

**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN****UNMIS**Media Monitoring Report, 17 April 2007

(By Public Information Office)

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HIGHLIGHTS :

UN/ Agencies

UN condemns killing of African officer in Darfur

(*SudanTribune.com*) The United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) today spoke out against the weekend killing of an African Union (AU) soldier serving with the AU peacekeeping force in Darfur (AMIS) – the latest in a series of attacks prompting calls for all sides to improve the security situation in the strife-torn region.

UNMIS “strongly condemns the killing of an AMIS Officer on 14 April 2007 near the AMIS camp in El Fasher by unknown armed men,” the mission said in a statement released in Khartoum*.

** Find attached separately the full text of the UNMIS statement*

AU to monitor Kony rebels

(*The Daily Monitor*) Eight African Union officials will be stationed permanently at Ri-Kwangba, W. Equatoria to monitor the Lord’s Resistance Army fighters camped there. The AU monitors will be re-enforcing six colleagues from Uganda, LRA and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA).

“These monitors will be drawn from Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa and Mozambique each sending two officials who will be permanently based at Ri-Kwangba,” Dr Ruhakana Rugunda, the head of Uganda’s negotiating team told journalists in Kampala yesterday.

The LRA’s demand for AU monitors was among the key issues agreed upon in the new ceasefire agreement signed last Saturday by Kampala and the LRA, overseen by former Mozambican. The talks that are scheduled to resume on April 26 will also include the Mozambican Minister for the Presidency Francisco Caetano Madeira, South Africa’s Lt. Gen. Gilbert Lebeko Ramano, Tanzania’s Ali Siwa, Kenya’s Japheth Getugi on the mediation team.

These officials will be joined by the chief mediator and GoSS Vice President Riek Machar – who has been at the helm of the landmark talks since July 2006. In the agreement, the GoSS will facilitate the movement of LRA rebels from Owiny-Ki-Bul, an assembly point near the Uganda-Sudan border to Ri-Kwangba near the DR Congo-Sudan border.

AMIS official says western media not accurate in reporting on Darfur

(*AlHayat*) An African Union Mission in Sudan representative told has commended two clans of the Zaghawa tribe of Nyala for a reconciling the differences and pointed out that this will encourage the return of about 30,000 IDPs. He said the African Union is prepared to assist in the implementation of the reconciliation deal and to help the IDPs back home. He also commended the role of the regional government in enabling this achievement around.

Speaking to a visiting delegation of journalists from the UAE, the African Union Mission in Sudan representative deplored the manner in which the western media depicts the situation in Darfur and described it as not factual and inaccurate. He said that the African Union has managed to hold on until a peace deal [*the DPA*] was reached despite the difficulties it faced.

He went on to say that violations to the deal are being carried out by parties SLM elements known to the African Union Mission in Sudan. He also called on the international community to put pressure on the non-signatory factions to come on board and for more logistics assistant to the AU.

Oxfam launches appeal for humanitarian aid for Darfur and east Chad

(*BBC*) Oxfam says it needs £5m (\$10m) to help displaced people in the region who continue to flee from violence.

Oxfam says about 10,000 people in Darfur are fleeing from their homes each month and aid agencies are facing unprecedented difficulties in reaching them.

"This is the greatest concentration of human suffering in the world and an outrage that affronts the world's moral values," Penny Lawrence, Oxfam's international director said after a tour of Darfur.

"Nearly 1 million people are not getting any aid at all and in some areas the aid efforts is under threat due to increasing insecurity," an Oxfam statement said.

In eastern Chad, some 375,000 people have fled from the conflict between rebels and government forces and at present aid agencies can only provide three litres of water a day to the people.

An appeal by the United Nations for funds to support displaced people in Darfur and Chad has so far only realised \$40m of the required \$173m.

Visiting US official John Negroponte, says Sudan is obstructing humanitarian aid in what he has described a "deliberate campaign of intimidation" and has warned of wider sanctions.

Mr Negroponte warned Sudan of isolation if it fails to stop harassment of humanitarian workers and rejects the deployment of UN peacekeepers in the war-torn region.

The Transition Debate

Sudan accepts Phase Two of United Nations plan for Darfur

(*SudanTribune.com; Akhbar Alyaum; AlSahafa et al*) UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed on Monday that the Sudanese government has confirmed its agreement on the entire heavy support package of the UN assistance to the African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur.

"The secretary-general is encouraged by this development and intends to move expeditiously with the deployment, in close cooperation with the African Union," said a statement issued by his press office.

