Local News Headlines

- Presidential advisor holds UN responsible for UNAMID weakness (SUNA/all dailies)
- Williamson holds UN responsible for deployment of hybrid (Sudan Vision)
- SPLM names arbitrators for Abyei (Al-Sahafa)
- Abyei youth call for immediate withdrawal of deputy chief administrator (The Citizen)
- SPLM violates CPA 650 times in Southern Kordofan and NCP 240 times – MP (Al-Rai Al-Aam)
- Four Australian peacekeepers depart for Darfur (Ray Al-Shaab)
- Defence Minister says SAF has the right to deploy anywhere, Minnawi accuses SAF of expanding operations in Darfur (Ray Al-Shaab/Al-Sahafa)
- Civil Defence warns of potential flood in Khartoum (Al-Rai Al-Aam)
- Southern Sudan AIDS Commission receives project fund (The Citizen)
- Sudanese Islamic Movement’s conference hypocrisy – Turabi (Ray Al-Shaab)

Websites/International headlines

- UNSG says no impunity for perpetrators of atrocities in Darfur (UN News Centre)
- US envoy to Sudan 'hopeful' over Darfur peace efforts (AFP)
- US & Sudan move to resume bilateral talks on normalization (ST)
- UN cleans Abyei of unexploded weapons (ST)
- Abyei citizens express ‘mixed’ reactions to formation of administration (ST)
- Sudan kills 7 workers in remote area of North Darfur – rebels (ST)
- Rebel groups must unite to reach lasting solution for Darfur – FC Agwai (UN DPI)
- Egyptian engineers join UN-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UN DPI)
- Jonglei receives $3.2m in support for peace campaign (ST)
- Japan grants Sudan $5.8m for child health programme (ST)
- Bashir pushed, but Not yet into a corner (Interview)

NOTE: Reproduction here does not mean that the UNMIS PIO can vouch for the accuracy or veracity of the contents, nor does this report reflect the views of the United Nations Mission in Sudan. Furthermore, international copyright exists on some materials and this summary should not be disseminated beyond the intended list of recipients.
**Highlights**

**Local Arabic and English language press**

*President advisor holds UN responsible for UNAMID weakness*
Sudan News Agency (SUNA) and local dailies reported that the Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail has held the United Nations responsible for the weakness of UNAMID forces in Darfur because the organization did not transport troops from Ethiopia and Egypt to Darfur. In a press statement after his meeting Tuesday with the visiting American envoy for Sudan, Richard Williamson, Ismail said that he had briefed the envoy on the efforts of Sudan government toward completion of the UNAMID forces for Darfur. He said they have also discussed ways to resume the Sudanese - American dialogue and the possibility to fix a date for resumption of talks between the two countries.

The American Envoy called on the United Nations to exert more efforts to complete UNAMID deployment in Darfur and to provide them with the required assistance. Williamson said that he got informed on the situation in Darfur and Abyei during his visit.

*Williamson holds UN responsible for deployment of hybrid*
Sudan Vision carried a report stating that the US Envoy said ICC was not the main issue of his talks with Sudan Government’s officials. Williamson holds UN responsible for delaying deployment of joint forces in Darfur. He said that the government of Sudan has provided maximum support to the joint mission, but UN has not completed deployment of these forces.

*SPLM names arbitrators for Abyei*
Al-Sahafa stated that GoSS Presidency Affairs Minister Luka Biong said SPLM selected two American nationals to advice SPLM on Abyei arbitration in The Hague. The two experts are Steven Stiweil and Michael Raymond. One was a long-time chair of The Hague and the other is an expert of international law and arbitration. Luka said they have the right to name more counsellors.

