

17<sup>th</sup> August 2008

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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

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# Highlights

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## Local Arabic and English language press

### *Nothing prevents Bashir from attending summit in Turkey - FM*

**Al-Rai Al-Aam** reported that President Bashir will leave for Turkey tomorrow to attend African-Turkish summit in which UNSG and AU Commission Chairperson will also participate. Foreign Minister Deng Alor said, "There is nothing that prevents him from attending an important summit"

Asked whether President Bashir received guarantees that he will not be apprehended, the Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman said, "so far there is nothing that prevents him and he fears nothing,"

### *SPLA turns off Messeriya from Abyei*

**Al-Intibaha** quoted Informed sources as saying that SPLA elements in Abyei were still violating security arrangements with regard to roadmap for return of IDPs from Muglad. SPLA expelled yesterday several Messeriya households who returned to the area. The sources said that a number of SPLA police elements were still causing trouble in Abyei as they have not been disarmed yet. According to the sources, the SPLA police are unorganized police elements brought to the area by SPLA before the eruption of recent conflict.

### *Extension of interim period is not under consideration of CPA partners – SPLM leader*

**Al-Khartoum** stated that participants at "Khartoum Weekly Forum" which was held under the theme "Right of self-determination for southern Sudanese" have urged extension of the interim period and postponement of elections to give more time for building stronger relations between the North and the South to ensure southerners' votes for unity during the upcoming referendum. The participants stressed the need for launching an initiative to that effect.

However, SPLM denied that the two partners were determined to extend the interim period to increase chances for unity when referendum is held. SPLM northerner sector official Waleed Hamid said the issue has not been discussed within SPLM or NCP. "Move for extension will be rejected by several political forces," he said.

### *No obstacles for UNAMID – Nafie Ali Nafie*

**Al-Sahafa** carried a report stating that The Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie confirmed total coordination and harmony between Sudan government and UNAMID in Darfur. He said UNAMID was not facing any obstacle. "I challenge anybody to point out a single problem encountering hybrid deployment," he said. Nafie who was speaking to the Sudanese TV yesterday said the peace process would proceed.

### *Trial of US diplomat killers begins today*

**Al-Rai Al-Aam** reported that the trial of five Sudanese nationals accused of murdering an American diplomat, John Granville and his Sudanese driver Abdul Rahman Abbas in Khartoum will begin today under articles 21 and 130 of the Sudanese Criminal Act the penalty of which is

death.

### ***Heavy rains kill seven persons, destroy 120 residences in Khartoum***

**Al-Sahafa** reported that Heavy rains which lashed Khartoum on Friday and Saturday killed seven persons and destroyed 120 houses in Omdurman. The civil Defence warned that the River Nile might also overflow its banks and cause floods.

### ***Prospective ministerial reshuffle***

**Akhir Lahza** learned of prospective ministerial reshuffle to be conducted shortly. The present minister of youth & sports will go to Darfur as governor and Hassan Osman Riziq will rejoin the executive. Changes is also expected in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as one of the presidential advisors is likely to take over as state minister for foreign affairs and Ali Karti will move to the Presidency as minister of State. There will also be reshuffle in the posts of governors of Northern and Southern Kordofan as well as a third central state. Nhial Deng Nhial and Abdul Aziz Adam Al-Hilo will take over as cabinet affairs minister and minister of state at the ministry of animal wealth respectively. Ismail Khamis Jalab will become deputy governor of southern Kordofan state.

## **Websites/International Headlines**

### ***Sudanese President entrusted to head Darfur national conference***

**(Sudan Tribune)** — The national unity government main partners agreed to choose President Omer al-Bashir as chairman of a national conference to resolve Darfur conflict.

The Sudan People's Initiative means to gather representatives from all the national political forces, the civil society and different traditional and political forces in Darfur including the rebel groups opposed to Abuja peace agreement.

The joint committee between the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan people's Liberation Movement (SPLM) agreed to entrust the president of the Republic to head the Sudan People's Initiative, in a meeting held last Thursday August 14.

The two parties also said they completed their bilateral consultations on the objectives and the mechanism of the national conference to end the five years conflict in Darfur. They further denied the existence of divergences over the chairmanship of the forum with other political forces.

They also asserted that all the political forces will be invited to take part without discrimination.

