva Kiir Mayardit, the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement including the Census.

Speaking to the press in Juba, Mr. Qazi urged the leadership of both the SPLM and the National Congress Party to quickly end the recent Census crisis.

He added that if the Census crisis is prolonged it would have hard impact on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement Mr. Qazi said that there were many challenges in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and all of them should be addressed to maintain good political atmosphere

The Minister of Telecommunications and Posting in the government of southern Sudan, Major General Chuang Aluong, said that more than 600 returnees have already been transported from the North to Ataar in the South to be counted in the forthcoming Census.

Mr. Aluong told Miraya FM that it was the responsibility of every peace loving Southern Sudanese to make sure they are counted.

[UN welcomes British proposal to host peace conference in Darfur \(Rai Al-Shaab\)](#)

(Rai Al-Shaab) The UN has welcomed British Prime Minister's proposal to host a peace conference on Darfur.

UN Special Envoy to Sudan Jan Eliason and his African counterpart Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim would discuss with the Security Council British offer.

"Regretfully, the question does not end at identifying the venue of the conference, it is to ensure the participation of the concerned personalities and to end violence which is our current top priority," he said.

[UN's Ban "extremely disappointed" over Darfur](#)

(ST) April 16, 2008 (UNITED NATIONS) — U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed extreme disappointment in a report made public on Wednesday at a lack of progress in resolving the conflict in Darfur, blaming both sides for showing no political will.

In his latest report on efforts to deploy a U.N./African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur, Ban said both the Sudanese government and rebel groups had failed to stop fighting, cooperate with the peacekeepers or prepare for peace talks.

"The parties appear determined to pursue a military solution; the political process stalled; the deployment of UNAMID (the peacekeeping force) is progressing very slowly ... and the humanitarian situation is not improving," he said.

"The primary obstacle is the lack of political will among all the parties to pursue a peaceful solution to the Darfur crisis," Ban said. "I am extremely disappointed at the lack of progress on all fronts."

The U.N. chief's bleak report covered the three months after UNAMID took over on January 1 from an ineffectual purely AU force to try to halt the five-year-old Darfur conflict, which involves government troops, allied militias and rebel groups.

The U.N. peacekeeping force is intended eventually to number 26,000 troops and police, but by March 26 only 9,200 were in place. There are disputes between the United Nations and Sudan's government over which countries can contribute forces and what the operating rules will be.

Peace talks opened in Libya last October in the absence of several key rebel groups and soon adjourned with little achieved.

"The use of military force by the parties has overshadowed the political process and created an environment in which the prospect of negotiations has become ever more remote," Ban's report said.

Although the Sudanese government said it wanted a political solution, its recent military actions against rebels in Western Darfur were "fundamentally at odds" with creating the right climate, it said.

The operations had led to indiscriminate killings and other serious human rights abuses, it added, while also blaming rebels for illegal detention and torture of civilians.

International experts say more than 200,000 people have been killed and over 2 million have been driven from their homes by the Darfur conflict. Khartoum says those figures are exaggerated and has put the death toll at 9,000.

The issuing of Ban's report for the Security Council coincided with a summit between council nations and African states, where Sudan's delegate pinned the blame for the deadlock over Darfur squarely on the rebels.

"The ball remains in the court of the Security Council as well as the AU ... to undertake the effort to convince the rebels to heed reason and not the sound of guns," said Mustafa Osman, an adviser to Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir.

[GoNU](#)

[UNAMID should not exceed its mandate: says Lt. Gen. Mohamed Ahmed Al-Dabi](#)
[UNAMID Administrative and Operations Affairs Coordinator](#)

(Al-Watan) GoNU said UNAMID had exceeded its mandate by committing a number of violations in Darfur region.

The National Coordinator for Administrative and Operational Affairs at UNAMID Gen Mohammed Ahmed Al Dabi said that concerned authorities were monitoring the performance of UNAMID closely.

He said UNAMID's confidence- building patrols were asking indigenous population about what services the government was rendering to them, adding these types of questions were not part of UNAMID concern.

Gen Dabi said UNAMID should concentrate its efforts on monitoring violation of DPA and reporting such violations to the higher commission.

“UNAMID instead should maintain security at IDPs camps and support implementation of DPA”, he said.

Gen Al Dabi reminded that UNAMID should realize that it has to observe Geneva conventions that cater for preserving cultural and social components of communities at areas of conflicts.

[Sudanese security stops five private papers publishing](#)

(ST) April 16, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Sudanese authorities prevented five privately owned newspapers from publishing on Wednesday, the latest in a wave of censorship, journalists said.

Al-Sudani, al-Ahdath, Ajras al-Huriya, al-Rai al-Shaab and the English language The Citizen paper were the latest targets of renewed censorship which opposition political parties say violates the constitution.

