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(By Public Information Office)

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HIGHLIGHTS:

United Nations and the Transition Debate

President of the Republic draws similarities between the situation in Lebanon to what would become of Darfur and eastern Sudan

(The local press in Arabic – 6th Aug. Khrt.) Addressing a celebration to mark Workers' Day yesterday, the President of the Republic promised that the recommendations of the workers will be followed.

The president also reiterated rejection to the deployment of international forces to Darfur and vowed to safeguard state sovereignty, uphold the values and beliefs of the people of the Sudan and honour the Darfur Peace Agreement which, he points, never mentioned a United Nations military role in Darfur.

He pointed out that this year's celebration comes at a time when the world is witnessing increased Israeli aggression against the innocent women, children and aged in Lebanon and Palestine under the umbrella provided by the US and the other states that "revolve around its orbit".

The president likened the unfolding events in Lebanon as a replay of what is happening in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq and what some powers want to happen in Darfur and eastern Sudan.

Meanwhile Palestinian president Mahmoud Abas Abu-Mazeen is set to arrive to Khartoum today on a two day official visit.

While here, the Palestinian president and his delegation will discuss the ongoing events in the Middle East and particularly the issue of Palestine and Lebanon in addition to bilateral relations between the Sudan and Palestine.

CPA

Postponement of the Sudan government partners meeting

(ST – 5th Aug. Khrt.) The ruling National Congress party has announced the postponement of a meeting with the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement.

Deputy Chairman of the National Congress for Political and Organizational and Political Affairs, Nafei Ali Nafei, told the press that his meeting with the Secretary General of (SPLM), Pagan Amum was adjourned till the return of Pagan from Juba.

The meeting was planned for Saturday to discuss the establishment of joint institutions of the two parties, as agreed upon at the joint meeting of the National Congress and SPLM leaderships last May.

Following criticisms made by the SPLM official during the visit of the First Vice-President to Washington last month, Nafei and other NCP officials said they would request a meeting with the SPLM to clarify the positions of the two partners.

GoNU

National Assembly blasts Government of North Kordofan for no reception

(*AlAyaam* – 6th Aug. **Khart.**) The National Assembly has criticised the Government of North Kordofan for not sending in officials to receive a parliamentary delegation that recently visited the region.

Parliament has called for a commission of inquiry into the issue.

The Government of North Kordofan says that it was busy with some important issues and thus could not receive the delegation of the National Assembly.

It is worth noting that a delegation from the National Assembly was compelled to wait for over 10 hours at el-Obeid airport awaiting a government official to receive them.

Southern Sudan/GoSS/SPLM

Ugandan rebels say Sudanese mediator complicate peace process

(*ST/AP/AFP* – 3rd Aug. **Juba**) Ugandan rebels accused the Sudanese mediator of complicating the peace process after being subjected to pressures to send a leading member to head their delegation to peace talks.

The Ugandan rebel's spokesperson criticised the behaviour of the Sudanese mediator who abandoned the Ugandan rebel delegation near the Congolese border in protest at a LRA commander's refusal to attend the negotiations.

Obonyo Olweny, spokesman for the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), said Thursday that south Sudan Vice-President Riek Machar, who is the chief mediator, abandoned the rebel army's delegation in the bush near the border of Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) late Wednesday.

"The vice president got upset and abandoned us here because he could not convince (LRA deputy commander) Vincent Otti to attend the talks in person," Olweny said from Nabanga, a small trading post along the frontier.

"Despite assurances that he will be provided security by the government of southern Sudan, Otti said he would not attend the talks because of the International Criminal Court's arrest warrant and absence of a cessation of hostilities agreement with the Ugandan government," he said.

"The mediators' demand is not acceptable to the top LRA command. If the continuation of the talks is pegged on that demand, then they are on hold. We are unable to proceed until such a time that the demand is dropped," Olweny said, expressing further regret the "LRA delegation is stranded at the border."

The chief mediator of the peace talks, which have been taking place in Juba, the capital city in southern Sudan, hoped to speed the process along by encouraging the rebels to send a more senior leader with authority to make decisions on behalf of the group.