*Abyei youth call for immediate withdrawal of deputy chief administrator*
The Citizen reported that the representatives of the Abyei Youth League in Juba alerted the leadership of SPLM in the presence of Vice President Riek Machar that the appointment of Rahma Abdul-Rahman Al-Nour as Deputy Chief of Administrator in Abyei is a great disappointment. The youth position was stated at the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly yesterday. The youth urged immediate withdrawal of the name of Rahma as Deputy Chief Administrator in Abyei, accusing him of direct involvement in lootings and killings of innocent civilians of Abyei town.

*SPLM violates CPA 650 times in Southern Kordofan and NCP 240 times – MP*
Al-Rai Al-Aam quoted the Chairman of the Southern Kordofan Legislative Assembly’s Technical Committee Siddiq Ibrahim as saying that SPLM violated CPA 650 times in southern Kordofan and NCP did the same for 240 times in the same area. A delegation from the Assembly will meet with President Bashir and FVP Salva Kiir for discussion on CPA implementation in the area.
Four Australian peacekeepers depart for Darfur
Ray Al-Shaab quoted Agencies as saying that four Australian Defence Force Peacekeepers supporting the United Nations and African Union Mission in Darfur left Sydney for Darfur, commencing their six-month deployment. The four peacekeepers will assist and coordinate with UNAMID to end violence in Darfur.

Defence Minister says SAF has the right to deploy anywhere; Minnawi accuses SAF of expanding operations in Darfur
“SAF has the right to deploy in any area,” says Defence Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussain, reacting to Minnawi’s complaint to the US envoy that SAF is deploying in SLA-controlled areas, according to Al-Sahafa newspaper. Hussain who was addressing a PDF conference yesterday in Khartoum revealed that the People’s Defence Forces (PDF) would be rearranged and reorganized to deal with any eventuality as the country was being targeted. He said UNAMID helicopter which was fired at took a different route other than the cleared one. “Lack of coordination with us is one of the problems with them {UNAMID},” he said. “They should coordinate with us to give them correct directions,” he added. Hussain has reiterated full commitment to provide protection to UNAMID troops.

Civil Defence warns of potential flood in Khartoum
Al-Rai Al-Aam reported that the General Directorate of Civil Defence alerted residents of areas close to the River Nile of potential floods. The Nile level yesterday reached 16.64%, just 30 cm short of danger level.

Southern Sudan AIDS Commission receives project fund
The Citizen said GoSS AIDS Commission received its long-awaited project funds. On the opening day of a five-day workshop on August 11, AIDS Commission chair Bellario Ahoy disclosed that the Multi Donor Trust Fund along with the help of World Bank has channeled funds to aid the SSAC strategic plans on AIDS projects that will last for five years.

Sudanese Islamic Movement’s conference hypocrisy – Turabi
Ray Al Shaab reported that the leader of the Popular Conference Party Hassan Turabi has described the recent Sudanese Islamic Movement’s conference as “hypocrisy”. Turabi made the statement while addressing yesterday a group of his party’s detainees released by the Government. He said the country would break up during the upcoming elections.

Websites/International Headlines
UNSG says no impunity for perpetrators of atrocities in Darfur
(Sudan Tribune) – The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon said today that the International Criminal Court (ICC) must be allowed to continue its investigations in Darfur. In an interview with the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram Ban expressed confidence “that the ICC will be able to enforce its decisions”.

The UN SG also stressed that the ICC is an independent institution. “I am emphasizing its complete independence. The ICC’s rules and decisions are governed by the court’s body and no third party may influence its work or the judges’ rulings” Ban said.
“The fact that the UN Security Council (UNSC) could hypothetically suspend ICC indictments does not mean undermining its independence or its functions. In the same token when the UNSC refers a case to the ICC like in Darfur, it doesn’t mean they are interfering in its work” he added.

Asked on the request by African Union (AU) to invoke Article 16 of the Rome Statute and suspend Al-Bashir’s indictment, Ban said it is up to the UNSC to make a decision in this regard.

However he underscored the need to bring Darfur war crimes perpetrators to justice. “We must prove that there is no longer impunity for those who commit atrocities…We can make peace and justice go hand in hand” Ban said.