However, the Democratic Unionist Party of Mohamed Osman al-Mirghani accused the two parties of working to exclude al-Mirghani initiative for a comprehensive national reconciliation launched last June.

The spokesperson of al-Mirghani initiative, Osman Omer al-Sharif said there would be no reconciliation or peace without the initiative of his leader. He further added they do not trust a government that undermined Garang-Mirghani agreement of 1989.

The DUP official was referring to the coup d'état of 30 June 1989 organized by the National Islamic Front to prevent the organization of a national conference to abrogate Islamic legislation imposed by the former president Nimeiri and to separate state and religion.

Also the political secretary at the Popular Congress Party of Hassan al-Turabi said Bashir is not qualified to head such gathering because the NCP is part of the conflict in Darfur. Kamal Omer added the SPLM should chair the conference because it is acceptable to other parties and rebel movements.

On August 11, the NCP-SPLM committee agreed on the objectives of the Sudan's People Initiative.

NCP member and former South Darfur governor, Atta Al Mannan, unveiled the main objectives of the national conference on Darfur, saying it aims at finding a lasting political solution for Darfur crisis and addressing the social root causes of the conflict.

The initiative intends to bring justice for Darfur people, fight the violence and to restore security in the region, he said. Adding, it also should adopt a plan to reconstruct and develop the economy of the three states in Darfur.

The conference also should tackle the humanitarian aspect of the crisis including the issue of security, repatriation of the displaced and refugees to their villages after receiving their due compensations.

### ***Kongor community: 20 people die of hunger***

**(Miraya FM)** The Kongor community in Akiék Payam of Warrap State has appealed to the UN to rescue them by providing food aid. The community who are hard hit by hunger caused by tribal clashes made the appeal to a team of UN and Government representatives who undertook an assessment mission in Akiék Payam today.

According to a letter addressed to the UN delegation, at least 20 people have died of hunger in Akiék Payam of Warrap State. Around 7 thousand of the over 67 thousand people of Akiék are scattered to different neighboring villages as they have nothing to eat in the area.

### ***114 Ethiopian peacekeepers arrive to Darfur***

**(Sudan Tribune)** — The first batch of an Ethiopian engineering company arrived today to the capital of El-Fasher to join the joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

Today's batch of 114 Ethiopian engineering personnel is part of the advance units of 350 peacekeepers who will continue to arrive on Sunday and Monday.

The groups was welcomed by UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative Henry Anyidoho who pointed out their important role to build roads, bridges and camps for the deployment of the 5000 Ethiopian troops.

Hours after their arrival, the Ethiopian contingent departed to western Darfur where they are deployed in Kulbus and Silea.

This Ethiopian force is part of two battalions, 850 each, to be deployed in Darfur before the end of the year.

In a gesture of good will, the Sudanese authorities authorized the entrance to the country of the 114 peacekeepers despite a problem related to non-arrival of their passports, the official agency SUNA reported.

Rodolphe Adada, the head of the joint U.N. and African Union peacekeeping mission for Darfur, is expected to hold a meeting tomorrow with the undersecretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mutrif Sidiq, who is in charge of the UNAMID file to discuss the outstanding issues related to the hybrid operation.

### ***Libyan, Eritrean foreign ministers discuss Sudan-Chad relations***

**(Sudan Tribune)** — Eritrean and Libyan foreign ministers discussed today the ongoing preparations to hold a meeting of a contact group charged with the implementation of Dakar Agreement signed last March between Chad and Chad.

Eritrea will host on August 26 a meeting of the group to discuss mechanisms related to the deployment of the joint patrols throughout border between the two countries. This meeting comes after the acceptance of a Libyan initiative to restore diplomatic relations between Khartoum and Ndjamena.

Eritrean Foreign Minister, Osman Mohamed Saleh, held talks on Saturday with his Libyan counterpart Abdel Rahman Mohamed Shalgam on the agenda of the meeting of contact group. The two parties agreed to include the implementation of the Libyan initiative to reconcile the two neighbouring countries.

Saleh arrived to Tripoli from Khartoum where he discussed with the Sudanese president the proposed agenda for the 26 August meeting. He told the reporters following the meeting that the Eritrean government would conduct meetings with the leaders of Sudan and Chad so as to normalize relations between the two countries.

