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(By Public Information Office)

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IN THE NEWS TODAY:**➤ UN/ Agencies/ Partners**

- Sudan camouflages military planes with UN, AU colors - report
- UN, African Union organise background briefing today

➤ The Transition Debate

- Tripartite mechanism to discuss today the LSP in Darfur
- Sudan says US position on the HSP is a major deviation from international consensus
- U.N., AU announce Darfur peace plan
- US, Britain to keep up pressure on Sudan
- Sudan's acceptance of the HSP draws regional and international welcome
- Sudan should accept full 20,000-strong international force- HRW
- Dr. Turabi says acceptance of the HSP will only lead to anarchy in Darfur

➤ CPA

- Presidential Advisor says 80% of the CPA has been implemented
- Foreign minister says delay in the establishment of the Abyei administration will affect development in the region
- Interior ministry says it supports the de-mining programs

➤ GoNU

- Council of Ministers to table the SAF draft statute before parliament next week
- 5,000 National Congress Party members cross over to the SPLM
- Eritrean president expected in Khartoum
- Unconfirmed reports say Atta-el-Mannan may replace Al-Muta'afi as governor of Khartoum

➤ Southern Sudan

- About 10 killed over cattle resulting in Tererkeka
- SPLA continues combing operations in Magawi, Eastern Equatoria
- Egypt's support in southern Sudan hailed

➤ **Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement**

- Chad claims new Sudan attacks
- Rebels say Sudan troops kill 73 in Darfur attack
- Rebel leader warns foreign firms of exploiting Darfur oil
- US Negroponte in Libya for talks on Darfur
- US tells Sudan, Chad to stop supporting rebels

➤ **Other Developments**

- UXO explodes killing 4 children in W. Darfur
- Tunisian suspected of involvement in plotting to bomb western interests in Sudan denies having any links to such plots
- Armed robbers strike in Mak Nimir Street in Khartoum

HIGHLIGHTS :

UN/ Agencies/ Partners

Sudan camouflages military planes with UN, AU colors - report

(*SudanTribune.com*) An unpublished United Nations report says the government of Sudan is flying arms and heavy military equipment into Darfur in violation of Security Council resolutions and painting Sudanese military planes white to disguise them as United Nations or African Union aircraft, the New York Times reported.

In one case, which the report illustrates with close-up pictures, the letters “U.N.” have been stenciled onto the wing of a whitewashed Sudanese armed forces plane that is parked on a military apron at a Darfur airport. Bombs guarded by uniformed soldiers are laid out in rows by its side.

The report says that contrary to Sudanese government denials, the freshly white planes are being operated out of all three of Darfur’s principal airports and used for aerial surveillance and bombardments of villages in addition to cargo transport.

The report was compiled by a five-person panel responsible for assisting the sanctions committee of the Security Council in monitoring compliance with resolutions on Darfur. It was made available by a diplomat from one of the 15 Security Council nations, which believes the findings should be made public.

While the report focuses much of its attention on the Sudanese government, it asserts that rebel groups fighting the Khartoum government are also guilty of violating Security Council resolutions, peace treaty agreements and humanitarian standards.

It recommends a tightening of the arms embargo and other restrictions on all activities involving illicit weapons, regardless of who is responsible.

The report covers the period from September 2006 to March 12, 2007 and it emerges a day after Sudan announced it was dropping its objections to large-scale United Nations assistance to the overwhelmed African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur.

All 15 Security Council member would have to agree to make the report a public document.

Asked for comment today, Marcello Spatafora, the ambassador of Italy, which heads the sanctions committee, said he had already circulated a letter among the other 14 members asking if there were any objections to releasing the document.

Barring objections, he would be free to make the report public in 48 hours, he said.

UN, African Union organise background briefing today

(*AlHayat*) The UN and the African Union jointly conduct a background briefing today on the efforts being exerted by envoys Salim and Eliasson to rejuvenate the political process for Darfur.

ambassador Sam Ibok of the AMIS and Abiodun Bashua of the UNMIS will be giving the briefing that the organisers say is meant to be an informal forum with leading editors of the print media in Sudan.

The Transition Debate

Tripartite mechanism to discuss today the LSP in Darfur

(*AlHayat*) The tripartite mechanism holds talks at the AMIS later today to discuss the implementation of the LSP.