In response to a question on why Al-Bashir was singled out when other world leaders committed comparable crimes, Ban said that it was the UNSC which referred the case to the ICC before adding that he expects the court to investigate crimes “irrespective of who committed them or where”.

Ban voiced disappointment for lack of progress in resolving the Darfur crisis but vowed to press all parties to sit at the negotiation table. He also sounded optimistic that Sudan will fulfill its obligations despite the ICC row.

**US envoy to Sudan 'hopeful' over Darfur peace efforts**

(AFP) The US envoy to Sudan struck a rare upbeat note over peace efforts in the Darfur region on Tuesday, saying he was hopeful that the slow pace of deployment of UN peacekeepers would be reversed. "The current trickle of added peacekeepers is very disappointing," Richard Williamson told reporters after talks with Sudanese Foreign Minister Deng Alor and meetings in Darfur with the leaders of the UN-led peacekeeping operation.

"Unfortunately, performance has not been acceptable to date. Unfortunately, the responsibility rests both here in Sudan and also with the United Nations," Williamson said in Khartoum. "But we have reasons to be encouraged and hopeful that the pace of the past will be reversed and we will see substantially more UNAMID peacekeepers here to help the people of Darfur in the near future," he added.

Williamson ended his previous visit to Sudan last June, announcing that the United States had suspended talks to improve its difficult relations with the Khartoum government and branded the country uninterested in peace.

"We'll be very disappointed if the pace doesn't pick up substantially. We've had specific plans shared with us, both in New York and in Darfur at UNAMID headquarters, for that to take place," he said on Tuesday. Williamson also said he was assured that the Sudanese government was making progress in allocating land for camps and making other infrastructure available.

UNAMID spokesman Noureddine Mezni said 8,192 soldiers and 1,723 police were on the ground in Darfur - an increase on recent months but still far below even half the projected total of 19,500 soldiers and 6,500 policemen.

A vanguard of 350 Ethiopian soldiers are to arrive next week to prepare for the arrival of an entire battalion and 126 Egyptian military engineers arrived on Tuesday to pave the way for further Egyptian deployment, Mezni said.

UNAMID still lacks the 24 transport and attack helicopters it says it needs to protect civilians
adequately in an area broadly the size of France.

Williamson’s visit to Sudan comes with Khartoum on a diplomatic campaign to freeze possible international proceedings against President Omar al-Bashir over alleged war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in Darfur.

Without explicitly saying by whom, Williamson said there was a "serious reassessment" on how to energize a peace process in Darfur, at least partly due to the imminent arrival a new international mediator, Djibril Bassole.

"I think the developments in 2008, from a variety of sources, have brought a new focus and attention, and the United States is anxious to be supportive of progress where possible," said Williamson. "But let me emphasize and this is terribly important: If we're going to get a sustainable peace in Darfur ... in the end the sovereign state of Sudan will have to address this issue," he said.

**US & Sudan move to resume bilateral talks on normalization**

(Sudan Tribune) – The Sudanese government and the US administration reached a preliminary agreement on resuming normalization talks that were suspended last June. The daily Al-Hayat newspaper published in London said that the US special envoy to Sudan Richard Williamson discussed the issue with officials in Khartoum today, where he met with the Sudanese presidential adviser Mustafa Ismail and the foreign minister Deng Alor.

Ismail said that both sides discussed setting a new date for the normalization talks. Williamson was quoted as saying that he would convey the outcome of his visit to Darfur and the North-South border area of Abyei before a new date is set.

Williamson’s visit to Sudan will end Thursday and there was no word on whether he would meet with President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir who is in the center of a row with the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The head of US affairs in the Sudanese foreign ministry Abdel-Basit Al-Sanoosi said they would seek clarification from Williamson on Washington’s position on the ICC developments. Al-Sanoosi described Washington’s stance on the issue as “mysterious and conflicting and inconsistent”.