According to a non-aggression pact signed in the Senegalese capital, on the sidelines of the Islamic Conference summit on March 13, Sudan and Chad agreed to deploy a monitoring force to ensure stability on the joint border and to establish a contact group composed of Congo, Eritrea, Gabon, Libya and Senegal.

Under the Dakar deal, Chad and Sudan promised to stop all armed and organized activities and banned actions threatening each other's national security.

Sudan had broken off relations with Chad after a raid on the capital Khartoum by the Justice and Equality Movement. President Omer al-Bashir accused Chad to providing the rebel group with the material and logistical support to carry out the May 10 attack.

### ***Sudan buys 50 Russian trucks***

**(Sudan Tribune)** – The Sudanese government has bought fifty trucks from the Ural truck plant located in Russia's Chelyabinsk Region and incorporated in the GAZ group.

The Ural-4320 is a general purpose off-road 6x6 truck, produced for use in the Russian Army. The wheel arrangement for the Ural-4320 was designed for transportation of cargoes, people and towing trailers on all types of roads and terrain.

GAZ Group said in a statement the model designed for Sudan (6WD Ural-4320) was currently being finalised and adjusted to African climate. However the firm didn't elaborate on the purpose or the beneficiary of the contract.

The Ural-4320 is also used for drilling for water, oil and gas using drilling rigs, which are mounted on the Ural-4320 chassis.

Industry experts estimate the cost of an all-wheel-drive Ural at around RUR1.5bn, which puts 50 such trucks at RUR75mn (\$3mn, or €2mn).

Ural trucks are powered by 240 hp engines produced by the Yaroslavl Autodiesel engine plant

### ***Sudanese troops continue attacks in North Darfur - rebels***

**(Reuters)** — Darfur rebels accused Sudan's government of more attacks on Saturday, saying Khartoum was not serious about peace and was pursuing a military solution to the conflict. Sudan's army denied the allegation and said its troops had fought off an ambush in an isolated incident. UNAMID said it was checking the reports. "The government army and militia attacked us yesterday in Abu Hamra and Kofod east of Kutum in North Darfur," Nimr Mohamed, spokesman for the Sudan Liberation Army under Abdel Wahed Mohamed el-Nur, told Reuters from Darfur.

"The government attacked us in Dorma, North Darfur...killing five of our troops," said Mohamed Drbeen, military spokesman for the SLA faction led by Senior Presidential Aide Minni Arcua Minnawi.

### ***Former eastern Sudan rebels suspend leader***

**(Reuters)** — Former rebels from eastern Sudan on Saturday said they had suspended their own leader, accusing him of splitting their political party along tribal lines.

The move raised the spectre of renewed instability in Sudan's impoverished yet resource-rich east and came days after warnings that the eastern fighters might return to war unless they received funding and training promised by a peace deal.

That agreement ended a decade of low-level revolt in a region that is home to Sudan's largest gold mine, its main port and major oil pipeline.

The eastern conflict has been overshadowed by Sudan's more high-profile conflicts between its north and south and more recently in the western region of Darfur.

Amna Dirar, a senior member of the Eastern Front that includes members of the non-Arab Beja tribe and Arab Rashaidiya tribe, said a group of party officials and military chiefs suspended the membership of chairman Musa Mohamed Ahmed at a meeting on Friday.

Ahmed, who did not attend the meeting, was not immediately available for comment.

Dirar said they made the decision after Ahmed organized a separate conference for the Beja Congress, an organization predominantly representing the Beja tribe.

"He is considering himself the leader of two political parties (the Eastern Front and the Beja Congress)," said Dirar.

"This is not acceptable ... The Eastern Front was formed to represent all the people of the east, whatever their ethnic group. He has split us."

She accused Ahmed of trying to concentrate power in the Beja Congress and using the conference to form policies that would then be pushed through the coalition Eastern Front party.

The Front joined a national coalition government after a peace deal in 2006 that saw Dirar appointed as a presidential adviser and Ahmed as a presidential assistant.

Dirar said she had taken over as head of the Eastern Front until the matter could be discussed at another party meeting.

"We have frozen his membership ... What happens next is up to him," she said, referring to Ahmed.