Sudan says US position on the HSP is a major deviation from international consensus

(*AlHayat*) Foreign ministry spokesperson, Ambassador Ali Al-Sadig, says the US position on Sudan's acceptance to the HSP is a major deviation from the worldwide welcome that the decision drew.

Speaking to the *Sudan Media Center*, the foreign ministry official expressed criticism over recent statements by US Deputy Secretary of State Negroponte in the wake of his visit here. Al-Sadig said that Negroponte had promised while in Khartoum that the US will back any agreement that the tripartite mechanism may reach on the support package. He says these recent statements only show that Mr. Negroponte "has two faces".

U.N., AU announce Darfur peace plan

(AP) The United Nations and African Union announced a two-pronged plan to bring peace to conflict-wracked Darfur, pledging Tuesday to move "expeditiously" to deploy 3,000 U.N. peacekeepers while intensifying efforts to achieve a political settlement.

Britain's U.N. Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry said whether the 3,000 troops and equipment can be deployed by the end of June depends on what countries come forward to contribute troops. A troop contributors meeting is scheduled for Friday.

At the end of two days of meetings, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and AU chief executive Alpha Oumar Konare asked their envoys who have been trying to promote a political settlement to prepare "a roadmap" to bring all rebel groups to the peace table.

At U.N. headquarters, Ban said it was important to turn the agreement on the heavy support package into action on the ground. The UN secretary general urged the 15-member Security Council to authorize funding for the peacekeeping operation. Ban also appealed to African countries to contribute troops both to the AU force in Darfur as well as to the future joint UN-AU peacekeeping operation.

And he said he would confer Thursday with potential troop contributors to the 3,000-strong interim UN force, which is to serve under AU command.

Said Djinnit, the AU's commissioner for peace and security, said the African Union had hoped the hybrid force would be deployed by the end of June, when the Security Council mandate for the AU force ends. But Djinnit said this will not be possible because the heavy support package has to be deployed first — which a U.N. official estimated will take months, not weeks — and there is still "a lot of work to do to finalize the negotiations between the AU and the U.N. on the hybrid operations, and then to consult with Sudan on that so that we reach a common understanding."

In the meantime, Djinnit said, the African Union is facing "a serious financial crisis" because it needs between \$23 to \$25 million a month to sustain its force. He urged donors to support the AU mission [*Follow the link for more on the story from a separate source* [UN, AU urge Sudan to implement Darfur force deal](#)]

US, Britain to keep up pressure on Sudan

(*SudanTribune.com*) The Sudanese ambassador to the United Nations, Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem, told Secretary-General Ban in a letter yesterday that his country agreed to the U.N. plan. Sudan had previously opposed the proposal, which calls for the deployment of 3,000 troops and six helicopter gunships in Darfur to support the current force of 8,000 African Union troops, as well as preparation for the next phase, in which a much larger force would be sent to the region.

But after a Security Council meeting here, Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett of Britain said yesterday's "little progress" on Darfur was the result of "diplomatic encouragement, but also the threat of sanctions." She added that now "everyone is weighing up" whether that threat should be removed.

Western diplomats and U.N. officials said Sudan has made similar promises in the past and later broken them. The test for the country now will be "the whole implementation" of the U.N. plan, Undersecretary-General for Peacekeeping Jean-Marie Guéhenno told The New York Sun, adding that he still has concerns about "bureaucratic spokes they can put in it," despite yesterday's letter.

Mr. Abdalhaleem told reporters that the implementation of the agreement depends on U.N. funding for this phase of the plan, and on "enhancing the peace process" among his government, the militias it backs — known as the janjaweed — and the Darfur rebel groups.

The Sudanese ambassador stopped short of saying his government would accept the next phase of the plan, in which at least 20,000 African troops, backed by European and Western commanders and logistical support staff, would be deployed in an attempt to end the violence in Darfur, which America has called a "genocide."

Malaysia has on the other hand urged the international community not to impose sanctions on Sudan. [Follow the link for more on this story [US, Britain to keep up pressure on Sudan](#); [Malaysia urges against Sudan sanctions](#)]

Sudan's acceptance of the HSP draws regional and international welcome

(*AlAyaam; AlHayat*) AlAyaam and AlHayat dailies note that the Sudan's acceptance of the Heavy Support Package drew welcome reactions from the international community.

The papers say that some parties [*not mentioned*] did give a cautious welcome hinting fears, based on past experiences, that the Sudan government may draw back.