Sudan’s radio and television are state controlled but the private papers enjoy relative freedom. However, sporadic censorship is introduced at politically sensitive times.

A 2005 north-south peace deal paved the way for democratic elections in Sudan in 2009. Many political parties have expressed concern the vote would be unfair without a free press.

Ajras al-Huriya and The Citizen said their papers were stopped because they had written articles about censorship preventing three papers from printing a day earlier. Al-Ahdath said no reason was given.

"Our paper today has been confiscated by the national security," said Nhial Bol, editor-in-chief of The Citizen. "They allowed us to print 10,000 copies then they confiscated them — we lost about \$10,000 last night," he added.

Independent al-Ahdath was also confiscated. "We printed 20,000 copies and our losses would be 25 million Sudanese pounds (\$12,500)," Editor-In-Chief Adil al-Baz told Reuters. He said no reason was given.

Security services were not immediately available to comment.

The papers said security officials had been visiting their offices every night to inspect the content and censor anything they did not like. "This is a great loss to the freedom of our country," Bol said. "It is illegal."

[GoSS](#)

[Joseph Kony is committed to Ugandan peace process - Machar](#)

(ST) April 16, 2008 (JUBA) — The Vice-President of southern Sudan government announced he will meet the elusive leader of the rebel LRA next month. He also assured his commitment to the two year peace process to end two decades of war in northern Uganda.

Riek Machar revealed that he has established direct contact with fugitive Ugandan LRA rebel Joseph Kony as from 14th April 2008 and that Kony assured him of signing the final peace deal but after being update on the traditional justice, special division of Ugandan court and the International Criminal Court (ICC) based in Hague Netherlands.

The chief mediator said that despite expiration of the cession of hostility agreement on 16th April 2008, Kony "is still committed to peaceful settlement of their grievances with the government of Ugandan and that his forces will honour the expired agreement and remain in the designated assembly camp at Riikwnbwa."

Kony refused last week to sign the final text of peace agreement brokered by the southern Sudan government. Machar said that the rebel leader did not turn up last week because he "wanted more information," notably on the criminal charges and the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of his fighters.

He said Lord's Resistance Army leader Joseph Kony requested for series of meetings involving LRA delegations, elders, traditional and religious leaders, local government administrators and members of parliament from northern Uganda to elucidate to him the details of the already signed agreements including the DDR.

Vice president Machar further disclosed that Joseph Kony has provided him with one week meeting programme timetable starting from 26 to 27 April meeting with LRA delegation led by James Obit for thorough briefing on the progress of the Juba peace talks, from 28 to 30 April meeting with elders, traditional and religious leaders including local government leaders and the members of parliaments from northern Uganda and finally meeting with the chief negotiator, Riek Machr on the first of May 2008 at Riikwnbwa designated camp in Western Equatoria State of Southern Sudan.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said last Monday during one day visit to Juba that he did not think Kony was serious about the talks, and hinted that Ugandan forces could abandon the ceasefire.

Twenty years of fighting have left tens of thousands dead and displaced two million people, mainly in northern Uganda. Several thousand have also been killed in southern Sudan, where the LRA has camps.

Kony, a semi-literate former altar boy, took charge in 1988 of a regional rebellion among northern Uganda's ethnic Acholi minority.

The original rebellion was mounted in 1986 by Holy Spirit Movement commander Alice Lakwena, who told her fighters she could rely on magic potions to turn enemy bullets into stones.

[Darfur](#)

[SLA-Minawi decides to boycott census in Darfur for insecurity](#)

(AIWan) Minawi-led Sudan Liberation Movement has announced boycotting of the census due to insecurity and instability in the three States of Darfur.

It argued that the IDPs' camps were not readied for the census process, saying that the census should not be confined to the cities of the three States, but it should cover the rural areas as well.

The movement official spokesperson Al-Tayeb Khamis has warned against conduction of the census and called on the government to negotiate with non-DPA signatories to achieve peace and then census could be conducted.

On the other hand, the leader of Greater Sudan Liberation Movement Mahgoub Hussein rejected conduction of the census for the same reasons, appealing to the citizens of Darfur to boycott the census, saying the atmosphere is not conducive.

[SLA-Minawi attacks SLA- Free Will](#)

(Al-Khartoum) Sources told the newspaper that SLA (Minawi) launched Wednesday morning a new attack on militias of SLA (Free Will) at Kasib area, Sheria Locality, South Darfur.

The sources said that the first ambush by SLA (Minawi) against the Free Will soldiers took place last Thursday at Umsafati area and left 14 persons dead.

Secretary-General of the Free Will, Amir Hassan Amir, denounced the attack indicating the attack aimed at forcing residents out of their areas, to be replaced by other tribes.