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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

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Highlights

Local Arabic and English language press

Sudan seeking to block extension for Sima Samar

Akhir Lahza reported that Sudan would push for termination of Sima Samar's mandate during UNHRC meeting in Geneva 8-23 September. In press statements, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ali Al-Sadiq affirmed Khartoum's rejection to the use of human rights to interfere in Sudan's internal affairs. He said Sudan would rely on its African and Arab friends in the UNHRC to block extension of Sima Samar's mandate as Rapporteur of human rights for Sudan after the human rights situation in Sudan has improved. Sudan delegation to the forthcoming meeting is expected to react to the Samar's report on human rights in Sudan to be submitted to the meeting.

Government agrees to AU/ UN observation for Darfur trials

Sudan Vision carried a report stating that Sudan Government has agreed to the suggestion of Arab League Secretary General Amro Musa which recommends that AU and UN monitor Darfur trials. Sudan ambassador in Cairo Abdelmoniem Mabrook revealed that Sudan agrees to AU/ UN observation for Darfur trials.

He stated that Sudanese Minister of Justice has appointed general prosecutor for Darfur crime which is an implementation of Arab Foreign ministers' proposal.

Foreign Ministry discloses difficulties ahead of UN-AU mediator mission

Khartoum Monitor reported that the Foreign Ministry spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq said the UN-AU chief mediator might encounter difficulties in his Darfur peace mediation mission including the non-signatory movements who are against negotiations and based in Europe.

"The chief mediator has no means of pressurizing them," he added. He told journalists that the most important thing the government gives to the mediator to facilitate his mission is the flexible position of the government which facilitates the movements of leaders in Darfur and that the government does not put preconditions for negotiations with non-signatory movements.

He said the two envoys Salim Ahmed Salim and Jan Eliasson exerted appreciable efforts to bring the government and the movements to the negotiation table but they had encountered some difficulties particularly that the major powers did not meet requirements for political settlement.

Bassole begins his mission by meeting with Kiir, Nafie and Alor

Al-Sahafa stated that the government said the success of the mission of UN-AU mediator Bassole depends on response of the major Darfur movements to the requirements for peaceful solution. The government said DPA would be the foundation for any negotiations and no provision of the agreement would be amended.

According to diplomatic sources, Bassole will begin his mission by meeting on Tuesday with FVP Salva Kiir, Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie, Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman and Foreign Minister Deng Alor.

President Bashir to attend signing ceremony of contracts in Juba

(SUNA) - President Bashir is to attend in Juba Wednesday the signing ceremony of contracts for Sawa Dam in Wau, Kenti Dam in Torit and Baraj Dam in Juba, signaling the start of implementation of dams projects in southern Sudan at the cost of 600 million dollars in its first phase.

The Executive Director of Dams Implementation Unit, Osama Abdallah, said in a statement to SUNA that the dams whose study contracts would be signed would have a tremendous effect on the production of electricity to meet the development requirements as well as on the improvement of the socio-economic life. Abdallah explained that all the projects would be funded by the Dams Implementation Unit.

SPLM and JEM sign memo of understanding

Al-Ayyam carried a report stating that SPLM and JEM signed a memorandum of understanding two days ago in Washington to resolve Darfur crisis. According to the memorandum, the two sides agreed on SPLM's proposal on the need for a meeting between FVP Salva Kiir and JEM leader Khalid Ibrahim in Juba in the near future and the unification of the movements to resolve the problem. Pagan Amum signed for SPLM and spokesperson Ahmed Hussein signed for JEM.

Ugandan rebel leader sets conditions for signing final peace agreement

The Juba Post reported that the LRA chief negotiator David Matsanga on Saturday said that the LRA leader, Joseph Kony will not sign a final peace agreement with the Ugandan government until the ICC drops the arrest warrant it issued in 2005.

"Kony is ready and will agree to a final peace agreement with the Ugandan government provided that the ICC warrants are dropped," he said.

Websites/International Headlines

Sudan calls on UNSC to avert possible arrest warrant for Al-Bashir

(**Sudan Tribune**) – The Sudanese government said it will ask the UN Security Council (UNSC) to nullify the application by the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) requesting an arrest warrant for Al-Bashir.

Sudan's envoy to the UN Abdel-Haleem Abdel-Mahmood also told Sudan official news agency (SUNA) that Khartoum wants an "official apology to the people and the leadership [of Sudan]".

Abdel-Mahmood said the allegations were masterminded by "circles hostile to Sudan aimed at smearing the country's reputation and hinder its development and democratic transformation".

