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UNMIS
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(By Public Information Office)

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HIGHLIGHTS:

United Nations and the Transition Debate

Pronk, Kingibe express disappointment on SAF attack

(The local press in English & Arabic – 2nd Aug. Khartoum) The UNMIS and AMIS have expressed great disappointment over the deterioration of the situation in North Darfur.

A statement issued jointly by the two missions condemned the attack on Kulkal, 60 kilometres from el-Fasher, by government forces with militia support on holdout rebel locations.

In the statement, the missions considered these attacks as violations of the Darfur Peace Agreement and the ceasefire agreement.

The statement further pointed out that continued violence will lead to a spread of violence after the displacement of the population in el-Fasher and the IDP camps.

** Please see the full text of the joint statement in the separate attachment. The statement has also been reproduced by some local dailies.*

National Congress Party rejects Annan's proposal for a United Nations force to Darfur

(AlWahda – 2nd Aug. Khartoum) The NCP has renewed its rejection to the deployment of United Nations forces to Darfur and regards Kofi Annan's recent proposals for a 24,000-strong United Nations force to be deployed to Darfur is premature.

A key member of the NCP says that such trends by the United Nations Secretary-General without consultations with the Sudan government are not helpful.

Qutbi el-Mahdi said that the government has a strong position on the issue and that position is backed by clear principles and based on the realities on the ground in Darfur following the Darfur Peace Agreement and has the backing of African and other friendly states.

He further pointed out that Mr. Annan should not busy himself by thinking how many soldiers are required to be deployed in Darfur and should instead concentrate on collecting enough forces to protect the people of Lebanon and Iraq instead of concentrating on a state that is headed towards peace and stability.

El-Mahdi expressed the belief that this recent escalation came as a result of the visit to Washington of Vice-President Salva Kiir and the SLM leader Mini Minnawi.

Meanwhile the Sudanese foreign ministry says it will hand over to the SRSG later today government's plans on improving the situation in Darfur according to the agreement reached between Kofi Annan and President Bashir in Banjul.

Foreign minister Lam Akol revealed that the plan is ready but did not elaborate on details. The minister however reiterated Sudan's rejection to the deployment of United Nations troops to Darfur.

Federation of Sudan Workers' Trade Unions stage demonstration over events in Lebanon

(*AlHayat* – 2nd Aug. **Khartoum**) the Sudan Workers' Trade Unions is staging a demonstration this morning in protest over the events in Lebanon.

Sources say the protesters will present a memorandum of protest to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations condemning the “organised atrocities against the people of Lebanon and Palestine”.

CPA

NCP, SPLM leadership councils to meet next week

(*AlAyaam* – 2nd Aug. **Khartoum**) Key members of the NCP and the SPLM meet this weekend to discuss issues suspended between the two sides.

Meanwhile, SPLM's Yassir Arman says that the SPLM is launching an initiative to encourage dialogue and understanding towards peaceful coexistence between all segments of the population in Khartoum.

GoNU

Bashir, Debbe to hold meeting in N'Djamena next Tuesday

(*AlSahafa* – 2nd Aug. **Khartoum**) President Bashir travels to N'Djamena next Tuesday for a one-day visit during which he will hold talks with this Chadian counterpart Idries Debbe and officiate in the re-opening of the Sudanese embassy there thus marking a restoration of normal relations between the two countries.

Sources say that talks between the two pleaders will focus on means to implement the agreement reached earlier between their respective foreign ministers.

Sudan's ambassador to Chad is expected to assume his duties at the embassy by next September.

Trial of Slovene envoy starts in Darfur

(*Sudan Tribune website* – 1st Aug. **Khartoum**) Court proceedings against Tomo Kriznar, Slovene president's special envoy to the Sudan's Darfur region, who entered Sudan through Chad without being issued with an entry visa by Sudanese authorities, started Monday at el-Fasher Court headed by Judge Hisham Mohamed Yousif.

In Monday's proceedings the court listened to the testimony of the investigator who pointed out that the accused was a foreigner and entered Sudan since the beginning of April and was moving from place to place, taking different photos and videos, using cameras and video cameras which were found in his possession.

The investigator said that the pictures that were seized from the accused amounted to 5,000 and that he was also sending news reports through the internet in which he accused the Sudanese government of attacking some regions and villages using planes, the state-run SUNA reported.

The investigator went on to say that the activities of the accused contributed strongly to the idea of replacing the AU mission in Darfur with UN troops, as was clearly stated in some of his written reports which were found in his laptop computer.

The investigator handed over the exhibits which were seized from the accused which included different types of cameras, a laptop and written reports.

The investigator added that despite the accused being a journalist, he could not confirm this and because of what the accused had done he faced charges under section 32 of the passport and migration law for entering the country without a valid visa, section 35 of the criminal law for spying and section 56 of the criminal law for spreading false and damaging reports.

