

**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN****UNMIS**Media Headlines, 28 August 2007

(By Public Information Office)

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Highlights

UN/ Agencies

UN says concerned by Sudan's expulsion of CARE director

(*SudanTribune.com* – 27 Aug UNITED NATIONS) The United Nations humanitarian arm voiced serious concern today at reports that the Sudanese Government has ordered the Country Director of CARE, a large non-governmental organization (NGO), to leave the country within 72 hours.

Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes said in a statement that the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is in touch with all sides to try to resolve “any misunderstandings or miscommunication” about the activities of NGO workers in Sudan, especially the case of CARE’s John Barker.

There are currently about 12,300 aid workers in the war-torn western Sudanese region of Darfur, including almost 900 international staff. They provide assistance to an estimated 4.2 million people, including 2.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), suffering since 2003 from the deadly conflict between rebel groups, Government forces and allied Janjaweed militias.

Mr. Holmes, who is also Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, said CARE has operated in Sudan for 27 years and has provided food, health care and other relief items to some four million people in the last three years alone.

In May, the UN and Khartoum signed a joint communiqué to improve the administration of the humanitarian effort in Sudan, including by helping to secure visas and work permits for aid workers and by making it easier for relief goods to clear customs.

UN set to OK deployment to protect Darfur civilians in Chad

(*SudanTribune.com* – 27 Aug UNITED NATIONS) The U.N. Security Council is set to give the European Union and the U.N. a green light to prepare for a new deployment to help protect civilians in Chad and the Central African Republic caught in the spillover of the conflict in Darfur.

A council statement giving preliminary approval to the deployment of E.U. troops and U.N. police was expected to be read at a Security Council meeting Monday afternoon, council diplomats said.

The draft statement expresses the council’s readiness to authorize an international operation for a year to protect refugees, internally displaced people and civilians at risk in eastern Chad and the northeastern Central African Republic.

France’s new U.N. Ambassador, Jean-Maurice Ripert, whose country drafted the statement, expressed hope last week that the council’s approval would be followed by

adoption of a resolution before the E.U. Council of Ministers meets on Sept. 17 to make a final decision on the E.U. force.

Ripert said the deployment of E.U. troops and U.N. police will probably be followed by a U.N. peacekeeping operation.

France's Ripert said last week that "the humanitarian and security situation in Chad is very bad as the result of a spillover effect of the Darfur crisis."

The Security Council has already authorized deployment of a 26,000-strong joint African Union-U.N. force to help quell the violence in Darfur.

OCHA appeals to donors to provide needs of floods affected people

(*AlSudani*) UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has said that the UN appeals to the international community to provide the flood stricken population with urgent needs.

Statement issued by OCHA noted that the situation requires the provision of an estimated 19.4 dollar for UN run projects.

OCHA will hold later on Tuesday a press conference to appeal for donors to provide the required assistances.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

East Sudan rebel leaders join national government

(*SudanTribune.com* – 27 Aug. KHARTOUM) Leaders of the ex-rebel Eastern Front arrived in the Sudanese capital on Monday to take up positions in central government as agreed in a 2006 peace deal.

Hundreds of cheering Eastern Front supporters, from the non-Arab Beja and the Arab Rashaidiya tribes of Sudan's arid east turned out to greet them and hailed their arrival as the prelude to development in their impoverished region.

Sudanese Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha welcomed Front leaders to join the government in building a new phase of life without bloodshed.

The peace deal is the third forged between Khartoum and regional rebel groups in three years. The previous two are a still shaky deal between north and south, and the Darfur Peace Agreement, which has done little to quell four and a half years of violence in the far western region of Sudan.

Like the other deals, the latest agreement contains a power-sharing clause that gives the Front three high-ranking seats in Khartoum and a number of parliamentary seats.

SPLA denies having 30.000 troops in oil fields

(AlSudani) The SPLA has described allegations by SAF spokesperson about the presence of 30.000 soldiers from the SPLA around oil fields as “harming rumor”

SPLA Deputy Chief of staff Maj. Gen. Bior Ajong expressed astonishment over information on percentage of the redeployment of SPLA to the South border of 1950. He pointed out that these allegations were aimed at covering SAF violations to the security arrangement protocol by its continuous presence in the oil fields. He explained that the presence of the SPLA around the oil fields was limited and was represented in the part of the forces which were redeployed from East Sudan to the South.