Ban called on Sudan to urgently provide the land and other facilities necessary for the deployment of the heavy support package, including permission to explore for water and meet all operational requirements.

He also urged the troops and police providers as well as all donors to contribute generously towards the earliest possible strengthening of the peacekeeping operation in Darfur. At the same time, he urged that hostilities on the ground be stopped without any further delay.

Earlier in the day, the UN chief received a letter from Sudan's UN ambassador Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem that confirmed Sudan's approval of "the helicopters component" of the heavy support package for the AU force.

On Monday, the secretary-general and the AU chairperson, Alpha Oumar Konar, also started high-level consultations on Darfur. Konare has asked the Security Council for funds and logistics assistance for the African Union Mission in Sudan in Darfur.

Meanwhile in Khartoum, Sudan Foreign Minister Dr. Lam Akol told a press conference earlier on Monday that Sudan has fully accepted the outcome of the Addis Ababa meeting on the United Nations Heavy Support Package to the African Union Mission in Sudan. He said that this entails that the United Nations send 3,000 experts and 6 combat helicopters for defensive purposes.

He said that this acceptance opens the door to new phases and puts the ball on the United Nations court.

He said that the Sudan has also accepted a United Nations request that command and control conform to United Nations practices but pointed out that African troops will form the mainstay for the "hybrid operation". This [*conformity to United Nations practices*] is in order to guarantee transparency in the provision of assistance to the African Union in Darfur.

The minister refuted reports that visiting US official John Negroponte had carried with him threats to Sudan to accept the United Nations assistance to the African Union. He pointed out that the views of Sudan and the US over the humanitarian and security problems in the country were not very different from each other.

The foreign minister further pointed out that the United Nations is to blame for any delay in the implementation of the HSP because Sudan has done all that has been required of it towards peacekeeping in Darfur.

Asked on talks with Negroponte, the minister pointed out that the main differences they had were on the US understanding of a hybrid force and hybrid operations for Darfur.

Akhbar Alyaum conducted an interview with Sudan's Representative to New York on the developments there. Ambassador AbdelMahmoud AbdelHameed said that yesterday saw Konare hold a meeting with African representatives to the United Nations, a meeting between Konare and the United Nations Secretary-General and a meeting of the Security Council.

In the first meeting, Konare briefed the African ambassador on the situation in adrfur and pointed out that it was wrong to say African Union Mission in Sudan has failed in its task in Darfur. He also hailed the DPA and pointed out that some have not fully understood it and that the Sudan government has to sensitize the people on the agreement. he also said that Africa will defend Sudan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He further pointed out that the delay in bringing DPA non-signatories factions on board could mainly be attributed to the tensions between Sudan and Chad.

On the HSP, he commended Sudan's acceptance of the Second Phase and pointed out that the "hybrid operation" will entail that the forces and the command be African. Any other alternatives will have to be considered with the full consent of the Sudan government, he said.

The Sudan representative pointed out that the African ambassadors commended the African Union role in Darfur and joined Konare in calling for United Nations financial assistance to these forces, revival of the political process and bringing the non-signatory factions on board.

Sudan's sanctions in doubt after acceptance of UN force

(*SudanTribune.com*) Sudan's acceptance of Phase II of the United Nations support package to the African Union Mission in Sudan could delay sanctions on the tables in Washington and London, diplomats say.

But U.S. Ambassador Alejandro Wolff said no decision had been made and the Bush administration was awaiting the return from Sudan of John Negroponte, the deputy secretary of state.

Jean-Marie Guehenno, the head of U.N. peacekeeping, said the new package of 3,000 U.N. military personnel for command headquarters, air support and logistics, was only a prelude to a larger force.

"This is not the robust force that Darfur needs," Guehenno told reporters. "It's a support package to lay the groundwork for a future robust force."

Egyptian minister says Sudan committed to "Addis Ababa action plan"

(*MENA via BBC Monitoring*) Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmad Abu-al-Ghayt on Monday [16 April] said Sudan is still in the course of implementing phase two of "Addis Ababa action plan".

Phase three has not even started yet, the minister - who is currently accompanying President Hosni Mubarak during a visit here - told MENA.

He praised the Sudanese government for its approval of the formation of a hybrid African Union-UN peacekeeping force in Darfur, noting that the force will be deployed within the framework of the third and final phase of the Addis Ababa plan.

The Egyptian top diplomat said the Sudanese government's stand conforms with Addis Ababa plan of action that was endorsed in October 2006. He said phase one of the plan called for the deployment of 250 AU peace troops, phase two covers the deployment of 2,000 personnel, whereas phase three stipulates the deployment of a stronger and bigger AU-UN hybrid force of 20,000 military servicemen and 3,000 police officers.