Sudan should accept full 20,000-strong international force- HRW

(*SudanTribune.com*) Concerned governments should impose targeted sanctions against Sudanese officials unless Khartoum immediately agrees to the full deployment of the proposed 20,000-member hybrid international peacekeeping force for Darfur, Human Rights Watch said today.

"Sudan's green light for only part of the peacekeeping force is too little, too late, and is aimed only at defusing international pressure and heading off sanctions," said Peter Takirambudde, Africa director at Human Rights Watch. "Governments should keep the focus on the full international force, which could really help to protect civilians in Darfur." [Follow the link for more on this story [Sudan should accept full 20,000-strong international force- HRW](#)]

Dr. Turabi says acceptance of the HSP will only lead to anarchy in Darfur

(*AlSahafa*) Secretary-General of the Popular Congress Party, Dr. Turabi, says acceptance of the HSP will only lead to anarchy in Darfur.

He pointed out that has come as a result of intensive pressure that forced the government to change its previous stands. He called for the resolution of the crises by intensifying locally the pressure on the government to seek a radical resolution of the problem

CPA

Presidential Advisor says 80% of the CPA has been implemented

(*Sudan Vision*) Presidential Advisor, Mansour Khalid emphasized the importance of implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement for the sake of the unity of the country.

While addressing the consultative meeting organized by the presidency about implementing the agreement, and addressing unity and separation, he said that all possibilities are still open, but back tracked, he said there is still chance for unity for Sudan. He added that the two parties implemented 80% of the agreement and he referred the delay of some items that their enthusiasm started to wane.

Foreign minister says delay in the establishment of the Abyei administration will affect development in the region

(*AlHayat*) Commenting on a paper presented at a a symposium organised by Juba University yesterday on assessment of implementation of the CPA, foreign minister Akol agreed that the implementation is slow.

He pointed out that the security arrangements remain the major obstacle and cited the Malakal clashes as an example.

The minister was also critical of the delay in the establishment of the Abyei administration and pointed out that the delay will draw back development in the region and causes Abyei not to benefit from its 2% from the oil revenue.

On the other hand *Khartoum Monitor* daily reports that the Chairperson of Board of Directors of Allintibaha daily and member of the National Congress Party (NCP), Al-Tayeb Mustafa said that seeking the realization of a united Sudan will be useless and a waste of time. All efforts towards the unity of Sudan have backfired and led to destruction, he adds.

He added that the notion of a “new Sudan” which is the brainchild of the SPLM will drag the country back to square one.

Interior ministry says it supports the de-mining programs

(*Sudan Vision*) Stressing the necessity to intensify the risk awareness as to land mines, the State Minister in the Ministry of Interior, Aleu Ayang underscored his ministry's support for the de-mining programmes.

Aleu delivered his statement while he was presiding over a meeting at his office attended by the Director of the National Centre De- Mining and Civil Society Organizations involved in the issue. He further directed the upgrading of a batch of police personnel to de-mining specialists to be assisted by specially trained Alsatian dogs.

GoNU

Council of Ministers to table the SAF draft statute before parliament next week

(*AlHayat*) The draft statute for the SAF will be tabled before parliament next week while the draft statute for the Police will soon follow, the Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers intimates.

He pointed out that there are about 20 more draft statutes related to CPA institutions that are yet to pass through parliament. He pointed out that parliament has so far passed 38 bills since the inception of the Government of National Unity.

5,000 National Congress Party members cross over to the SPLM

(*The Citizen*) Several NCP members from Greater Kordofan declared yesterday in Omdurman their detachment from National Congress Party and joining SPLM.

The new SPLM members said that the step was taken after they got convinced to believe in the goals and principles of the SPLM.

Eritrean president expected in Khartoum

(*AlAyaam*) Eritrean leader Assias Affewerki is expected in the country later today.

The *SMC* reports that his talks here will mainly focus on bilateral relations, issues of mutual interest and the developments in Darfur.

Unconfirmed reports say Atta-el-Mannan may replace Al-Muta'afi as governor of Khartoum

(*AlSudani*) *AlSudani* daily has learnt that S. Darfur governor Atta-el-Mannan may replace Al-Muta'afi as Governor.

Al-Muta'afi may most likely take over the agriculture ministry for Khartoum State, the paper adds.