Kiznar had requested a visa from the Sudanese embassy in Vienna but his request was denied due to his hostile positions to Sudanese government expressed through his negative writing in the newspapers of his country.

Kriznar was arrested in Darfur on Wednesday July 19.

The Slovene ministry of foreign affairs urged Sudanese government to release Kriznar, pointing out his humanitarian activities and stressed its hope that he be released as soon as possible due to his medical condition.

Southern Sudan/GoSS/SPLM

LRA apologises to the people of Sudan for past atrocities

(*AlRai AlAam* – 2nd Aug. **Nabanga**) The Lord's Resistance Army has declared a unilateral ceasefire and its leader has given a formal apology to the people of Sudan over the price they paid for the war in Uganda.

Kony and GoSS Vice-President Riek Machar agreed that talks with the Uganda government will resume next Monday.

South Sudan to restore Rumbek TV station

(*Sudan Tribune website* – 1st Aug. **Rumbek**) Plans are underway to revive the Lakes State TV station which was ravaged by war and fell into disuse since the liberation of Rumbek by the SPLA forces in 1st/7/1997.

The TV station dates back to the late 1970s when the American Telecommunications company Harris international was contracted by the Nimeri regime to install Television transmission reception centres throughout the Sudan where giant satellite dishes were set up to receive the Omdurman national TV broadcasts.

The plan was part of the National communications infrastructure network to link up the whole country, the Lakes State minister of Information, Culture, Youth and Sports stressed. According to Ms. Adak Costa Mapuor the Lakes State minister of Information, Culture, Youth and Sports further affirmed that the radio station will follow soon using FM frequencies.

Since the area is under control of the SPLM forces, nine years ago, citizens of Lakes state had been deprived of information services.

The Rumbek old TV station site stands as a huge monument. A white elephant at best. Now the huge satellite dish stands out in Rumbek as a giant landmark like the tour Eiffel of Paris by which the city is known. Our Rumbek dish site is rented out to investors as an internet provider centre while the dish itself provides the roof of a bar that serves drinks.

All of that now has to change as the information ministry will reclaim the site and lay a new infrastructure for TV and Radio communications for the Lakes State in the year near future.

GoSS plans to restart all the non-functional TV stations in the former SPLM controlled areas which are more or less like our State TV services are still operational in the former government of Sudan held areas which have now come under the SPLM.

The GoSS must therefore take the challenge seriously and bring parity to all States by establishing TV and Radio Stations throughout the Southern States on equal footing with the North. This will at least make the average citizen to be aware of Government policies and how development plans are proceeding, let alone other social news of interest.

Darfur/Darfur Peace Agreement

SAF establishes security points in Darfur

(*AlAyaam* – 2nd Aug. **Khartoum**) The SAF admits reports of insecurity in the Jebel Moon area in West Darfur.

The spokesperson for the SAF pointed out that the SAF has formed checkpoints in the area to minimise such attacks from holdout rebel groups.

The SAF spokesperson downplayed UNMIS reports of clashes in the region and pointed out that these are “not clashes in the sense of the word”.

Holdout rebels accuse SAF of planning to use chemical weapons against them

(*AlAyaam* – 2nd Aug. **Khartoum**) Holdout rebel groups in Darfur say the SAF is moving chemical weapons to Darfur to use against them. They have also warned against the use [by *SLM-Minnawi*] of African Union insignia.

The spokesperson for the SAF has rebuffed these claims and points out that 90% of the Western Command of the SAF are from the Darfur region thus making these claims void.

He pointed out that the SAF has never used AMIS insignia. “The African Union is a neutral body monitoring the conflict and it is not in the interest of anyone to obstruct their task”, he said.

Deputy commander of the JEM and 13 field commanders join Darfur Peace Agreement

(*AlHayat* – 2nd Aug. **Khartoum**) The JEM suffered a serious setback yesterday when deputy commander Gardi Abdalla Abouna and 13 other field commanders declared they are joining the Darfur Peace Agreement camp.

The governor of West Darfur told a meeting of the security committee held at the AMIS base in el-Geneina that Gardi and his group are granted amnesty and are now roaming freely among their people in the area.

African Union condemns Minnawi group torture

(*Sudan Tribune website* – 1st Aug. **Khartoum**) African Union special envoy to Sudan condemned torture practiced by a former Darfur rebel group, which signed peace deal, inside the AU compound in Al-Fasher.

The AU said in a press release issued today that AU representative in Sudan Baba Gana Kingibe, “shocked and horrified at the incidence of torture which occurred in the SLA quarters in Al Fasher whereby a middle aged unidentified individual was brutally beaten and blooded all over, including severe blows to his head, on two successive days, the 17th and 18th July, 2006”.