The Sudanese diplomat said that Africa, Islamic world, Arabs, Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and other regional organizations are strongly behind Khartoum.

He further said that all these groups are in contact with the UNSC "to correct the situation" created by the ICC move.

Sudanese officials have as of late been making statements saying that a suspension will not be

acceptable and demanded a cancellation of charges against Al-Bashir.

However the UNSC does not appear ready to address the ICC issue at the moment due to opposition of veto wielding members of the council particularly Western countries.

Sudan president faces condemnation over 'expensive' gift to Egypt soccer team

(Sudan Tribune) – The Sudanese president Omer Bashir came under fire following gifts he awarded to members of the Egyptian soccer team in honor of their achievement in winning the 2008 African Cup of Nations held in Ghana earlier this year.

The pro-government Al-Rayaam daily reported last week that the gift included 35 vehicles, manufactured at Giad Motor, among other gifts. The cars will be shipped via Port of Aqaba in Jordan.

There has also been conflicting reports on the amount of the monetary gift disbursed to the Egyptians in sealed envelopes during the ceremony. A sports editor in a Sudanese newspaper told Sudan Tribune that the cash prize was \$25,000 for each player while others put the figure at \$15,000.

The news has been widely circulated throughout the Sudanese cyber world and was subject to unprecedented condemnation mixed with bitterness from people who considered the gift inconsistent with the conditions the country is going through.

One Sudanese reader from Saudi Arabia commenting on the news article at Al-Rayaam said that the reward “will make Al-Bashir lose much of the sympathy he received following Ocampo’s allegations”.

Many Sudanese people think the ceremony was held as part of a ‘public relations’ campaign for Al-Bashir after the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo requested an arrest warrant for him.

“If the match was held before Ocampo the players [Egyptian] would not have received any cars” one Sudanese commented.

“The country’s budget and its management [utilized] all for the purpose of countering Ocampo’s move...You [Al-Bashir] will be asked about this money you squandered on soccer when people are suffering from malaria, Schistosomiasis and pregnant women die from lack of food and medicine. People are living without shelter or drinking water and substantial number of people have cancer” Samir Badr from Saudi Arabia wrote.

Samir Zaher, president of the Egyptian Football Association (EFA), voiced his support to Al-Bashir on his row with the ICC during the ceremony.

Ibrahim Abdalla Bagal Srage a Darfuri student activist said that the money could have been used to address many pressing issues in the country.

“The children of Darfur are stranded at camps in the desert. People in East Sudan are dying from tuberculosis and Southerners perishing from starvation.” he said.

“How can a president of a country donate million of dollars to an Egyptian team while his people are sick and hungry?” he added.

Fathi Al-Sideeg an accountant in Saudi Arabia told Sudan Tribune that the reward demonstrates “mismanagement and incompetence in running the country”.

“It is an attempt to beautify the face of the regime and building fences with Egypt, our gate to the world” he added.

The move by Al-Bashir even shocked some of his supporters and sympathizers.

Mohamed Hamid Goma’a an editor at the pro-government Sudanese Media Center (SMC) wrote a polite criticism echoing the need for Al-Bashir to be prudent with money.

“Some students have been expelled because the school administration asked them for electricity fees and their parents have been bitter because they have nowhere to sit [in classes]” he said.

“President Omer Hassan Al-Bashir is stronger when he is close to people and possesses a charismatic appeal but not through these schemes” he added.

Goma’a blamed unidentified assistants of Al-Bashir for “misleading” him.

Anwar Dafa-Alla an Electrical & Computer Engineering PhD candidate in South Korea uploaded a series of videos to YouTube analyzing different aspects of the reward.

Dafa-Alla has personally met with Al-Bashir during his visit to Seoul last May and even presented him with a symbolic gift on behalf of Sudanese expatriates in South Korea.

“I expected Islamic scholars to come out and say that the money wasted is ill-gotten. \$350,000 in gifts to the Egyptian team at a time when Sudan is in desperate need....I was genuinely waiting to see someone telling him [Al-Bashir] fear Allah Omer. You belong to the Islamic movement. How can you do something like this” he said.

“If they didn’t say it to your face Mr. President I will. Fear Allah Omer. Fear Allah. You belong to the Islamic movement and held you conference recently. You spoke about Islam and related stuff. What you are doing has nothing to do with Islam. Hear it from me today before you do so in your grave” Dafa-Alla added.

The computer science major also spoke sarcastically and questioned why people should take part in the “million signature” campaign planned by the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) to condemn the ICC accusations against Al-Bashir.

“There are many questions that need answers particularly if it was the president and his corrupt entourage who led the country into a dark hole...To have corruption start from the president of the republic is unacceptable” Dafa-Alla said.