"I am not going to Juba," Otti said. "The ICC has not withdrawn their warrants, therefore I have no guarantee they (Uganda or Sudan) can't capture me."

The Lord's Resistance Army, however, remains committed to negotiating peace with the Ugandan government, Otti said.

The Ugandan government delegation has insisted the rebels send a top commander to the talks in order to show their seriousness, but the rebels have refused, citing the ICC arrest warrants against LRA chief Joseph Kony, Otti and three other top commanders.

Kony, in a rare public appearance on Tuesday, flatly denied some of the atrocities his forces are accused of, but apologised to the people of northern Uganda and southern Sudan who have borne the brunt of war.

Olweny said Thursday: "The peace talks are on bumpy ground. The chief mediator is crippling the peace process".

"This is not a good sign ... because it is not the responsibility of the Vice-President to dictate to us who should represent the LRA," he added.

The LRA spokesman said that the delegation was being protected at Nabanga by Sudanese security forces as they were mulling a way of getting to Juba.

"We shall have to iron out some of these issues when we get to Juba," he said. "We have communicated to the people close to the vice president, and he is still expecting Otti to attend the talks, but that is not possible."

"This time round, it is the mediators and not the government of Uganda, who are complicating the peace process."

The talks that opened in Juba, the capital of the semi-autonomous region of south Sudan, are seen as the best chance to restore peace and stability in Uganda.

The negotiations to end 19 years of war in northern Uganda began on July 14 and broke off July 24. They were set to resume next Monday.

South Sudan to transform SPLA to a conventional army

(Sudan Radio Service/ST – 4th Aug. Juba) In an effort to transform the Sudan People's Liberation Army into a conventional and professional army, the SPLA has embarked on an intensive military training of its former guerrilla soldiers.

Speaking at the SPLA General Headquarters last week in Juba, SPLA spokesman Major-General Kuol Deim Kuol said at least 5,000 soldiers are undergoing training in New Cush, but that training is also going on in other several other parts of southern Sudan, the Sudan Radio Service reported

“We are training one brigade of about 5,000. This is a special operations brigade. We have a full division of about 15,000 SPLA soldiers that are almost completing training in Wingebol area and another full division in Upper Nile. This is part and parcel of our strategy to transform the SPLA from a guerrilla army into a regular conventional army.”

The SPLA spokesman also called on the Sudan Armed Forces to redeploy about 3000 southern Sudanese SAF army soldiers in Juba to northern Sudan as stipulated in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

South Sudan receives \$473 mln, as oil revenues share for five months

(*ST* – 4th Aug. **Khrt.**) The GoSS share in oil revenues for the period from January-May 2006 is 473 million dollars, a report issued by the competent authorities at the Federal Ministry of Finance and National Economy says.

The report which is a monthly and is prepared by experts from the ministries of Finance and Energy and from South Sudan Government stated that the flow of oil revenues to South Sudan Government was 96.9 million dollars in March, 95.8 million dollars in April, and 112.1 million dollars in May.

The total share of the South Sudan Government in oil revenues for the year 2005 was 894.7 million dollars.

After the multiples accusations of lack on transparency on the oil revenue the ruling National Congress ministry of oil publishes regularly figures of the South Sudan shares of oil revenue.

SPLM institutes legal proceedings against *Akher Lahza* local daily

(*Khartoum Monitor* – 6th Aug. **Khrt.**) The SPLM Northern Sector has instituted legal proceeding against *Akher Lahza* daily for publishing what it called untrue and insulting news about prominent figures of the SPLM.

The secretary for political affairs of the SPLM’s Northern Sector, Agok Majur Kuor, said that the recent desperate press campaign to tarnish the reputation of SPLM figures would be met with legal steps and that the SPLM’s answer would be to work hard for a democratic transformation.

Darfur/Darfur Peace Agreement

Bashir appoints SLM Minnawi as President’s Senior Assistant

(*ST/the local press* – 6th Aug. **Khrt.**) Following SLM leader Minnawi’s failure to show up yesterday, the government moved swiftly to calm the anger of the SLM and issued a Presidential Decree appointing Minnawi as Senior Assistant to President Bashir and head of the Interim Authority for Darfur.