The Sudanese consented to the three phases and made one condition: that the AU be responsible for the composition of the hybrid force, he said.

According to him, under the plan, if the AU and UN fail to reach the target number of troops from African countries, they can recruit troops from outside Africa.

As per the plan, anything connected with the force - from its chain of command to the way it is being run - should be decided by the three parties concerned - Sudan, the AU and the UN - together.

The Egyptian minister said Egypt has contributed peace troops to phase one of the plan and has offered to send more troops under phase three. "We are awaiting a response from the UN regarding our offer," he said.

He said the problem of opening Sudanese skies for military helicopters is over for Khartoum has already consented to giving them permission to fly in its air space.

Abu-al-Ghayt statements were given on the sidelines of the inauguration of the Egyptian Consulate's new offices in Paris.

Remain cautious on Sudan's acceptance of UN support – rebels

(*SudanTribune.com*) The leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement, Abdelwahid al-Nur has hailed efforts of the international community to persuade Sudanese government to accept the second phase of a UN plan to bolster a peacekeeping operation in Darfur. However, he said world should remain alert because Khartoum had dishonored many agreements.

Al-Nur told Sudan Tribune he wants first to see this hybrid force achieving its mission: restoration of security and protection of civilians in Darfur. After that, "we can speak about negotiations." Al-Nur stressed.

"We should not repeat the mistake of Abuja, and engage talks with the government while Khartoum governors continue to conduct genocide in our region." Al-Nur explained.

He further said that return of all the displaced and the refugees to their village and to assure their protection is very important condition to resume talks with Khartoum.

EDITORIAL: The *AlAyaam* editorial today commends the government for having declared acceptance to the HSP including the use of combat helicopters.

The paper describes this as a step ahead towards peace and stability in Darfur and away from tensions. It says the ball is now on the court of the UN to make true its obligations of support.

The editorial goes on to say that the next stage requires all parties concerned – government and the international community alike as well as the political forces, NGOs, the civil society and the people of Darfur – to put pressure and exert efforts to push for a political process to compliment what has been agreed upon in order to bring peace through the negotiations table, a ceasefire and improve access to the IDPs in the camps. It is high time to move ahead the political process.

CPA

VP Taha holds talks with Vraaslen over implementation of the CPA

(*AlHayat*) VP Taha held talks with Tom Vraaslen, the head of the Assessment and Evaluation Commission, yesterday.

The two discussed measures and mechanism of coordination between the institutes of the Presidency with all those parties that could monitor and bolster implementation of the CPA. The agreed that implementation was proceeding well and that the recent meetings of the Presidency contributed to charting a course of the actions necessary.

SPLM and National Congress Party discuss Abyei

(*Khartoum Monitor*) The Secretary-General of the SPLM has said that the two partners in the Government of National Unity (GoNU) will discuss the Abyei issue next Monday at a tripartite meeting headed by the President of the Republic.

Speaking to reporters at the conclusion of the political follow-up meeting of the National Congress Party (NCP) and the SPLM yesterday, Amum stated that the two parties have presented the agenda for their annual meeting and revealed that relations between the two parties have been normalized and there is a need for progress.

Only 6% returnees repatriated from Khartoum to southern Sudan

(*Sudan Tribune*) The National Assembly yesterday passed the report of the Humanitarian Affairs Committee on the follow-up of voluntary returns from Khartoum to southern Sudan .

The report states that only 6% of a target population of about 300,000 have been repatriated and attributes the slow pace to insecurity and health risks. The report also stressed the need for availing water and food along the return route and the allocation of a full budget for the returns program and exploiting river transport.

On returns to Darfur, the committee revealed that no voluntary returns program has as yet been undertaken in the Darfurs due to the unfavorable security conditions there. The committee says it had failed during its recent tour to the Darfurs to carry out any field visit to the IDP camps there.

Ethiopia repatriates 670 Sudanese refugees

(*SudanTribune.com*) Ethiopia said on Monday it repatriated 670 Sudanese refugees from two refugee camps in the west state of Gambella last week.

Estifanos Gebremedihin, program director of the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs, told journalists that these refugees, who are from Fugnido and Dimma refugee camps, were returned to their country.

The administration is returning the refugees through air and inland transport, he said, adding that there is a plan to ferry 1, 500 returning refugees by 30 flights.

Pagan Amum describes developments in Darfur as“genocide.”