Southern Sudan

About 10 killed over cattle resulting in Tererkeka

(The Citizen) Cattle raiding has left another ten people dead in Terekeka County's Bari- Mundari Community.

The ten were killed in cold blood, while many have been wounded. The crisis still continues despite all the efforts to bring about peaceful co-existence between the Mundari and Dinka tribes of in southern Sudan.

SPLA continues combing operations in Magawi, Eastern Equatoria

(The Citizen) The Acting Deputy Chief of staff for Political and Moral Orientation branch as well as SPLA spokesperson Major General Koul Deim reported that on the 16th March three Lords Resistance Army bandits were killed.

This was during the process of rescuing the village of Agoro north of Magwi town from the LRA bandits.

Egypt's support in southern Sudan hailed

(BBC Monitoring) First Vice-President and President of Southern Sudan Salva Kiir Mayardit has received a message from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on how to strengthen the bilateral ties and monitor the implementation of the agreements signed between the two sides. More details from our reporter in Juba:

[Reporter] First Vice-President and President of Southern Sudan Salva Kiir Mayardit has received a message from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The message was delivered by Egyptian Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources Mahmud Abu Zayd, who is currently visiting the capital of southern Sudan, Juba, with a high-ranking government delegation.

The message expressed the desire of the Egyptian government to provide all the assistance needed by southern Sudan. In a press statement, Abu Zayd said his visit to Juba came as a follow up to the agreements signed by Egypt and the government of southern Sudan.

For his part Kiir expressed his thanks and appreciation for Egypt's support and assistance to southern Sudan. He also hailed the progress of the brotherly ties between the two sides.

At the same time, Vice-President of the Southern Sudan government Riek Machar hailed the assistance of the Egyptian government in irrigation and water projects in southern Sudan.

Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement

Chad claims new Sudan attacks

(AlJazeera) Chad has again accused Sudan of supporting rebels in its territory and attacks by Janjawid fighters.

The Chadian government claimed on Tuesday that video footage, obtained by Al Jazeera, showed Janjawid and other fighters detained by authorities, among them three Sudanese. This video was handed over by Chad's government to Al Jazeera's reporter in the eastern town of Abeche, only days after its foreign minister apologised to Sudan for killing 17 of its troops in a cross-border raid. The men claim they are unarmed herdsmen arrested at the border but Chad says the identifications cards shown in the video prove their affiliation to the Sudanese army. "If the mercenaries attack us again, we will follow them wherever they go and I hope the Sudanese brothers allow us to follow them inside Sudan," Ahmat Allam, the Chadian foreign minister, said.

"Because they are the ones creating problems for us. They attack us in Chad and flee into Sudan."

Rebels say Sudan troops kill 73 in Darfur attack

(Reuters) A Sudanese rebel group accused government troops and Janjaweed militia on Tuesday of killing 73 people in attacks on a cluster of villages in northern Darfur, an accusation the army denied.

Ibrahim al-Helu, a commander in one rebel faction of the Sudan Liberation Army, said a large number of government troops and militia had attacked 11 villages in the Sires Umm al-Qura area in northern Darfur over the past three days.

"They killed more than 73 civilians ... People are fleeing the area," he told Reuters. He said his faction, which rejected a 2006 Darfur peace deal, had engaged the attackers and fighting was still under way. The African Union was checking the report.

Helu's report came on the same day the United States accused the Khartoum government of not doing enough to implement a shaky 2006 peace accord and urged it to admit a U.N. force of 17,000 to 20,000 peacekeepers. Sudan has previously rejected such demands.

An army spokesman said the Sudanese armed forces had no operations in the area where the violence was reported, and dismissed it as nothing more than typical tribal clashes.

Rebel leader warns foreign firms of exploiting Darfur oil

(SudanTribune.com) A Darfur rebel group has warned today foreign oil firms against exploring oil and Mineral in the western Sudan province, saying they would not allow it.

"The Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) wishes to make clear to foreign investors and the Sudanese government that so long as the people of Darfur are denied their basic rights, the exploitation of natural resources in Darfur for the benefit of the National Congress Party regime or any foreign firm will not be tolerated," said the SLM leader Abdelwahid al-Nur in a statement emailed to Sudan Tribune.

Al-Nur said that petrol and other mineral resources in the region are the proprietary of Darfur people and they should remain unexploited till the end of current conflict. He further added only people of Darfur are enabled to decide on the fate of this wealth.

