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IN THE NEWS TODAY:

- **United Nations and the Transition Debate**
 - SRSR Pronk holds talks with Wali of West Darfur
 - Annan Outlines Darfur Peace Plan
 - Opposition differ over international forces
 - Joint investigation on attack on arms depo concludes investigations
 - UNDP recruits volunteer experts from Diaspora

- **CPA**
 - SAF and SPLA agree to resolve issue of southern Sudanese militias
 - Joint committee of CPA partners to meet tomorrow

- **GoNU**
 - Palestinian president arrives today in Khartoum
 - Sudan's Salva Kiir to visit Cairo

- **Southern Sudan/GoSS/SPLM**
 - South Sudan discusses LRA's rejection of Machar role in talks

- **Darfur/Darfur Peace Agreement**
 - SLM Minawi arrives in Khartoum after dispute
 - Sudan should mull Muslim peacekeepers - Senegal's president
 - National Redemption Front claims control over el-Sayah in North Darfur

- **Eastern Sudan**
 - Eastern Front fears talks may end in deal between governments of Eritrea and Sudan
 - Authorities in Eritrea put AbdulWahid under house arrest

HIGHLIGHTS:

United Nations and the Transition Debate

SRSB Pronk holds talks with *Wali* of West Darfur

(*AlSudani/SUNA* – 7th Aug. **el-Geneina**) In a meeting with SRSB Jan Pronk, the *Wali* of West Darfur deplored the recent violence in the region in which a number of humanitarian workers lost their lives.

He highlighted the violations of the ceasefire agreement and pointed out that the holdout rebel groups were largely to blame for these violations. He called upon the United Nations and other agencies to pressure the holdout rebel groups to come on board the Darfur Peace Agreement.

On his part, SRSB Pronk condemned the attacks on humanitarian workers and has urged that the IDP camps be cleared of arms in the hands of some of the IDPs.

The SRSB called for a clear plan to be formulated by all partners to implement the security arrangements in order to achieve stability and consolidate the tenets of peace in Darfur.

Mr. Pronk further revealed that the disarmament plan tabled before the African Union is under discussion.

On the other hand, the West Darfur security committee has announced a series of security measures that include a ban on non-members of the regulation forces from wearing military uniform and banning anyone from shooting in the air during celebrations.

Annan Outlines Darfur Peace Plan

(*Sudan Tribune* – 7th Aug.) UN chief Kofi Annan has urged the Security Council to reinforce the Darfur African Union (AU) peacekeepers, while pressuring Sudan to accept a UN force.

Mr. Annan gave three options for the UN, with Sudan's approval, to bring peace.

One scheme would involve 18,600 African and Asian troops, making it the world's largest UN peace force. But Sudanese president Omar el Bashir has vowed to never allow a UN force into Darfur. The UN cannot assume a role without the governments consent.

“Securing the consent of the government of Sudan will require continued intensive discussions with Khartoum by council members, by key number states and regional organizations, as well as by the United Nations.” Mr. Annan said

He warned that the window of opportunity created by the Darfur peace agreement signed in May would be lost if there was no extra effort to implement it on the ground. The current AU peacekeeping force in Sudan's war-torn West is 7,000-strong. Some 2m people have fled their homes in Darfur since conflict began in 2003, and tens of thousands of people are reported to have been killed in ongoing violence.

Opposition differ over international forces

(*Khartoum Monitor* – 7th Aug. **Khrt.**) Differences between the parties of the national Democratic Forces Alliance (N DFA) emerged over attitudes towards intervention of international forces under article seven of UN convention.

Some of the parties forming the N DFA in a meeting yesterday at UMMA party premises, rejected intervention of international forces in Darfur under article seven, saying the government is to be held responsible for the deteriorating situation in Darfur.

Dr. Turabi head of the Popular Congress party one the parties forming the N DFA said the government rejection to international forces would further worsen the situation in the country.

Joint investigation on attack on arms depo concludes investigations

(*Akhbar Alyaum* – 7th Aug. **Khrt.**) A joint team of the United Nations, the SAF and the SPLA has concluded an investigation into an attack on an arms depot of the Popular Defense Forces in Bao, Blue Nile State, and will report its findings to the Area Joint Military Committee, says spokesperson Radhia Achouri of the United Nations Mission in Sudan.

The spokesperson says the AJMC will then study the report and determine the party responsive for the attack.

She pointed out that the joint team is carrying out regular patrols in the region to avert another attack on the area.