Sudan ambassador to New York: government ready to begin talks on Darfur

(AlSudani) Sudan Permanent Delegate ambassador to the UN, Mahmoud Abdul Halim has emphasized Sudan’s readiness to start negotiations with non- signatories in the mid of the fasting month of Ramadan.

He indicated that efforts are currently under way to implement the SC resolution pertinent to the deployment of the hybrid forces in Darfur. He stressed that countries contributions to finance the hybrid operation will be finalized by the end of this month.

Strikingly, SPLM Relieves its Dynamic Federal Minister

(Sudan Vision) The statements, made by the SPLM Leadership member and the State Minister in the Ministry of Interior, Major General Aleu Ajang Aleu, commenting on the circumstances surrounding the helicopter crash that killed Late Dr. Garang in August 2005 have severely rocked the SPLM Leadership Bureau to the extent that it has recommended his removal from office.

In line with the domestic tension in that respect, Khartoum - Kampala relationships has also become tense as the said statements had provoked the Ugandan Government. In response to Ugandan stance, the First Vice President, First Lt. General Salva Kiir, dispatched a special envoy to Kampala to contain the crisis.

Were Eleu’s statements the first that touched the sensitive part of the Issue? Did they differ from the others statements on the subject?

Definitely, Eleu was not the first member in the SPLM to comment on the subject. Mama Rebecca- Garang’s widow- along with the Movement, ex-spokesman, Yasir Arman, has cast suspicions implying a plot behind Garang plane’s crash. While paying homage to Late Garang at New Site in South Sudan, the Ugandan President, Museveni himself, stated that Garang’s death could have been something other than a mere aviation accident.

Museveni statement evoked confusion within his own media organs and a reporter was detained for holding the Ugandan President responsible for Garang's death, saying that Museveni's plane that was boarded by Garang which eventually led to his death was an obsolete helicopter.

Sudan Government response to Museveni statement was severe to the extent that it raised queries as to why the Ugandan President had not promptly notified Sudan on the then unknown whereabouts of Garang's plane following its departure from Entebbe.

As such, though he had pointed a finger to the SPLM Leadership itself respecting the death of Dr. John Garang, Eleu Ajang was not the first to trigger the assassination hypothesis.

SPLM raises doubts on transparency in dealing with oil revenues

(Alwan) An SPLM leader and Deputy Speaker of the National Council, Atim Garang, has cast doubts on transparency of all measures taken by government in regard to oil exploration.

Garang statement comes following comments by the Minister of Energy and Mining who stressed transparency in all oil deals. Garang further asserted the absence of accountability and transparency in all stages of oil processing.

Military reinforcements to end banditry and armed attacks in South Kordofan

(AlAyam) Government of South Kordofan has provided military reinforcements to the Central Reserved Police to put an end to the banditry and armed attacks recently occurred in the state. Minister of Information and Culture and government spokesperson said that an armed group attacked a vehicle at al Tabon area affiliated to the forestry department saying that the forces present in the area chased the attackers and retrieved the vehicles. He revealed security arrangements were made to put an end to security attacks and instability.

New arrests in Kajabar

(AlAyam) Six persons opposing the construction of Kajabar dam were reportedly arrested by security authorities. The high committee opposing the construction of the dam, called on a statement for the immediate release for all detainees or sending them to stand fair trails.

Ministerial reshuffle in Blue Nile State soon

(AlAyam) The SPLM in Blue Nile State has disclosed its intention to reshuffle the State Cabinet bending the nomination of the NCP for its candidates. The SPLM Political Secretary in the State, Jaber Bakheit said that the SPLA is currently holding continuous meetings to name its nominees for the state new Government.

North/South Borders Demarcation Committee believes its decisions will assist in securing peace

(*AlWihda*) Chairman of the Technical Committee assigned to demark the border of 1.1.1956 between the North and the South Prof. Abdullah Alsadig Ali has confirmed the committee's keenness to come out with decisions which would assist in security, stability and reconciliation among the various Sudanese people.

SPLM: we are not renegotiating Abyie protocol

(*The Citizen*) Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) yesterday denied renegotiating any aspects of CPA with the national Congress Party (NCP), as it sought to stem accusations that the agreement reached by a committee trying to resolve the impasse was tantamount to a renegotiation of the peace agreement.