SLM-Minnawi spokesperson Mahjoub Hussein who addressed a crowd that had gathered at the Green Square yesterday to receive Minnawi apologised that the leader would not be showing up and blamed the National Congress Party.

He said the NCP was dragging its feet on the implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement and should have announced the appointment earlier before Minnawi’s date of arrival. “Now

that the government has announced the appointment, we can set down to make true peace”, added the spokesperson.

He said that the government made the appointment under pressure from the SLM.

The spokesperson reiterated the SLM position in support for the deployment of United Nations troops to Darfur and for a trial of the suspects to the war crimes in Darfur.

The SLM spokesperson further revealed that Minnawi will arrive at 4 o'clock this afternoon and will be sworn in tomorrow.

The SLM had earlier suspended participation in all committees formed to monitor the implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement until Minnawi would be appointed.

But *presidential advisor Majzoub el-Khalifa* says Minnawi's appointment came since the 3rd of this month when the SLM leader returned from Holland. He said the decision was made following consultations with the signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement and is in line with the agreement. He said Minnawi was in fact flown to el-Fasher to Khartoum on a presidential aircraft.

El-Khalifa says the SLM has apologised for the unbecoming conduct of their spokesperson and has reassured the government of its trust and full cooperation.

On the other hand, *the appointment has widely been criticised by holdout rebel groups*. The Freewill faction of the SLM, the Darfur Lawyers Council, the Consultative Council of Arab Tribes of Darfur have held separate meetings following the announcement of the appointment [*there are no details of the outcome of any of those meetings*] while the National Redemption Front had threatened an escalation in military activities should the appointment take effect.

Peace implementation panel condemns ceasefire violations in Darfur

(*ST, SMC* – 5th Aug. **Addis Ababa**) The Darfur Peace Agreement Joint Commission expressed deep concern over the continued violations of the ceasefire in Darfur with grave consequences on the humanitarian situation.

The DPA Joint commission condemned the continued violations of the ceasefire declared in Darfur and decried the involvement of all the parties to the conflict “signatories and non signatories of the DPA alike” said a press statement by the AU spokesperson Nureddine Mezni.

The DPA panel accused the new rebel groups of attacking the African Union forces besides, their Sudanese adversaries.

Esam Eldin al-Haj, the spokesperson of the SLM holdout faction accused the AU forces of providing intelligence to the Sudanese army on the positions and movements of their troops and for providing logistics support to Minnawi's forces.

He further said that AU does not condemn Sudanese military air raids against their positions.

Meanwhile Lt. Gen. Mohamed el-Dabi who led the Sudan government delegation to the meeting in Addis said that the government delegation presented a detailed and comprehensive report on the measures taken to implement the Darfur Peace Agreement.

Lt. Gen. el-Dabi said all participants were in full agreement that the African Union Peace & Security Council be requested to issue a resolution on holdout rebels and to urge implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1591 against these groups.

He also called upon the African Union to seek Interpol assistance to arrest leaders of the National Redemption Front.

El-Fasher selected as venue for the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue Conference

(*AlAyaam* – 6th Aug. **Khrt.**) The preparatory committee for the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue Conference has slated the conference for the 15th of September and says the 1,000 participants will be drawn from all sectors of the Darfur society, international and local experts, the GoNU, signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement and political forces representing all shades of the Sudanese political spectrum.

The committee has also chosen el-Fasher as the venue for the conference.

MSF evacuates staff from Sharif Umra and Jebel Moon areas

(*Allintibaha* – 6th Aug. **Khrt.**) MSF says many of its activities in Darfur are currently being suspended due to attacks against during the previous weeks in various parts of Darfur.

In a recent press statement, the MSF said that amongst the latest incidents was a robbery on 14th July by armed men on their compound in Sharif Umra during which a car was stolen. An ambulance was also shot at on the road between el-Geneina and Morney, the driver was beaten. It also some other incidents in addition to the above.