Achouri said that the United Nations Mission in Sudan received preliminary reports of the attack on the depot on Thursday the 3rd of this month while the attack occurred on the 30th of last month.

She said there are unconfirmed reports accusing former elements of the Popular Defense Forces who later joined the SPLA of being behind the attack on the depot but the joint report could not prove that they were responsible for the attack.

The spokesperson further said that the attackers managed to seize a large number of weapons. She however rebuffed reports that they abducted some people during the attack.

UNDP recruits volunteer experts from Diaspora

(*Khartoum Monitor* – 7th Aug. **Khrt.**) The United Nation Development Program (UNDP)-supported project “TOKEN Sudan” has up to this moment recruited more than five Sudanese volunteer experts and professionals from outside the country, one of whom is Dr. Osman Nur who yesterday arrived in Khartoum to assume his duty within the next few days.

TOKEN Sudan project is a UNDP-supported project implemented in partnership with the Ministry of International Cooperation, and covers the whole country .The project is intended to provide a window of opportunity for Sudanese in the Diaspora to provide capacity building to Sudan organizations at all levels of government, universities and research institutions ,and private enterprises for a limited period of time (1-12 weeks).

The project is demand –driven, based on requests form national organizations foe services of project-funded TOKEN volunteers.

Ganiyu A. Ipaye, TOKEN Project Manager in Sudan stated that the project is neither a repatriation programme nor an employment scheme. He said the TOKEN Project started in 1978 with the aim of bringing those experts who left their countries due to economic reasons to contribute their experience and expertise to the development of their countries.

The project manager mentioned that TOKEN Sudan deployed 4 volunteers to provide capacity building support at the University of Khartoum, Ministry of General Education, Ministry of Health, National Population council, Ministry of International Cooperation, Ministry of Finance and National Economy and the Ministry of labour. He added that the number of volunteers is expected to reach 20.

CPA

SAF and SPLA agree to resolve issue of southern Sudanese militias

(*AlSahafa* – 7th Aug. **Khrt.**) A joint SAF and SPLA committee looking into the issue of southern Sudanese militia forces has resolved to put an end to the violations perpetrated by these groups.

33,000 elements from these militias are to be aligned to the SPLA while 6,000 will align to the SAF and the two forces recognised by the CPA will then have to bear responsibility for the violations perpetrated by any of their elements.

SPLA spokesperson Bior Ajang, who revealed the information, also said that the United Nations will then verify these numbers.

He said that the two sides also agreed to hold regular monthly meetings alternately in Juba and Khartoum to follow up on the issue and to convene emergency meetings should the situation dictate so.

Joint committee of CPA partners to meet tomorrow

(*AlSudani* – 7th Aug. **Khrt.**) A meeting of the joint committee to bolster partnership between the National Congress Party and the SPLM will start tomorrow, says Yassir Arman of the SPLM.

Arman says the meeting which was earlier slated for today has been postponed for tomorrow due to the ongoing visit of the Palestinian leader to the country and the arrangements for a reception of the SLM leader.

Pagan Amoum who arrived in Khartoum yesterday said that the agenda for the meeting will be sorted out later today.

GoNU

Palestinian president arrives today in Khartoum

(*The Citizen/SUNA* – 7th Aug. **Khrt.**) Palestinian president Mahmoud Abas Abu-Mazeen arrived in Khartoum yesterday for a two-day visit during which he will hold talks with President Bashir on bilateral relations and the developments in the Arab world.

In press statements at the airport in Khartoum, the Palestinian leader said he will be holding talks with President Bashir in the latter's capacity as the chairman of the Arab League and will be discussing the ongoing developments particularly in Palestine and Lebanon.

He said that he also intends to consult the Sudanese leader on the proposed agenda of the emergency Arab summit and the meeting of the ministerial committee of the Arab League.

Sudan's Salva Kiir to visit Cairo

(*ST* – 7th Aug. **Cai.**) Sudanese First Vice-President and President of Government of Southern Sudan Salva Kiir Mayardit is expected to visit Cairo to discuss issues pertaining to the development of southern Sudan and on how Egypt can contribute to the economic development of southern Sudan.

Kiir would also discuss with the Mubarak the Egyptian role to attract Arabic funds to Southern Sudan. Egypt is expected to lobby Arabic countries to invest and participate in the rebuilding of southern Sudan.

The Jonglei Project is expected to feature in the talks between the two.