**UN cleans Abyei of unexploded weapons**

(Sudan Tribune) — Abyei has been successfully cleared of unexploded bombs and land mines, the United Nations Mine Action Office (UNMAO) said in a press statement today.

"UNMAO has successfully cleared Abyei of unexploded ordnance (UXO)," the statement said. It further said that UN humanitarian agencies and NGOs will now be able to return to the area and provide much-needed support to the remaining population and to returnees.

The UNMAO said its partner Mine Tech International and the Red Cross systematically removed and destroyed all devices found in battle. UNMAO also sent Mine Risk Education teams to Al Muglad and Agkok (respectively north and south of Abyei) to provide information on the prevention of UXO accidents to people displaced by fighting.

On 6 August, UNMAO tasked the Egyptian Military Demining Company to destroy a stockpile of 4,800 abandoned munitions. As Suleiman Nyamwya, UNMAO’s operations officer who attended the stockpile destruction put it, “this completed the clearance of UXO in Abyei and will
enable the safe return of displaced families to the area”. (ST)

**Abyei citizens express ‘mixed’ reactions to formation of administration**

(Sudan Tribune) — Citizens of Abyei in Juba on Monday expressed mixed reactions to the recent appointment of the Chief Administrator of disputed area and his deputy by the Sudanese president.

President Omer al-Bashir appointed on Friday 8 August, Arop Mayak Monytoch of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) as Chief Administrator of the interim Abyei Area Administration and Rahama Abdel-Rahman Al-Nour of the National Congress Party (NCP) as Deputy Chief Administrator.

In a briefing by the Vice President of the Government of Southern Sudan, Riek Machar Teny, who also heads the SPLM Committee on implementation of Abyei Protocol, Abyei intellectuals, youth and women held different views on how the administration was formed. Some rejected the inclusion of Rahama Abdel-Rahman as Deputy Chief Administrator while others argued that the Abyei Protocol reached in Naivasha in 2005 calls for inclusiveness in the administration.

Machar’s Abyei Committee membership include Yasser Arman, GoNU Presidential Advisor, Luka Biong Deng, GoSS Minister for Presidential Affairs, Justice Paul Mayom Akech, Minister of Internal Affairs, Justice Michael Makuei Lueth, Minister of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Development and Deng Arop Kuol, Chairperson for Legal Affairs in the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA).

Arop Madut, SPLM member of Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly argued that the formation of the Abyei administration that included NCP’s Rahama, a Messiriya, as Deputy Chief Administrator of Abyei amounted to handing over of Abyei to the North. He warned against renegotiation of the CPA.

Machar explained that the Abyei Protocol in the CPA was not specific on how the administration could be proportionally set up. He argued that it was only clear in giving 60% to SPLM and 40% to NCP, but fell short on how to divide the executive seats between the two parties.

Machar argued that it was necessary to form the temporary administration that would be responsible for the development of the area and to repatriate the displaced people of Abyei to their homesteads before the coming elections in 2009.

He further explained that it was the Abyei Roadmap Agreement that was specific in giving the SPLM the position of Chief Administrator while the NCP got the position of the Deputy Chief Administrator.

Machar, however said a Dinka Ngok NCP member could have also occupied the post and not necessarily always non-Dinka Ngok members of the Party.

The Abyei Protocol recognizes both the Nine Dinka Ngok Chiefdoms and other Sudanese residents of Abyei.

The Roadmap agreement also establishes a ‘Development Fund’ for Abyei in addition to the 2% allocated to the Area per the CPA.

Deng Arop, SSLA Chairperson for Legal Affairs and citizen of Abyei said the formation of the administration would facilitate the return of the people to their areas. Those who criticized the
agreement did not understand the Abyei Protocol in the CPA, and he urged them to read and understand it.