In one of his videos he made mathematical calculations on the cost associated with the rewards and how it could have been spent elsewhere on specific items.

Some Sudanese people even went as far as saying that the Egyptian team lost intentionally to please the Sudanese government and its generous president.

The African champions on Wednesday lost 4-0 to their Sudanese counterparts in the warm-up

match held in Khartoum today. This is Egypt's first defeat by their southern neighbor in 33 years.

The Egyptian player Mahmoud Fathallah scored own goal in the first half to give Sudan an early lead.

The Sudanese government has so far maintained silence and did not respond to the criticism.

However during the ceremony there was no mention of the vehicles awarded or the amount of money. Some have said this was done to pacify the public opinion.

For now the ceremony and the gifts have undoubtedly shaken Al-Bashir's image in the eyes of his people making him appear as "insensitive" to the plight of the population particularly the Darfur refugees who were the focus of all criticism directed at the Sudanese head of state.

Sudan political party commission call for martial law after Al-Bashir arrest warrant

(Sudan Tribune) – The commission for political parties in Sudan urged President Bashir to impose martial law if the International Criminal Court (ICC) judges issue an arrest warrant for him.

Aboud Gabir head of the commission told Sudan official news agency (SUNA) that martial law may be necessary "to prevent any infiltration that threatens the security situation in the country".

The Sudanese constitution confers the power of declaring emergency law on Al-Bashir with the approval of his 1st Vice President Salva Kiir and the national assembly. The measures that can be taken during imposition of martial laws include "partial suspension of the bill of rights".

The time period for the duration of martial laws is 30 days unless the Sudanese parliament approves an extension.

Gabir said that the Sudanese people "are now aware of the international conspiracy and utilizing international justice through the ICC".

"The people of Sudan will not stand with their hands tied behind their backs in front of international injustice" he said.

He also called on Sudanese political parties to support the government of national unity "to build a strong Sudan".

JEM delegation to leave for Juba to meet SPLM officials

(Miraya FM) JEM delegation will leave for Juba in the coming month to meet SPLM officials as part of efforts to address Darfur crisis.

JEM advisor Dr Gebrel told Miraya that a delegation of JEM met with SPLM in Washington.

He added that the SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amun will meet with the Chairman of JEM Dr Khalial later.

On its part, the SLM of Abdul Wahid faction confirmed that, it did not meet with the SPLM members in London, but it is expected any time.

The spokesman of the movement Yahya Polad on his comment on the "Sudan people's initiative", said he considered it as a protection to the president al Bashir after he was charged with war crimes in Darfur.

He told Miraya FM that the initiative is a waste of time.

Khartoum is witnessing nowadays a diplomatic movement, to form final thoughts and opinions about the "Sudan people's initiative", which was proposed by the NCP, in coordination with some political parties, to find a solution for the Darfur crisis.

Uganda rebels accuse south Sudan of attack

(Reuters) - A spokesman for Uganda's fugitive northern rebels accused south Sudanese troops of attacking guerrilla positions on Sunday on the Congo border, preventing a peace meeting.

Officials from the South Sudanese Liberation Army (SPLA) could not immediately be reached for comment, and there was no independent confirmation of the clash.

"Sometime last week there was a skirmish after SPLA attacked our positions," David Nyekorach-Matsanga, a spokesman for Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels, said by telephone from the south Sudanese capital Juba.

"We thought that was a mistake. But today they repeated it when they attacked LRA at Nabanga."

He gave no other details, but said a planned meeting in the area between LRA representatives and their elusive leader Joseph Kony had been cancelled.

A two-decade civil war in northern Uganda forced 2 million people from their homes and also destabilized neighbouring parts of oil-producing south Sudan and mineral-rich eastern Congo. Kony is wanted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

Two years of peace talks collapsed in April when he failed to appear on the border to sign a final peace deal.

At an African Union summit in Egypt last month, the top U.S. diplomat for Africa warned that the LRA leader was re-arming. (Reporting by Frank Nyakairu; editing by Daniel Wallis and Tim Pearce)

Hopes of Ugandan peace deal fade again

(The Earth Times) Kampala - The Ugandan government has said it did not send a delegation to peace talks with rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), killing any hope that a final peace agreement could be signed Sunday. United Nations Special Envoy and former Mozambican president Joachim Chissano, who was supposed to mediate in the talks, traveled to the southern Sudan capital Juba as a precursor to attending the meeting, but the journey appears to have been in vain.

"Honorable Chissano is already in Juba. We cannot go to Juba. We cannot resume the peace process," Ugandan Deputy Defence Minister Ruth Nankabirwa told Deutsche Presse-Agentur dpa.