Kiir is also expected to hold talks with the chairman of the National Democratic Alliance Mohamed Osman al-Merghani to discuss means to reactivate cooperation.

Southern Sudan/GoSS/SPLM

South Sudan discusses LRA's rejection of Machar role in talks

(*Monitor/ST* – 6th Aug. **Juba**) The Southern Sudan Cabinet has held a special session to discuss Ugandan rebels' rejection of Riek Machar as the mediator in the talks between the Uganda Government and the Lord's Resistance Army rebels, the Kampala based *Sunday Monitor* reported

The government's spokesman, Samson Kwaje, told the *Sunday Monitor* that Machar would brief the Cabinet on the talks. But another government official said that the meeting would discuss whether the LRA was justified to reject Machar as mediator.

On Thursday, the LRA second-in-command, Vincent Otti, announced that his rebel group was rejecting Machar on grounds of partiality.

The rebels are particularly suspicious of the mediator's demands that Otti must show up in Juba for the peace talks to resume next week because the next stage was so serious it needed an LRA leader who can take real decisions.

Otti said that if Machar does not change his attitude, "we shall look for another mediator". The Ugandan government said on Friday that it has confidence in the Southern Sudan's mediation of the peace talks. The government's chief negotiator, Internal Affairs Minister Ruhakana Rugunda, said that Kampala has full support and confidence in the mediation of Machar.

The International Criminal Court has arrest warrants out against Kony, Otti, Okot Odhiambo, Raska Lukwiya and Dominic Ongwen. The court wants Uganda, Sudan, or Congo to arrest the LRA top commanders and hand them over to face crimes of war charges at The Hague.

A Sudanese official said his Cabinet could take drastic measures against the LRA if it continues on its current path. "In the event that we cannot save the situation, the Cabinet may come up with an order expelling the LRA from our land since they are not interested in the talks," the official said on condition of anonymity because he is not authorised to comment on the matter publicly.

The Cabinet meeting comes a day after the LRA issued a unilateral ceasefire, an otherwise goodwill gesture toward the talks but one being marred by Otti's insistence on not appearing in Juba.

The government in Kampala said it was not aware of the LRA move. It has, however, been wary of LRA's ceasefire pronouncements before saying the rebel group normally uses that move to reorganise and rearm.

Darfur/Darfur Peace Agreement

SLM Minawi arrives in Khartoum after dispute

(*Reuters/ST* – 6th Aug. **Khrt.**) Late and amid kicking and shoving, former Darfur rebel leader Minni Arcua Minnawi arrived to a chaotic welcome in Khartoum on Sunday to speed up implementation of a May peace deal for Sudan's vast west.

Minnawi, the only one of three negotiating rebel factions to sign the May accord with Khartoum, was due to arrive a day earlier but abruptly cancelled over a political dispute.

He accused the government of obstructing the deal by not making good on a promise to appoint him as special assistant to the president.

The government issued the decree on Saturday just hours after Minnawi's Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) said they would stop implementing the May peace deal until Minnawi was appointed.

Again on Sunday he was hours late and in a disorganised welcome journalists, officials and ministers grappled in Khartoum's airport as his delegation shoved its way inside.

Minnawi apologised for those who had "braved the sun" to welcome him the day before yesterday. His aides blamed the government for not making it possible for Minnawi to meet with his constituents due to the "inappropriate venue".

In statements to the press yesterday, Minnawi took the opportunity to renew calls to the holdout rebel groups whom he described as "comrades in arms" to join the Darfur Peace Agreement and thanked all those who made the Darfur Peace Agreement become a reality.

He said that the true worth of the Darfur Peace Agreement will now be seen through implementation of the agreement.

"This peace is for all of Sudan, all the Sudanese people," he said over throngs of journalists, crushing to hear him speak.

Majzoub al-Khalifa, presidential advisor and head of the government delegation at the Darfur talks, greeted Minnawi and said that the SLM leader's arrival to Khartoum marks the

beginning of implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement and is a message to all that the people of Sudan are serious in their quest for solutions to their problems.

"The future before us is a strong future," he said.

Relations between the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) leader and government partners seemed better as Minnawi blamed Saturday's stand off on a lack of "communication and coordination".

SLA officials said he would be sworn in as special assistant to the president, a political post created by the May accord, on Monday at the Republican Palace.