Minister Paul Mayom Akech reminded the Abyei community about the incompleteness of the CPA to the SPLM’s favour. “We must understand that we did not win the war through the barrel of the gun, but through a peaceful negotiation on the table in Naivasha … and that Abyei Protocol had some ‘grey’ areas since it was a negotiated agreement,” he argued. “This is a win-win situation,” he added.

“Peaceful negotiations on the table are about ‘give and take’ and you don’t expect the other party to fulfill all your demands a 100%,” added Minister Michael Makuei Lueth who is also member of the SPLM Committee on the Abyei Protocol.

Earlier, Abyei Youth League issued a press statement condemning the inclusion of Rahama in the Abyei Area administration calling it “a shameful administration… and a betrayal to the people of Abyei.”

A UN-based Miraya FM Radio presenter, Adau Kuol Padiet and citizen of Abyei challenged those who criticized the formation of the administration, arguing that it was in accordance with the CPA’s Abyei Protocol. “I have been the presenter of the programme called “Facts on CPA’ and I can tell you that the CPA recognizes both the Dinka Ngok and other Sudanese residents in the area including the Misseriya as would-be members of the administration and this could be the source of bringing Rahama,” she explained.

Minister Luka Biong Deng, citizen of Abyei and member of the Abyei Committee expressed his appreciation to his senior colleague, Machar for what he described as Machar’s relentless efforts to bring positive change to Abyei Area by successfully leading the Abyei team.

Machar appealed to the citizens of Abyei to support their new Chief Administrator, Arop Moyak and urged them to resettled in the area before the 2009 elections where they would participate in democratic elections to make the SPLM win 100% in the constituencies of Abyei.

**Sudan kills 7 workers in remote area of North Darfur – rebels**

(Sudan Tribune) — Darfur rebels accused the Sudanese government of killing seven people during an attack against a soda ash plant in north Darfur.

Jebel Atron in northern Darfur is one of the most important deposits of Trona or (soda ash) in the country. Not far from this area Sudanese government has just started a small campaign of 1,000 kilometers of seismic” works at Block 12A.

Abdel-Wahid al-Nour, the chairman of the Sudan Liberation Movement has accused the Sudanese army of killing seven workers in Atron and Karam El-Tom where Durfuri used to extract the sodium carbonate. The rebel chief said around 270 vehicles attacked the plant on Sunday August 10 and expelled the worker from the area.

Ansan Wikfs, a partner of Sudan-owned Sudapet, said last July they would begin seismic operations at Block 12A located in a remote area of northern Darfur. Sudapet, Ansan and Saudi Arabia’s Al-Qahtani Group are the joint-operators of Block 12A.

The rebel leader said the National Congress Party is not serious about peace in Darfur, adding that the government is recruiting new local militias and prepare for new attacks against rebel positions. He claimed that a security delegation led by Defence Minister Abdel-Rahim Hussein met last week with janjaweed leaders to fix their role and needs in the next period.
On August 6, Hussein headed a high ranking security delegation — including Interior Minister Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid, and Security and Intelligence Services Chief Salah Gosh – to assess the security situation in the three states of Darfur.

**Rebel groups must unite to reach lasting solution for Darfur – FC Agwai**

(UN DPI) - Darfur’s splintered rebel movements must unite at the negotiating table if there is to be a lasting solution to the conflict in the Sudanese region, the UNAMID Force Commander said today. General Martin Luther Agwai, told reporters in New York that the international community needs to put as much pressure on the rebels as it has on the Government, with which they have been fighting since 2003, to end the conflict.

“’I want to say it again and again – that it takes two to tango,’ Gen. Agwai said. “Let’s not put too much searchlight on one party; let’s also put enough searchlight on the other party.”

Gen. Agwai noted that four rebel groups took part in talks preceding the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2006, and yet now they have fractured into around 30 groups on the ground, nearly all of them without cohesive command and control.

“I am not in any way saying that the Government is clean. But what I am saying is that also the other side cannot be said to be saints. So my appeal is that the pressure, especially now that we have a joint mediator, should be exerted on both sides.