"The Eastern Front will continue with members of the Beja Congress and work as one party. Up to now we have not had a meeting as the Eastern Front to agree on our activities. We don't have a strategy, no clear objectives."

There have been growing signs of Sudan's political parties regrouping ahead of national elections promised for 2009.

Dirar last week warned that easterners might be driven to fight again if Khartoum failed to deliver a promised \$600 million development package and re-train eastern soldiers.

### ***GoSS Earmarks \$65 m. for Electricity Sector***

**(Sudan Vision)** GoSS Minister of Energy and Mining Dr. John Luke stated that his government has allocated a sum of \$65 million for the electricity sector, revealing that tenders are being floated for the import of new generators for Juba and that the Intelligence and Security Service has delivered to generators. Dr. Luke disclosed in an interview he held with Ajas Al-Hurria daily that the Ministry will opt of generating power from waterfalls abundant in the South, pointing that expert international houses are presently bent on studying means of utilizing these power sources. He reiterated that as soon as these projects are completed, the South could export power to neighbouring countries.

He further stated that though most of Sudan's oil is extracted in the South all the manufacturing processes are carried out in the North. He accordingly called for refineries to be constructed in the South to ensure its requirements of oil by-products, adding that GoSS is concerned with development of oil production sites. He cited that all the licence contracts of companies working in those sites have a provision obliging companies to cater for development of the regions they operate in

### ***As food aid floods into Sudan, Khartoum reaps rich rewards from bumper crops in exports***

**(SCOTLAND on SUNDAY)** EVEN as it receives desperately needed food aid from international donors; Sudan is growing and selling vast quantities of its own crops to other countries. The Khartoum regime is capitalizing on high global food prices at a time when millions of people in its war-riddled region of Darfur barely have enough to eat.

In the bone-dry desert, where desiccated donkey carcasses line the road, huge green fields suddenly materialize. Beans, Wheat, Sorghum, Melons, Peanuts, Pumpkins and Aubergines. They are all grown here, part of an ambitious government plan for Sudanese self-sufficiency, creating giant mechanized farms that rise out of the sand.

But how much of the bonanza is getting back to the hungry Sudanese, like the 2.5 million driven into camps in Darfur? And why is a country that exports so many of its own crops receiving more free food than anywhere else in the world, especially when the Sudanese government is blamed for creating the crisis in the first place?

African countries that rely on donated food usually cannot produce enough on their own. Somalia, Ethiopia, Niger and Zimbabwe are all recent examples of how war, natural disasters or gross mismanagement can cut deep into food production, pushing millions of people to the brink

of starvation.

But in Sudan, there seem to be plenty of calories to go around. The country is already growing wheat for Saudi Arabia, sorghum for camels in the United Arab Emirates and vine-ripened tomatoes for the Jordanian army. Now the government is ploughing £2.5bn into new agribusiness projects, many of them to produce food for export.

Take sorghum, a staple of the Sudanese diet, typically eaten in flat, spongy bread. Last year, the US government, as part of its response to the emergency in Darfur, shipped in 283,000 tons of sorghum, at high cost, from as far away as Houston. Oddly enough, that is about the same amount that Sudan exported, according to UN officials. This year, Sudanese companies, including many that are linked to the government in Khartoum, are on track to ship out twice that amount, even as the United Nations is being forced to cut rations to Darfur.

Eric Reeves, a professor at Smith College in the United States and an outspoken activist who has written frequently on the Darfur crisis, called this anomaly "one of the least reported and most scandalous features of the Khartoum regime's domestic policies". It was emblematic, he said, of the Sudanese government's strategy to manipulate "national wealth and power to further enrich itself and its cronies, while the marginalised regions of the country suffer from terrible poverty".

Aid groups gave up long ago on the Sudanese government helping the people of Darfur. The nation's president, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, has been accused of masterminding genocide in Darfur – UN officials have said that if they do not bring food into the region, the government surely will not.

That leaves the United Nations and western aid groups feeding more than three million residents of Darfur. But the lifeline is fraying. Security is deteriorating. Aid trucks are getting hijacked nearly every day and deliveries are being made less frequently. The result: less food and soaring malnutrition rates, particularly among children.

On top of this is the broader problem of trying to find affordable grains on the world market when prices are higher than they have been in decades.

