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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

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- We will expel international troops if warrant of arrest is issued against me – Bashir (All dailies)
- We will not hand over any Sudanese national to the ICC – Bashir (Sudan Radio)
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- Sudanese court sentences 12 Darfur rebels to death (local dailies/ST)
- SPLM, NCP iron out differences in Southern Kordofan (Khartoum Monitor)
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- China appoints a consul in Juba (ST)
- Turkish lawyers demand official probe into Sudan president (ST)
- Sudan's Bashir says strengthened by ICC arrest bid (Reuters)
- Janjaweed militiamen gang-rape 3 Darfur women: IDP spokesman (ST)
- Sudanese army conduct exercises with heavy weapons near Khartoum (ST)

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Highlights

Local Arabic and English language press

We will expel international troops if warrant of arrest is issued against me – Bashir

Local daily Arabic newspapers of today reported that President Bashir has reiterated Sudan rejection to deal with ICC, declaring that if necessary he would fight a war to protect sovereignty adding that he would not resign. The President said he would ask the African peacekeepers in Darfur {some newspapers say international peacekeeping troops} to leave the country if a warrant of arrest is issued for him. He said he would continue traveling abroad and would not care about the ICC. The President said the fate of his presidential post would be decided by the Sudanese people in the upcoming elections and declared that he would not handover Ahmed Haroun because nothing was proved against him. President Bashir made the statements in an interview to Al-Arabia TV.

“ICC indictment is strengthening the internal front of the Sudanese people” he declared. “In Sudan we apply Islamic Sharia laws and persons accused are tried accordingly. We can not allow trial of a Sudanese national by non-Islamic court,” he said.

Bashir said he would continue to go overseas and would not fear to follow suit of leaders arrested and charged by other international courts, such as Bosnian Serb war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic and former Liberian President Charles Taylor.” We are very confident of our internal front and we don’t give a damn about the precedents set by those going to court,” he said. “I am not concerned about traveling, we maintain good relations with a number of countries which has no relations with the ICC,” he added.

The President has also rejected criticism of the death sentences issued against those who had participated in the attack on Omdurman. “They attack the capital, aided by Chad. There was loss of lives among SAF, Police and NISS. Civilians were terrorized and public property destroyed. It was a crime,” he said. The President declined to answer questions about rape in Darfur saying the Sudanese customs and traditions do not allow such acts which he described as allegations by circles hostile to Sudan.

He rejected claims that SAF continues attacking civilians and destroying villages in Darfur.

We will not hand over any Sudanese national to the ICC – Bashir

Sudan Radio broadcast today that President Bashir at press conference in Istanbul yesterday reiterated Sudan rejection to handover any Sudanese national for trial abroad, affirming the efficiency and the good reputation of the Sudanese Judiciary at the international and regional levels and its capability to try any accused. He has blamed UN for delaying deployment of the hybrid force saying the African TCC made available the required troops but UN failed to transport them. However, he has affirmed Sudan Government commitment to cooperate to dislodge obstacles impeding the deployment.

The west is seeking to weaken Bashir to replace him – Nafie

Al-Sahafa said the Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie has accused USA, Britain and France of hatching conspiracy, through ICC, to weaken Bashir to replace him during the upcoming elections.

Nafie made the statement while addressing yesterday hundreds of NCP northern supporters at the NCP HQ.

Sudanese court sentences 12 Darfur rebels to death

Local dailies and Sudan Tribune carried reports stating that 12 rebels more were sentenced to death by a Sudanese court Wednesday over rebel attack on the Sudanese capital on May 10. Today's verdict brings to 50 the number condemned to death by hanging.

Amnesty International, joining its voice to UN envoy to Sudan and lawyers, criticized the lack of legal proceedings guarantees saying the defendants had access to the lawyers for the first time during the trial while they were tortured and forced to confess to crimes.

A Sudanese judge handed down death sentences against 12 people arrested following an attack by the Justice and Equality Movement on Khartoum and acquitted four other suspects. Judge Hafez Ahmed Abdallah of Omdurman special court further transferred the case of four suspects to juvenile courts saying they were under the age of 18.

The judge declared them guilty under Sudanese criminal and counter-terrorism legislation of involvement in the May attack on Khartoum.