Abyie MP Arop Madut set off the volley of accusations when he said in July that the compromise reached by the two parties to establish Interim Administration in Abyie area, was not only a violation of the CPA, but also not in lines with people wishes.

Arop who talked to the Citizen newspaper during SPLM Interim National Council meeting said, they were insisting that, Abyie Administration should be based on the resolution provided in the CPA.

The minister added that the NCP was trying to run away from the provision showing it's reluctant to implement the entire agreement. NCP, Arop said have been avoiding the task by bringing up all sorts of excuses.

GoSS

GoSS may set up diplomatic mission in Nigeria

(*Alwan*) A Southern Sudan parliamentarian has hinted that the government of South Sudan (GOSS) may set up diplomatic missions in Nigeria and other African countries.

Peter Adok Niaba, who is a member of the Federal National Council, said that the Interim National Constitution and the Interim Constitution of South Sudan grant the GoSS jurisdictions to establish diplomatic economic relations with countries as well as regional and international organizations.

Niaba added that the regional cooperation Ministry at GoSS was assigned to look after the foreign relation without resorting to the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Accordingly the Goss has nominated representatives in a number of Eastern and Southern African countries. Thus nomination of similar ones in Western Africa is a matter of time" he said.

Darfur

AU envoy to Darfur angrily received in Nur's birthplace

(*SudanTribune.com* – 27 Aug. ZALENGEI) Thousands of Darfuris demonstrated angrily on Monday in Zalengei town to show African Union envoy Salim Ahmed Salim their despair over a peace process that has failed to bring security to western Sudan.

Salim traveled to Zalengei town as part of a tour of Darfur to get people's views on efforts to renew talks to end the 4-1/2 year war that has driven 2.5 million people from their homes.

Protests greeted him in the region which is the birthplace of rebel Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) founder and Chairman Abdel Wahid Mohamed el-Nur and hostile territory for the AU.

A breakaway group of protestors chased Salim's convoy from the airport to the town, brandishing sticks and knives. One sign read: "Abdel Wahid is brave, broadminded and true."

On a hilltop overlooking town, thousands of women formed a multi-colored mass protest as Salim met with community leaders.

Displaced Darfuris refused to meet Salim in the camps, but a few came to meet him in the town.

Despite the opposition Salim encountered, the message was mostly positive and clear. Residents want peace and security, and they want Nur to join a peace process that is expected to include talks with the government in the coming months.

AlAyam quoted a statement issued by the National Force for Solving Darfur Crises as demanding the National Congress Party to abandon fomenting security instability and arming militias. The statement called on the SPLM to respond to Darfur people demands on top of which are the one region, individual compensation and fair power and wealth sharing and security arrangements.

In the meantime Darfur Lawyers Association has criticized statements made on Monday by the AU Secretary General Alfa Omar Konare as regarding SC resolution 1769 as "irresponsible"

The statement appealed to the national, regional and international civil society organizations to challenge what it terms government plot to forcefully evacuate IDP camps.

In another development *Alwan* reported that Minnie Minnawi discussed at El Fashir Airport with Salim progress on the peace process through the efforts been excreted by AU/UN envoys to convince non-signatory factions to join the peace process.

Darfur force has "unprecedented" mission

(*SudanTribune.com* – 27 Aug. WASHINGTON) A hybrid U.N.-African Union peacekeeping force for the Darfur region of Sudan has received sufficient pledges for participation, though critical needs remain for technical support and an engineer corps, a top U.N. official said.

"It is unprecedented what we are trying to do here," Jane Holl Lute, the U.N. assistant secretary general for peacekeeping operations, said about the coordination between the African Union and the United Nations.

But "the political process is the heart of the peacekeeping mission. It can only walk alongside the process, not substitute it," she said.

Lute, an American, said the headquarters for the 31,000-member force would be operational in El Fashir, capital of North Darfur state, by the first week of October.

Lute, who traveled to Darfur in July, cited enormous operational challenges. The desert terrain is daunting, and sandstorms are frequent. El Fashir is 125 miles from the nearest port, which means massive equipment will have to be transported overland. Roads must be built. Commercial companies will handle the construction of camp sites and the foundations for water and fuel storage, she said.

On the positive side, Lute said, supplies blocked at the harbor in Khartoum have been released for unloading. "Things have been flowing more smoothly than they have been in the past. Hundreds of containers caught up in the port of Khartoum have started to move since July," she said.