The Force Commander said too many of the rebel groups had shown no interest in negotiations.

“They will have to end on the negotiation table because militarily it’s clear no side will win the war in Darfur.”

As many as 300,000 people are estimated to have died over the past five years in Darfur, either through direct combat or disease, malnutrition and reduced life expectancy. Another 2.7 million people have had to flee their homes.

In his press conference, Gen. Agwai also urged the international community to provide the mission with the requisite troops and equipment – particularly helicopters – to carry out its mandate.

UNAMID is supposed to have 26,000 troops and police officers at full deployment, but currently has only about 10,000 in place.

**Egyptian engineers join UN-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur**

(UN DPI) - UNAMID reports that 129 Egyptian engineering personnel arrived today in the western Sudanese region to join the force that is trying to quell the deadly fighting and humanitarian suffering that has raged since 2003. With today’s arrival, the 335-strong Egyptian engineering company is now fully deployed. The next major deployment, that of the Ethiopian battalion, is expected this weekend.

UNAMID is supposed to have more than 26,000 uniformed personnel, including peacekeepers and police officers, when it reaches full deployment. Currently only about 10,000 blue helmets have arrived. The mission said it hopes it will soon reach the capacity it needs to fulfill its mandate and meet the expectations of both the people of Darfur and the international community.
Meanwhile, OCHA reports that UN agencies continue to deliver aid to all accessible areas of Darfur, despite targeted attacks against relief workers, restrictions by the Sudanese Government and aerial bombings by the Government.

Last month the number of targeted attacks against humanitarian groups reached alarming levels, with one guard for a non-governmental organization (NGO) being killed, six aid workers wounded and 21 vehicles stolen or hijacked. Armed men also broke into 33 premises belonging to humanitarian operations.

**Jonglei receives $3.2m in support for peace campaign**

(Sudan Tribune) – Jonglei government has received a $3.2 million donation in support of peace and law enforcement at the Counties level, UNDP official Ferdinand Von Habsburg announced Tuesday. The donation came a day after the State Governor sought foreign assistance to make peace and development achievable in shortest time possible.

The funds, from the Norwegian and British governments, will be used to purchase equipment by UNDP as requested by the Counties’ Commissioners in the two days conference that ends today.

**Japan grants Sudan $5.8m for child health programme**

(Sudan Tribune) — The government of Japan has extended a grant aid of $5.8 million to UNICEF for child health programme in the Sudan. A ceremony to mark the event was organised at the Minister of Public Health in Khartoum on Tuesday. The event was attended by Minister of Public Health Tabitha Boutros Shokay, the Japanese Ambassador to Sudan Yuichi Ishii and UNICEF Representative Ted Chaiban. The funds will be used to provide an essential package of primary health care services, benefiting some 5.5 million people.

Since the signing of the 2005 peace agreement, UNICEF and partners such as WHO support the vaccination of 8.9 million children against polio, 3.5 million children against measles, as well as distributing 910,000 bed nets to protect families from malaria.

**Bashir pushed, but not yet into a corner**

[IPS Terra Viva (NY), Interview with Aymen Abdelaziz Salaama, international law expert–12/8/08]

CAIRO, Aug 11 (IPS) - Aymen Abdelaziz Salaama, professor of international criminal law at Cairo University and a likely nominee for al-Bashir's legal defence team, spoke to IPS correspondents Adam Morrow and Khaled Moussa al-Omrani about the ICC's controversial case against Khartoum.

**IPS:** The ICC was established only recently but is already challenging sitting heads of state. What is the court's legal authority based on, and where does it have jurisdiction?