"Now Minni is in Khartoum we will see development for Darfur and implementation of the deal signed in (the Nigerian capital) Abuja," said Ruqayim Mohamed Ibrahim, from Kutum in North Darfur and a member of the SLA.

But tens of thousands of Darfuris disagree with her, and have demonstrated angrily against the deal, saying it does not meet their basic demands. Most of the few hundreds of Darfuris had waited for Minnawi on Saturday in Khartoum were also opposed to the deal.

Sudan should mull Muslim peacekeepers - Senegal's president

(AP/ST – 6th Aug. **El-Fasher**) Senegal's president Sunday said Sudan should consider the use of troops from Muslim nations to quell fighting in its Darfur region - suggesting an alternative to the U.N. force Sudan has rejected.

Sudan has repeatedly said it won't accept a U.N. peacekeeping force and that the African Union troops in the region are making progress in calming Darfur.

Senegal President Abdoulaye Wade - who flew into the North Darfur capital of el-Fasher for a one-day visit - asked Osman Yusouf Kibir, governor of the region, to consider a force made up of soldiers exclusively from Muslim nations.

"We are part of the Muslim world and I hope we can take soldiers from there," Wade told Kibir. He suggested member nations of the Organization of The Islamic Conference could send troops. Wade didn't say if these soldiers would be associated with the U.N., and it wasn't clear whether the OIC had offered such a force.

Kibir called a Muslim peacekeeping force "a very good idea," and reiterated Sudan's opposition to a U.N. force. Kibir said the security situation in Darfur was improving and that imposing foreign forces without Sudan's agreement would "complicate the situation and lead to more clashes."

"We categorically refuse the transformation of the AU mission into a U.N. mission," Kibir said. "We will not permit colonialism to return to Darfur."

Wade was also set to meet with heads of the African Union mission during his visit. Senegal has about 375 troops in Sudan as part of the AU force. The West African country had offered to send 583 soldiers, but the AU said it couldn't fund the full group.

U.N. Secretary-general Kofi Annan has suggested deploying between 15,300 and 18,600 U.N. troops to Sudan.

The Senegalese President also appealed to rebels in Sudan's violence-torn Darfur region to join a peace accord to stop the conflict from spreading wider in central Africa.

Wade, who is visiting Sudan and Chad to defuse tensions between the two feuding neighbours, has invited their presidents to peace talks in Dakar on Wednesday. He extended this invitation to the Darfur rebels still holding out.

"I ask these other factions to come and meet me in Dakar so that together they can join the accords. In that way, we can all work for peace in Darfur," he told reporters.

Wade met Minni Arcua Minnawi, whose Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) rebel faction was the only one to sign the May peace deal brokered by the AU, whose 7,000-strong peacekeeping force in Darfur has been struggling to secure the region.

National Redemption Front claims control over el-Sayah in North Darfur

(*Akhbar Alyaum* – 7th Aug. **N. Darfur**) A spokesperson for the National Redemption Front says their forces had repulsed an attack by SLA-Minnawi and managed eventually to gain control of el-Sayah area in North Darfur.

The NRF spokesperson says the SLA incurred heavy losses in terms of military hardware seized and lives lost during the battle. He said they have consolidated their hold on el-Sayah and have thus uprooted SLA-Minnawi from the region.

On the other hand, SLM-Minnawi spokesperson Mahjoub Hussein rebuffed the report and said that their faction is at the peak of its powers. He said he will be prepared in two weeks time to lead a delegation of media representatives to see the situation on the ground for themselves.

Eastern Sudan

Eastern Front fears talks may end in deal between governments of Eritrea and Sudan

(*AlAyaam* – 7th Aug. **Khrt.**) Talks between the Eastern Front and the Sudan government resume today amidst fears from prominent members of the Eastern Front that the talks may end in a deal between the government of Sudan and Eritrea.

These fears are based on the recent visit to Khartoum by an Eritrean government delegation.

A source within the Eastern Front says it is feared that the two governments may reach a deal at the expense of the cause of the people of eastern Sudan.

He pointed out that the secrecy shrouding the talks and the refusal to allow in foreign observers only point to an imminent deal between the two governments.

Authorities in Eritrea put AbdulWahid under house arrest

(*AlAdhwa* – 7th Aug. **Khrt.**) Authorities in Eritrea have put AbdulWahid Mohamed Nur under house arrest, informed sources say.

The sources say that the decision was taken in a bid to mend relations between Sudan and Eritrea for not signing the Darfur Peace Agreement.