The talks were scheduled to be held Sunday in a village near Sudan's border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The LRA, a self-professed Christian fundamentalist rebel outfit, began battling the Ugandan government in the mid-1980s, killing and mutilating thousands of civilians and displacing close to two million others.

Kampala mid-2006 opened up talks with the rebels, who fled to the north-east of the DRC late 2004.

The two sides signed a ceasefire agreement in August 2006, but the LRA refused to sign the final peace deal in April.

The LRA wants the International Criminal Court (ICC) to withdraw arrest warrants it slapped on five of its commanders, including leader Joseph Kony, for war crimes.

Obama's choice of Biden as VP is Sudan's NCP worst nightmare

(Sudan Tribune) – The Sudanese ruling National Congress Party (NCP) are likely to be very concerned by Barack Obama's pick of Senator Joe Biden as his running mate.

The Democratic presidential contender made the announcement of Biden as his Vice President over the weekend ending weeks of speculation.

The NCP considers the Democratic Party generally hostile to them let alone a figure who was strong proponent of military intervention in the war ravaged region of Darfur.

Biden is the chairman of the foreign relations committee at the US senate and presided over many hearings discussing the situation in Darfur.

In April 2007 the aspiring presidential VP said that "it's time to put force on the table and use it".

Biden said that senior US military NATO officials in Europe told him that 2,500 U.S. troops could "radically change the situation on the ground [in Darfur]".

The Delaware senator was also a co-sponsor for a resolution asking for a no-fly zone over Darfur and Sudan Divestment Authorization Act.

"It is within our power to clip their wings. Yes, a no fly zone could make it more difficult for humanitarian groups to operate – so we should do everything possible to design it with their concerns in mind" Biden said last year.

"This is incredible what is happening and I promise you, we will all going to sit here 5-10 years from now and ask ourselves why didn't we do the things we can do?" he told the former US special envoy to Sudan Andrew Natsios in a hearing last year.

In September 2004 the US, in a unilateral move, officially labeled the conflict in Darfur as genocide.

Khartoum denies genocide and blames the Western media for exaggerating the four-year-old Darfur conflict. European governments are reluctant to use the term.

Sudan army kills 18 in Darfur camp clash - rebels

(Reuters) - Sudanese troops attacked a Darfur displaced persons camp on Monday, leaving up to 18 dead and scores wounded, rebel leaders and a camp resident said.

Kalma camp in South Darfur, home to some 90,000 people who have fled their homes during five years of fighting, has long been a centre of unrest.

The government has accused armed rebel supporters of taking refuge in Kalma while residents have accused government-backed militias of mounting a string of raids on the settlement.

Yahia El Bashir, the British-based spokesman for the arm of the rebel Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) led by Abdel Wahed Mohamed Ahmed al-Nur, said troops had gone into the camp to try to clear it of residents.

"This is a message of defiance to the international community. We call on the UNAMID peacekeepers to do their job and defend the IDPs (internally displaced persons)," he added. UNAMID, the joint U.N.-African Union peacekeeping force deployed in the vast desert region in west Sudan, has been severely hampered by shortages of equipment and troops.

Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir denies accusations that his forces are responsible for genocide in Darfur, and Arab and African states say moves by the International Criminal Court to indict him could hinder efforts to bring peace.

Leaders of two rebel factions told Reuters that soldiers in around 100 vehicles surrounded Kalma at 5 a.m. (0200 GMT) on Monday, then opened fire.

"I am inside the camp Kalma. Now there is still shooting," Abakr Suleiman, a senior tribal leader inside the settlement said at 10 a.m. "There is heavy shooting. They came into the camp and killed people. There are houses burning."

He said up to 18 people had been killed and an unknown number wounded. Other unconfirmed reports from rebel groups put the death count at around 50.

Ahmed Abdel Shafie, leader of one SLA faction, said: "The IDP are resisting, we are expecting casualties. They (the government of Sudan) want to demolish Kalma camp; they want to force people to leave."

No one was immediately available for comment from the Sudanese Armed Forces. UNAMID spokesman Kemal Saiki said he had received reports of shooting at Kalma, close to south Darfur's capital Nyala and officers had sent patrols to the area to check.

He said there were unconfirmed reports that there had been an exchange of fire and that government troops had tried to mount a "cordon and search" operation. The authorities have made unsuccessful attempts to disarm Kalma residents in the past.

The new joint U.N.-African Union mediator for Darfur, Djibril Bassole, was due to arrive in Khartoum on Monday to take up his position.