**Aymen Salaama:** The ICC was founded based on the 1998 multilateral Rome Statute (also known as the International Criminal Court Statute), and officially came into being in 2002. It was established with a mandate to investigate and prosecute state leaders and high ranking officials accused of committing war crimes, genocide or crimes against humanity. The court is mandated with prosecuting individuals, not governments or political systems. The ICC’s jurisdiction, however, only applies to crimes committed since its establishment in 2002. The maximum
sentence the court can deliver is 30 years in prison. It cannot pass sentences of life in prison or execution. There are currently 106 full ICC member countries, including three Arab states: Jordan, Djibouti and the Comoros Islands. The remaining Arab countries -- including Egypt and Sudan -- have signed the charter, but their respective parliaments have not approved it.

IPS: Under what circumstances can the ICC raise a case against a head of state?

AS: There are only three ways the ICC can raise such a case. The first is for a full member state to request an investigation into crimes allegedly committed on its own territory. The second is for the UN Security Council (UNSC) -- citing a possible threat to international peace and security -- to request the court to investigate crimes committed in any country, whether a signatory or not. This is what happened when the UNSC issued Resolution 1593 in 2005, which called on the chief prosecutor to investigate war crimes allegedly committed in Darfur.

This is why Sudan's claim that it is a not a full ICC member-state -- and so therefore the court has no jurisdiction over crimes allegedly committed on its territory -- is not legally accurate. The third way is for the chief prosecutor himself to call for an investigation into alleged crimes in any country. In order to do this, however, he must obtain the approval of the court's preliminary panel. This panel, which consists of three international judges, oversees all the activities of the chief prosecutor's office.

IPS: What were the charges levelled against al-Bashir and on what evidence?

AS: The chief prosecutor accused al-Bashir of exploiting the means of authority -- namely the police and army -- to methodically commit war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity since 2002. To back up its claims, the prosecutor's office has collected evidence from witnesses and victims from 17 different countries, from government and non-government agencies and from recent UN missions to Darfur.

IPS: What can Khartoum do to counter the charges?

AS: Firstly, it can lodge an appeal against UNSC Resolution 1593 based on the fact that the resolution exempted American nationals present in Darfur from the court's jurisdiction on the grounds that the U.S. is not an ICC signatory. In my view, this exemption is extremely unfair, because it forces Sudan to deal with the ICC while simultaneously preventing the court from making war crimes accusations against the U.S. Secondly, Khartoum has the right to contest any evidence brought against it by the chief prosecutor in front of the preliminary panel.

Thirdly, it can establish local trials for those accused of committing the crimes in Darfur. According to the ICC charter, the court doesn't have jurisdiction except where the national judicial system is found to be unable or unwilling to prosecute the accused. The court itself, however, determines whether the country in question -- which must be signatory to the treaty -- has this ability or not. Even if Sudan tries the accused locally, this doesn't necessarily mean the ICC will drop the case.

Finally, Sudan ought to launch a diplomatic and political campaign aimed at convincing the UNSC to issue a decision to delay the investigation for a one-year, renewable period.

IPS: How can Khartoum convince the UNSC to issue such a decision?

AS: Firstly, it can implement the Darfur peace agreements; secondly, it can provide protection and security to all humanitarian agencies currently working in Darfur; and thirdly, it can hold
local trials for other government officials accused by the ICC of committing war crimes in Darfur. But again, even if Khartoum -- with the support of the Arab League and African Union -- succeeds in obtaining a 12-month delay, this doesn't mean that the UNSC will withdraw its case.

IPS: What will happen in the event that the ICC issues an arrest warrant for al-Bashir?

AS: Sudan could simply turn al-Bashir over to the ICC. If it refuses to hand him over, however, he would be banned from visiting any of the full ICC member-states. Countries that have signed but whose parliaments haven’t ratified the convention, like Egypt and most other Arab countries, meanwhile, would have a moral obligation not to receive him or offer him refuge. In addition, the ICC can request a UNSC resolution, based on Chapter 7 of the UN charter, to impose gradual sanctions on Sudan. This would begin with the cutting of diplomatic relations, but could eventually escalate into a naval blockade of the country and then -- in a worst-case scenario -- the use of military power to force Sudan into compliance with ICC demands.