“We in the SLM as well as the other parties are not authorized to dispose of this wealth while 90% of the Darfurians are displaced or refugees in the neighbouring countries”, he said.

In April 2005, the Sudanese minister of energy and Mining Awad Ahmed Al-Jazz announced that oil had been discovered in Darfur. The region has untapped oil, gold, iron , silver as well as natural gas.

US Negroponte in Libya for talks on Darfur

(*SudanTribune.com*) US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte arrived on Tuesday in Tripoli, the first visit by such a high-ranking Washington official to the former pariah state in over 50 years, an AFP reporter said.

Negroponte, on a four-nation African tour focused on trying to resolve the crisis in Sudan’s western Darfur region, is to hold talks Wednesday with Libya’s pointman for Africa, Abdel Salam Triki, the US embassy here said.

Triki, assistant foreign minister for African affairs, last week shuttled between N’Djamena and Khartoum mediating between Chad and Sudan after deadly border clashes between their troops.

Negroponte flew in to the Libyan capital from Chad, where he paid a brief visit following a five-day stay in Sudan during which he pushed Khartoum to accept the deployment of a robust UN-African Union peacekeeping force to stem violence that has steadily escalated since the Darfur conflict erupted in 2003.

The State Department had said Negroponte would during his trip, that will also take him to Mauritania, rally support from Sudan’s neighbours to help end the conflict.

US tells Sudan, Chad to stop supporting rebels

(*SudanTribune.com*) Neighbors Sudan and Chad should stop supporting rebel and other militias in each other’s country, a top U.S. diplomat said Tuesday, making a rare strong and public demand of U.S. ally Chad.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte also repeated a demand he made a day earlier that Sudan stops its support of the janjaweed militia blamed for atrocities in Darfur.

"There is widespread agreement that the crisis in Darfur has three main elements, humanitarian, security and political. All of these elements demand the immediate attention of the Sudanese government and international community," Negroponte told journalists after visiting a camp for Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad.

He said he welcomed Sudan's decision announced a day earlier to allow the U.N. to send 3,000 peacekeepers to Darfur, but did not comment further on the issue.

Sudan and Chad should, "cease supporting any armed elements, rebel or ethnic militias that seek to destabilize the neighbor," said Negroponte. "Sudan must cease its support of the janjaweed and all non-signatories of the Darfur peace agreement must stop their attacks, put down their arms and come to the negotiating table."

The U.S. diplomat also said that the United States is convinced that the violence in Sudan's western region of Darfur, Central African Republic and Chad are linked and their stability depends on each other.

On Monday, Negroponte met with President Idriss Deby and Foreign Affairs Minister Ahmat Allam-mi. Later Tuesday, Negroponte was to go to Libya and then visit Mauritania.

Other Developments

UXO explodes killing 4 children in W. Darfur

(AlAyaam) AMIS is investigating the death by a UXO explosion of four children in West Darfur as reported. The explosion 2 meters east of Kajbar was first reported by UNMIS in its News Bulletin.

Meanwhile in Khartoum, a blacksmith died recently of a grenade explosion when he hit the grenade in his shop as he tried to forge it into a different shape.

Sources say the grenade was given him by his unknowing father and he, in turn, thought it was something he could make use of.

Tunisian suspected of involvement in plotting to bomb western interests in Sudan denies having any links to such plots

(AlAyaam) Mr. Hassan Bin Tahir who is suspected of being part of a terrorist cell that was plotting to bomb western interests in Khartoum has denied being part of such a cell.

Hassan who is of Tunisian nationality said he had no links to the other suspected members of the cell – an Egyptian and a Libyan who were both arrested outside Sudan. He said however that he was once approached at a mosque in Omdurman by the Libyan suspect who asked his advise on how to carry out such bombings of western interests in Khartoum. He told the court that such an act was *haram* [regarded a crime by the Islamic laws]. He said he has not seen the Libyan since then.

The suspect further told the courts that he came to Sudan in 1992.

The court adjourned and will convene on the 23rd of the month to pass its judgment.

Armed robbers strike in Mak Nimir Street in Khartoum

(*AlWatan*) The agent for *AlSudani* mobile phones at Mak Nimir Street in Khartoum was robbed in broad daylight yesterday by armed robbers

The robbers brandished their gun and took off with what money they could find in a car without registration plates.