Most of the participants in the force will come from African countries. Other countries, including India, Bangladesh and Nepal, are contributing logistical units, and China is providing engineering units. About 19,500 soldiers will be armed.

Lute estimated that the annual cost of the force would be \$2.4 billion to \$2.6 billion. The United States is to fund about a quarter of the costs. Lute spoke in Washington, where she met Friday with officials at the National Security Council before returning to New York.

Group 19 considers negotiations with government

(*AlSudani*) The SLM (Group 19) has disclosed its willingness to negotiate peace deal with the government without any preconditions.

Reliable sources told AlSudani daily, that differences among the SLM factions recently took part in Arusha meetings, prompted the group to take this stance.

The Field Commander of Group 1, Adris Adam Morjan informed the sources that the group is seeking a prompt and lasting solution to Darfur crises.

He accused the JEM of dishonoring previous agreements on the unification of the factions view points expressing his group's ability to mobilize other factions and reach a unified negotiation position.

Meanwhile, SLM- Nour faction humanitarian coordinator told AlSudani that the movement was categorically rejected holding of general elections in Darfur State noting that all current circumstances are not suitable for conducting such elections.

AU Talks Peace but Sudan's Tribal Leaders Remain Divided

(Sudan Vision) A senior African Union envoy is touring Darfur to press tribal leaders to talk peace, ahead of a visit to Sudan by the UN Secretary General, who is expected to increase momentum for the deployment of a robust peacekeeping force.

The envoy, Salim Ahmed Salim, held talks yesterday with Arab and non-Arab tribal leaders in Al Geneina, the capital of West Darfur State, before touring displaced persons camps.

The rebel leaders remain divided, despite an agreement reached by about a dozen factions in the Tanzanian resort town of Arusha earlier this month on a joint negotiating platform ahead of talks with the Sudanese government.

The most influential leader, Abdel Wahid Al-Nour boycotted the Arusha meeting. Mr. Nour, who lives in Paris, is holding out until the planned force to be run jointly by the African Union and the UN is deployed. But the full 26,000-strong force, which was authorized by the UN Security Council, last month, is only expected to be deployed next year.

Jamous decides to leave UN hospital today

(AlSahafa) A leading SLM figure Suleiman Jamous, who is currently in confinement in a UN clinic in Kadugli has threatened to leave his compulsory confinement today if the UN fails to finalize procedures of his permit transfer from the government prior to his departure to Nairobi for medical treatment.

Jamous told AlSahafa daily that he would deal with other alternatives if he is forced to find his way out from his exile.

Asked whether he would surrender to the government or not, he said “following 14 months of detention it doesn’t matter who the detaining force is, the government or the UN.

Miscellaneous

Sudanese court discharges nine in journalist beheading case

(SudanTribune.com – 27 Aug. KHARTOUM) A Sudanese criminal court on Monday dismissed the case against nine people on trial in connection with the beheading of a prominent journalist and brought formal charges against 10 other defendants.

Nineteen people, including two women, had been on trial in connection with the brutal murder of Mohammed Taha, editor of the Arabic-language daily al-Wifaq.

Taha's decapitated body was found on a dirt road in the capital last September, his hands and legs tied and his head lying next to his corpse.

Taha drew protests from Islamic groups in 2005 by reprinting a series of articles questioning the origins of the Prophet Mohammad. He was an Islamist but his criticism of other Islamic groups angered many.

The chief investigating police officer told the court during an earlier hearing that an article in Taha's paper had infuriated the defendants, all from the troubled Darfur region of western Sudan, by unflattering references to Darfuri women.

Osama Osman, the presiding judge, threw out the case against the nine defendants, including the two women, on grounds of insufficient evidence. He ordered them freed immediately.

The judge also formally indicted the remaining 10 defendants on charges including kidnapping, abetting murder, premeditated murder and mutilating Taha's body. In Sudanese trials the indictment procedure can come in mid-trial.

The lead defense lawyer, Kamal Omar, pleaded "not guilty" for the 10 defendants charged. For each, he responded: "The defendant is not guilty. He did not participate in the crime and the defendant's confession was extracted under torture."

The chief police investigating officer had presented to the court written confessions implicating the defendants in the crime. But in court they all retracted the confessions, saying they were coerced into making them.

The trial has seen some dramatic developments since it opened in February.