The statement went on to say that the security incidents have led to the evacuation of MSF teams in Sharif Umra and 2 projects in the Jebel Marra, has interrupted the work of its mobile clinics and limited referrals of emergency cases to surgical facilities.

SLM representative summoned in Slovene envoy trial

(*ST, AlAyaam* – 6th Aug. **ElFasher, Khrt.**) The Sudanese court trying a Slovene presidential envoy to Darfur on charges of charges of illegal entry and espionage, decided to summon the representatives of a former rebel faction as a witness.

According to the state-run SUNA the judge Hisham Mohamed Yousif decided to summon the representative of the Sudan Liberation Movement Minnawi faction before the African Union to the tribunal.

The SLM had earlier declared that Kriznar had entered the Sudan at the invitation of its leader to gain an insight into the situation and publicise it to the world.

The court was responding to an appeal by the lawyer acting in defence of Tomo Kriznar, Slovenian president's special envoy to Darfur.

The court also decided on the request of his lawyer Mohamed Mahjoub to make a medical examination for Tomo Kriznar.

Slovenia had held intensive talks with Darfur rebels during the race to sign up rebel groups to a peace deal with Sudan's government in May.

Tomo Kriznar, a peace activist who travelled to Sudan's troubled Darfur region in February as the Slovene president's envoy, has been held since July 20 and is to be tried in the coming days, said Ivo Vajgl, a presidential adviser.

Vajgl acknowledged Kriznar entered Sudan without a valid visa, though he didn't know why. He denied the accusations that Kriznar was a spy.

Meanwhile the German ambassador in Khartoum has formally requested permit from the Sudanese foreign ministry to visit the Kriznar.

The ambassador's request comes on the grounds his country is the current chair of the EU.

The court has ordered a media clampdown on the proceedings at the request of the defence counsel.

Head of Northern DDR Commission calls on tribes to control arms flow

(*Alltibaba* – 6th Aug. **Khrt.**) The head of the Northern Sudan DDR commission, Dr Salaf-el-deen Saleh has underlined the need for the tribes of South Darfur to control the flow of arms in the region.

He affirmed during the reconciliation process between the Rizeigat and Habbania, yesterday in Elsunta that the reconciliation and the realization of social security assist in a sustainable peace in the Darfur region.

Eastern Sudan

Sudan declines Eritrean offer to mediate with Darfur rebels

(*ST* – 5th Aug. **Khrt.**) Eritrean authorities have offered their services to mediate with a Darfur holdout rebel group but Khartoum has turned down the offer, a press report said.

According to Arabic language *al-Sudani* paper, the Eritrean delegation which visited the Sudanese capital last week proposed to mediate with the rebel National Redemption Front (NRF) to joint the Darfur Peace Agreement but Sudanese officials didn't seem interested by the offer.

The African Union and the international community threatened to impose sanctions against the rebel groups which refuse to ink the DPA. This stand comforts Khartoum in its position.

Eritrean military delegation to monitor eastern Sudan ceasefire

(*ST* – 3rd Aug. **Kassala**) An Eritrean military delegation led by the head of operations General Tehle Kebele has arrived in Kassala town in eastern Sudan to monitor the ceasefire signed between the regular army and the rebel Eastern Front.

The Eritrean delegation then held talks with the representatives of the Armed Forces led by head of the government's military delegation for security arrangements, General Mohamed Abdelgader Naser Eddin.

The two sides reiterated the need to strengthen security and stability in the region and work towards ending wars. The head of the Eritrean military said he is happy with the progress of the negotiations on the eastern issue and stressed Asmara's commitment to Sudan's peace and stability.

Earlier in July, Sudanese army and eastern Sudan rebel group signed a military protocol to implement to ceasefire agreement signed on 27 June.

According to ceasefire accord, the cessation of hostilities obliges the two sides to desist from any movement from the places they had occupied prior to June 19, to designate army officers who would implement the agreement drawn from both of them and representatives of the Eritrean government in five stations that separates the two parties. This is to say the area around the Red Sea, Setit River, Barka River, Kerayit and Lafa towards facilitating the implementation of the peace process and stability of Sudan.

Eastern Sudan peace talks are scheduled to resume on 7 August.