Adam Bakr, a Defence lawyer criticized the "expected sentences" and said he will appeal it. The coordinator of the Defence team, Amin Mekki Maddani regretted that four out of the seven judges on the Constitutional Court had voted to reject their challenge against the special courts on Tuesday.

"We believe that the terrorism law is unconstitutional, that it is against the bill of rights, against international conventions and against the code of criminal procedure," he told Reuters
Last Monday Amnesty International accused Sudan of detaining hundreds of Darfuri without charges saying authorities prepare to try them in what it termed "sham courts". The organization urged Khartoum to reveal the whereabouts of all individuals held in the context of the 10 May investigation.

Yesterday JEM released a statement denouncing the death verdicts declaring it demonstrates the military approach adopted by government despite "peace talk rhetoric". The rebel movement further threatened to repeat its attack on Khartoum.

SPLM, NCP iron out differences in Southern Kordofan

Khartoum Monitor stated that the Spokesperson for the Government of Southern Kordofan State, Ali Kuku Kinda said differences between NCP and SPLM have been resolved as the state was divided into NCP and SPLM areas and others still run jointly.

"All areas are now under the control of the Government of the State following the visit of the presidential committee headed by the Presidential Affairs Minister Bakri Hassan Saleh," he said.

Massacre in southern Sudan

Al-Wifaq carried a report that unidentified armed group attacked a truck in Jimaiza area killing

about 140 passengers including children and women. The truck was en route from Juba to Bor yesterday when came under attack. Another vehicle was also attacked, two passengers killed and others run for safety. SPLA troops clashed with armed group which is yet to be identified.

Websites/International Headlines

China appoints a consul in Juba

(Sudan Tribune) Chinese government has opened a new consulate in Juba the capital of the semi-autonomous southern Sudan where Beijing invests in oil industry.

Sudanese foreign minister Deng Alor on Wednesday met with the newly appointed Chinese General Consul to the government of southern Sudan to be based in Juba, in the presence of the Chinese ambassador to the Sudan.

The Chinese president Hu Jintao during his last year visit to Sudan had pledged to open Juba consulate.

Alor has welcomed the appointment of the new consul to Southern Sudan saying this step reflects the intimate relations between the Sudan and China and that it would boost relations between the two countries.

The minister reviewed with the consul fields of mutual interest in a way that would boost promotion of bilateral relations.

The Chinese Consul to southern Sudan will leave for Juba next week to meet with officials of the government of southern Sudan and take up his mission from there.

Turkish lawyers demand official probe into Sudan president

(Sudan Tribune) A number of Turkish Human Rights lawyers filed an application with the Ministry of Justice demanding immediate investigation of genocide allegations made against Sudanese president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir.

The lawyers said that Article 13 of the Turkish Penal code empowers the general prosecutor to launch a probe against any foreigner who is suspected of committing genocide and crimes against humanity.

“Whether it is the Turkish president or the US president; anyone who commits these heinous crimes must be prosecuted” Orcun Ulusoy with the Human Rights Agenda Association told Sudan Tribune by phone from Ankara.

“This is not a request to arrest Al-Bashir. It is simply demanding an investigation in light of the allegations brought against him by the International Criminal Court (ICC)” he said.

Even if an arrest warrant is issued Turkey has no obligation to apprehend the Sudanese head of state since they are not members of The Hague based court.

UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1593 referring the situation in Darfur to the ICC urged but did not mandate non-state parties to cooperate.

Ulusoy called on the Turkish government "to show leadership in prosecuting the crimes committed in Darfur".

"Turkey has a chance to lead the world in showing that those suspected of genocide have no hiding place" he stressed.

Last week Human Rights Watch (HRW) issued a statement expressing concern "that Turkey chose to welcome al-Bashir".

Turkish President Abdullah Gul said his Sudanese counterpart that "human suffering agitates all, no matter which religion, ethnicity or language those who suffer belong to".

He further added "I told the president [Al-Bashir] that the Sudanese government should work hard" to end the violence.

Sudan's Bashir says strengthened by ICC arrest bid

(Sudan Tribune/Reuters) — Sudanese President Omer Hassan al-Bashir said the International Criminal Court's attempt to prosecute him for genocide and war crimes had only strengthened his position and he had no fear of extradition.