The AU force attempted to intervene, but were rebuffed by SLA elements who dragged the victim back into their compound, the AU said. Colonel Ali Mokhtar, the leader of the group claimed that the victim was an SLA soldier under discipline. The fate of the victim is not known.

“This incident lends credence to the previous incessant allegations” said the AU statement.

In spite of Minawi denial, different reports from the ground affirm that SLM-Minawi is committing human rights violations against members from the group who are opposed to the Darfur peace deal signed with the Sudanese government in Abuja last May. Minawi group attacks also other rebel groups rejecting the peace deal.

Ambassador Kingibe urged Minawi to order an immediate end to this practice. He further demands a thorough investigation of this particular incident and the culprits made accountable.

The AU affirmed its readiness to provide non military support to the Sudanese parties as required by the DPA, “but such cooperation cannot be expected by any party that condones torture and inhumane treatment of its own members, much less the civilian population in Darfur”.

Darfur holdout rebel groups accuse the AU of losing its neutrality by housing Minnawi in their headquarters in Al-Fasher, flying him in AU helicopters on demand around Darfur and allowing his troops to drive AU vehicles in Al-Fasher town.

Darfur rebels kill, rape to enforce deal – Amnesty*

(*Reuters/ST* – 1st Aug. **Khartoum**) Darfur rebels who signed a peace deal with the government killed and raped civilians to try to force them to support the unpopular accord, human rights group Amnesty International said on Tuesday.

The African Union-brokered deal was signed in May by only one of three rebel factions — the Minni Arcua Minnawi group. Tens of thousands of Darfuris have protested against the deal, saying it does not meet their demands.

"Some 72 people were killed, 103 injured and 39 women raped in targeted attacks against civilians in the Korma region," said Amnesty in a statement.

The attacks were at the beginning of July in Korma, about 70 km (45 miles) north west of el-Fasher, Darfur's main town. Around 8,000 people fled their homes, emptying Korma.

"The attackers were members of the Minni Minnawi faction of the armed political group the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), reportedly supported by the Sudan armed forces and the Janjaweed," London-based Amnesty said.

Since signing the deal, Minnawi's troops have repeatedly been accused of imprisoning and torturing Darfuris who oppose it. Minnawi denies the reports.

But a U.N. helicopter in June airlifted elderly SLA official Suleiman Adam Jamous out of Minnawi's stronghold in Darfur where he had been imprisoned for weeks. Jamous had opposed Minnawi's leadership and the deal.

Amnesty further said a 7,000-strong AU force had not protected civilians and had not investigated the violence.

Some other rebel groups accuse the AU of losing its neutrality by housing Minnawi in their headquarters in el-Fasher, flying him in AU helicopters on demand around Darfur and allowing his troops to drive AU vehicles in el-Fasher town.

Amnesty said civilians had reported the attacks to the AU force on July 5, but the SLA had opposed the AU going to Korma. Only an AU outpost in nearby Tawila had gone to Korma but it had not issued its findings.

SLA officials were not immediately reachable and an AU spokesman was unable to immediately comment on the report.

Tens of thousands have been killed and 2.5 million forced from their homes during more than three years of conflict in Darfur.

** Please see the full text of the report in separate supplement to this MMR*

Eastern Sudan

Sudan, Ethiopia discuss ways to promote bilateral relations

(*Sudan Tribune website* – 1st Aug. **Khartoum**) The Sudanese president Assistant, Nafei Ali Nafei, discussed promotion of Sudanese Ethiopian relations with Speaker of the Ethiopian parliament, Teshome Toga, at his office at the Republican Palace, Monday

During the meeting they discussed ways of supporting and promoting Sudanese-Ethiopian ties and pushing it forward, as well as the role which should be played by other countries to support and strengthen ties among African countries.

The president's assistant lauded the level of ties which have gathered the Sudanese and Ethiopian people over the years.

The Speaker of the Ethiopian House of Peoples' Representatives during the meeting explained the position of his government on the border conflict with the neighbouring Eritrea and the stand of his government towards "the fundamentalist group operating in Mogadishu" and the Ethiopian support to the "legitimate" Somali Transitional government.

Nafei pointed out Sudan's political stance with its neighbors which was based on good neighborhood policy and supporting African brothers at all international levels for the sake of the people's interest towards achieving stability and progress.

Relations between Sudan and Ethiopia is chilled by the normalizations of relations between Sudan and Eritrea, shaky foe of Ethiopia, but also because of Sudanese pressures on the Somali government to recognize Somali Islamic Courts last June.

Teshome Toga who returned home later on Monday, has participated in the 2nd Parliamentary Forum of the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa countries held in the Sudanese capital Khartoum.

In his address to the forum, Teshome said that the Darfur Peace agreement should provide a good opportunity for the countries in the region. He said that in sharp contrast to the current atmosphere in Burundi and Sudan, which he described as hopeful, the deteriorating situation in Somalia has become a serious concern.