"Sudan could be self-sufficient," said Kenro Oshidari, the director of the UN World Food Programme in Sudan. "It does have the potential to be the breadbasket of Africa."

Sudanese officials say that is precisely their goal, and they deny that Sudanese agribusiness is being built at the expense of their own people.

They say they are simply trying to build up their economy. They say they know what it is like to be vilified, having been squeezed by American sanctions for more than a decade. And it could get worse, with Bashir facing genocide charges at the International Criminal Court in connection with the massacres in Darfur.

"Sanctions are never far from our mind," said Al-Amin Dafa Allah, chairman of the National Assembly's agricultural committee. "We're trying to minimize our reliance on the outside."

In fact, part of the reason relief agencies bring their own food into Sudan stems from the American policy of giving crops, not money, as foreign aid.

Many European countries, by contrast, just give the World Food Programme cash, which can be



used to buy food locally. Last year, the programme bought 117,000 tons of Sudanese sorghum. UN officials said they would like to buy more, but they had had run-ins with Sudanese suppliers who could make more money with exports.

"We don't get discounts," said Emilia Casella, a spokeswoman for the World Food Programme.

For now, Sudanese officials seem more interested in doing business with their new partners in the Middle East. Sudan is the largest country in Africa, at nearly one million square miles. It has 208 million acres of arable land, with less than a quarter being cultivated. The Sudanese government is striking deals with Arab countries just across the Red Sea: the Arab countries bring the money, the soil scientists and the \$200,000 tractors. Sudan supplies the land.

"Our country is small and dry and mountainous," said Man Shuqwara, the Jordanian director of a Jordanian-run farm in northern Sudan that grows wheat, beans, potatoes, onions, tomatoes, oranges and bananas. "By logic we would come to Sudan."

That same logic is attracting big money from Saudi Arabia. About an hour's drive north of the Jordanian farm, near the town of Ed Damer, is a huge new £100m project to grow wheat in what now looks like a 10-mile-wide sandbox. Some of the wheat will stay in Sudan; some will be shipped to Saudi Arabia.

A fleet of new John Deere tractors is already lined up for harvest time. A worker on the farm whispered that the tractors had been sneaked into Sudan through Saudi Arabia because of the American trade sanctions.

Sudan's overall economic strategy is to diversify from oil, which it began exporting in 1999, and to focus more closely on the traditional engine of the country's economy – agriculture. More than 80% of the work force is engaged in raising animals or farming of one sort or another.

"Our sesame oil is the best in the world," said Al-Amin, the agriculture committee chairman. "And it's organic."

But make no mistake – much of Sudan is still a blazing hot, cruelly barren landscape. Yet at certain places, especially along the Nile River, it is as green and lush as Europe, with the three crucial ingredients for growing things: land, labour and, most important, water.

The Nile and its tributaries flow more than 2,000 miles across Sudan, bringing the silt-rich, chocolate-coloured water right to the fields. The British colonial government capitalised on this, building a dam in 1925 on the Blue Nile, one of the two main sources of the Nile River, and a network of canals. Today, that project, called the Gezira Scheme, has thousands of miles of canals irrigating nearly 2.5 million acres of farms.

"We have water 24-7," said Siddig Eissa Ahmed, the director of the Gezira Scheme, which is government-run, like much of Sudanese agribusiness.

Another dark side to all the development is displacement. The conflict in Darfur, in western Sudan, is largely about grazing rights and watering holes – and the government's brutal counterinsurgency policies in response to an armed rebellion. So far, the most ambitious agricultural projects have avoided the area altogether, and instead are concentrated in the centre and northern parts of the country.

Even so, development in Sudan often means uprooting other rural subsistence farmers for

large-scale commercial projects, said Alex de Waal, a Sudan scholar at the Social Science Research Council in New York.

"Smallholder food production goes down, commercial food production goes up, and food relief serves as a subsidy to this transformation, keeping the displaced alive," he said.

The Sudanese government is widely blamed for running many of the displaced people in Darfur off their farms, making them reliant on handouts.

The last time the government gave the World Food Programme any food for Darfur was in 2006. It was 22,000 tons of Sudanese-grown sorghum. It was a fraction of what the people needed, UN officials said, and some of the grain was rancid and infested with weevils.