The court's chief prosecutor last month requested an arrest warrant for Bashir on charges of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur.

But Bashir, in his first interview with an international news agency since then, told Reuters the move was strengthening his hand and that his country would fight the decision of court prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo.

"The decision of the ICC prosecutor is already solidifying our internal front, the internal front of our Sudanese people, and that is the source of our power and we will fight their actions," Bashir said in Istanbul on Wednesday.

Bashir, who rarely gives interviews, looked relaxed on the last day of his three-day trip to Turkey, his first abroad since the prosecutor's announcement. The visit has added to doubts over whether other countries would be ready to arrest Bashir even if a warrant is issued.

African and Arab states want the court moves put on hold, fearing they would only make it harder to bring peace to Darfur. Oil producing Sudan's close ally China has also voiced concern at the attempt to put Bashir on trial.

Bashir is the first sitting head of state to be pursued by the International Criminal Court. NATO member Turkey has not ratified the treaty forming the court, but has been under pressure to do so as an aspiring EU member.

Bashir said he would continue to go overseas and did not fear following in the footsteps of leaders arrested and charged by other international courts, such as Bosnian Serb war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic and former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

"We are very confident of our internal front and we don't give a damn about the precedents set by those going to court," said a smiling Bashir, sporting a diamond-studded watch.

"We are not concerned about traveling, ourselves, we have good relations with a number of countries that do not have relations with the ICC," he said.

Bashir dismissed the idea of taking any action to extradite other Sudanese officials accused of

war crimes by the court or of stepping down if he faces an arrest warrant.

"We are not taking any decisions regarding the actions of the ICC. We don't care about the decision of the ICC. It is in the end a decision of the Sudanese people to decide in the next election," he said.

"And we will refuse to give up Ahmed Haroun, because nothing was found against him."

The court indicted State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs Ahmed Haroun and militia leader Ali Kushayb for war crimes last year, but Sudan has said they will not be handed over for trial.

Sudan plans elections in 2009 following a landmark peace deal in 2005 to end civil war between the northern based government and southern rebels, although the United Nations has expressed doubt over whether the ballot will be held on time.

Bashir rejected accusations that government forces were still attacking civilians and destroying villages in Darfur. He dismissed as propaganda Reuters video footage which showed militia carrying army identification in burned villages.

"We have a long history of fabricated tapes by journalists who use people as actors. We have these tapes. This is not evidence," he said..

Janjaweed militiamen gang-rape 3 Darfur women: IDP spokesman

(Sudan Tribune) – Three Darfuri women were gang-raped after they left their camps to gather firewood, a spokesperson for Darfur displaced said today.

"This happens at a time when government officials claim that Darfur is enjoying security. The crimes and human right violations continue" Hussein Abu-Sharati the spokesperson of Darfur displaced and refugees at the Kalma camp in South Darfur told Sudan Tribune.

Abu-Sharati said that the women were intercepted by a group of Janjaweed militiamen who were present in the area of Wadi Bargo in South Darfur.

He listed the names of the victims as Tayba Adam Al-Tahir 15 years old; Aicha Youssef 17 years old; Kaltouma Salih 55 years old.

"The three women are at the Kass hospital in South Darfur in case anyone has doubts" he added.

The Janjaweed is a heavily armed militia blamed for waging a campaign of rape, killing and pillage in Darfur.

Rights groups and Western governments say that Khartoum used the Janjaweed as a proxy militia against Darfur rebels and civilians suspected of rebel sympathies. However the government denies this and says that the Janjaweed are outlaws.

Abu-Sharati said that an Egyptian officer with the United Nations - African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) was notified of the incident "but took no action".

“We also informed the UN officer in charge of humanitarian aid to be our witness. There can be no peace in Darfur without giving us security” he said.

In a separate incident Abu-Sharati said that Sudanese security officers arrested families of the IDP's who came to visit them.

“Last week they took away around 73 people. They stopped cars at checkpoints leading to Kalma and Abu-Shouk camps and ask passengers to get out. They picked a number of them and took them to an unknown location” Abu-Sharati said.

“Their families know nothing about them. The Sudanese authorities must release them and guarantee their legal rights” he added.