(*AlAyaam*) SPLM Secretary-General, Pagan Amum, described developments in Darfur as genocide. While the two partners consider resolution of the crises as a priority, Pagan stresses the necessity to implement the peace agreement and the democratic transformation to save the country which he describes as being at a the threshold of collapse.

Pagan holds all Sudanese responsible of deterioration of the situation pointing at what he calls the negative role of the army and its involvement in the civil war.

Two SPLA soldiers killed by cattle keepers in Blue Nile state

(*AlKhartoum*) Pastoralists in Bau area, Blue Nile State, killed two SPLA soldiers, reports say from there.

The pastoralists mistook the soldiers as cattle raiders.

GoNU

Sudanese president accuses West of "obstructing" peace process

(*BBC Monitoring*) Speaking yesterday to the visiting Malaysian delegation led by its Prime minister, President Bashir said Sudan has succeeded in signing a peace accord [Comprehensive Peace Accord] and implementing its provisions, as well as the Abuja accord and the East accord - all aimed at strengthening stability in the country.

The President said that Western governments that were part of the peace accords and supported these accords, were now obstructing its implementation by encouraging the rejectionist movements.

He expressed hopes that the OIC which is currently chaired by Malaysia will play a more active role in supporting peace by encouraging those who have not signed the Abuja accord to join the accord and to ease the pressure on Sudan.

Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement

Darfur interim authority to hold meeting to discuss implementation of the DPA

(*AlHayat*) A committee of the secretariat-general of the Darfur interim authority has started preparations for a meeting in the coming two weeks of all governors of the states of Darfur.

the impending meeting will discuss the implementation of the peace agreement and the humanitarian and security situations in the states of Darfur.

Fire in Abu-Shouk Camp destroys 140 shops

(*AlHayat*) A fire that broke out at the Abu-Shok market in North Darfur engulfed about 140 shops, reports the camp leader at Abu-Shouk.

He said that the fire that broke about the day before yesterday caused much damage but no lives were lost. He says investigations have been launched into the causes of the fire and that a committee has been formed to assess the damages for compensation.

Darfur Janjaweed militia supported by Sudan govt- US envoy

(*SudanTribune.com*) Speaking at the end of a three-day visit to Sudan, Negroponte told reporters that the government must clamp down on the janjaweed, a pro-government militia that the International Criminal Court has blamed for numerous cases of killing, rape, arson and looting in the western Sudanese region that has been wracked by rebellion and counter-insurgency for the past four years.

"The government of Sudan must disarm the janjaweed, the Arab militias that we all know could not exist without the Sudanese government's active support," Negroponte said.

He added that the rebel forces that didn't sign the Darfur Peace Agreement of May last year "must stop their attacks, put down their arms and come to the negotiating table."

Negroponte said there were now more refugees - people driven from their homes by the conflict - in Darfur than when the peace accord was signed. And he accused the government of hindering international efforts to help them.

"The denial of visas, the harassment of aid workers and other measures have created the impression that the government of Sudan is engaged in a deliberate campaign of intimidation," Negroponte told reporters. "When it comes to humanitarian access, the government of Sudan's record is not encouraging."

Negroponte said his talks with President Omar al-Bashir and other officials had been positive, but Washington's relations with Sudan would improve only when Khartoum grants non-governmental organizations better access to Darfur and accepts the U.N.'s plans to deploy large numbers of peacekeepers there.

AlAyaam daily also reports that the deputy US Secretary of State demanded the handover of Darfur suspects to the ICC. He called upon the suspects to handover themselves to trial.

Sudan has complained that Washington didn't meet its expectations of better relations after it made peace with the southern Sudanese rebels in 2005.

Negroponte spoke before heading to Chad for the next leg of a regional tour that will also take him to Libya, where he's also expected to push for the U.N. plan on Darfur.

His press conference came shortly after the official Saudi Press Agency reported that al-Bashir had called the king of Saudi Arabia to announce he has signed a joint agreement with the U.N. and the African Union that defines their respective roles in Darfur.

The U.N. didn't immediately confirm the report, and Negroponte declined to comment on it.

The U.S. is holding off on imposing sanctions against Sudan to allow time for the government to decide to accept the U.N. plan, under which a joint force of 22,000 U.N. and African Union peacekeepers would be deployed in Darfur.

Other Developments

US media delegation visits Sudan

(*BBC Monitoring*) An American media delegation, including more than 35 journalists representing the various US media outlets, arrived in the country yesterday morning. During its week-long visit, the delegation will meet state officials and visit several places including Juba, Al-Fashir, Nyala and Hosh Banagah [the president's home town]. The delegation will further become acquainted with the latest developments in the situation in Darfur in particular, and in Sudan in