



UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

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IN THE NEWS TODAY:

- **United Nations, the transition debate and the Frazer visit**
 - Britain, US plan to submit new draft on Darfur to UN vote
 - Updates on the Jendayi Frazer visit
 - President Bashir, V-P Taha and Presidential Advisor Mustafa reiterate rejection
 - Cholera rampant in Sudan, WHO fears for neighbours
 - United Nations vehicle driven by armed southern Sudanese injures two in accident
 - Coverage on the memo presented by the National Staff Association on salaries*
- **CPA**
 - Vice-President Kiir to hold talks with SSDF on Thursday
 - South Kordofan forms commission for the implementation of the CPA
- **Southern Sudan**
 - Civilians disarmament raises concern in Sudan's Upper Nile
 - South Sudan prepares for fifth population census
- **Darfur/DPA**
 - 21 NRF soldiers killed in SLM-Minnawi attack in Darfur
- **Other developments:**
 - Activist arrested ahead of planned protest over price hike
- **Commentaries:**
 - Give them what they want, Pronk, or else ...!
 - The Salvation regime – between the Community Police and the international forces
 - Demonstration and Demonstration

HIGHLIGHTS:

United Nations, the transition debate and the Frazer visit

Britain, US plan to submit new draft on Darfur to UN vote

Quoting diplomats at the Security Council, the *AFP* reports that a revised US-British draft* resolution would be circulated in the UN Security Council, authorizing the deployment of UN peacekeepers in.

The story has also been picked by *AlKhabar* daily quoting *USA Today*. The main headline in the local daily screams: ***First batch of international forces [to deploy to Darfur] by the beginning of next week.***

Ghanaian envoy, Ambassador Epenteng, who is this month's chair of the Security Council, said that decisions will be taken on further action depending on the Security Council's reaction.

US representative, John Bolton, believes such a decision is "pretty close" and says efforts will be made to have a vote on the new draft by Thursday.

"We think we found a formulation that will win acceptance on the council and achieve the objectives we are seeking, which is the early transfer of responsibility in Darfur to the United Nations," he added but cited Khartoum's consent to a deployment as a requisite.

** Also see the document, "Highlights on the UNSC measures on Darfur" attached separately*

Updates on the Jendayi Frazer visit

Most local newspapers reported yesterday that the US envoy had failed in seeking an audience with President Bashir and would be leaving the country without doing so but today's papers and the *AP* carry the story of a meeting between President Bashir and Jendayi Frazer.

The reports say the visiting envoy had delivered President Bush's letter to his Sudanese counterpart and that the US president had also sent an invitation for a meeting in the US with President Bashir. The Sudanese president promised to study the requests made and said he will be sending an envoy to Washington to discuss a request by President Bush to allow a U.N. force into the war-torn Darfur region, according to a State Department spokesman.

AlRai AlAam adds that President Bashir, in the 30-minute meeting with Frazer, accused the western media of blowing the situation in Darfur to exaggerated proportions.

Frazer also took up with the Sudanese president the arrest of an American journalist by pro-government forces in the Darfur region. Paul Salopek of the *Chicago Tribune*, his driver and interpreter were arrested Aug. 6. He was charged with espionage, passing information illegally, writing "false news" and entering the African country without a visa.

The State Department has said any judicial process should be fair and speedy.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a U.S. official said later there was no foundation to the spy charges but that some technical violation of immigration regulations could not be ruled out.

President Bashir, V-P Taha and Presidential Advisor Mustafa reiterate rejection

Another story that has commanded a front-page position in all local newspapers [*including those printing in the English language and also covered by the AFP*] is President Bashir's speech before a "meeting of consultation and support" with the Workers' Federation at the Friendship Hall.

The story goes that the President has called on the international community to support the African Union in carrying out its work in Darfur or, should it fail to do so, plan from now for an immediate withdrawal of the AMIS from the region.

In the meeting held ahead of President Bashir's meeting with the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, the president promised the international community that United Nations forces, should they deploy to Darfur, would face the same fate as that of the colonial-times' ill-fated expedition led by Hicks Pasha to Sudan. He said that the government does not want to enter into a confrontation with the Sudanese government but will spare no efforts to resist the international forces should they deploy.

Also brought up by the president during his speech was the issue of "re-colonization" and he said that the Security Council wants to apply the examples of Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon to Sudan and the Sudan therefore prefers a "confrontation to the death" to such a fate and said he would not like to see another Abu-Ghuraib prison in Darfur or any Sudanese countryman held in Guantanamo.

He said that this is part of a Zionist-Crusader alliance.

Meanwhile, Vice-President Taha has of late been increasingly vocal towards the issue of a transition of the AMIS to a United Nations operation.

His latest statements in this regard came yesterday in a visit to an Islamic school in el-Obeid where, addressing a rally, he told the people they should not fear anything as long as they remain united by the Qur'an.

AlHayat, *AlAdhwaa* and many other local dailies cover his visit and report that he also vowed that no "invader" will set foot on Sudan.

To ward off speculation that the GoNU is divided over the issue, the Vice-President assured the people that the Government of National unity is united on all national issues.

Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail says, on the other hand, that the UK, US draft has caused a rift within the Security Council, reports the *Sudan Tribune* daily and other Arabic language dailies.

He also joined Vice-President Taha in warding off speculation of a divide within the GoNU over the issue.

The presidential aide further revealed that the GoNU remains in contact with the Security Council and the United Nations to clarify the Sudan's position on the issue.

Cholera rampant in Sudan, WHO fears for neighbours

A *Reuters* story also quoted in *AlSudani* quotes a top expert at the WHO as saying last Tuesday that cholera is rampant across Sudan, with nearly 25,000 cases and more than 700 deaths recorded this year, and the epidemic threatens neighbouring Chad.

Cholera has broken out in most states of Sudan, including North and South Darfur, but the toll does not include West Darfur where agencies have little access due to insecurity, said Claire-Lise Chaignat, WHO's global cholera coordinator.

The water-borne disease could easily spread to Chad, where more than 200,000 Sudanese refugees from Darfur are staying in crowded camps near Abeche, she added.

"It is a huge epidemic and the case fatality rate in southern Sudan is 3 percent, which is high," Chaignat told Reuters in an interview.

The new WHO figures come on the heels of a warning on Monday by U.N. Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland who told the Security Council that Darfur was on the brink of a fresh humanitarian disaster threatening "massive loss of life".

Sudan's health ministry has set up a task force with United Nations agencies, including WHO, to combat the epidemic through better hygiene. Most cases respond to oral rehydration salts.

An outbreak of acute watery diarrhoea currently raging in Ethiopia, which has reached the capital Addis Ababa, is probably linked to Sudan's cholera epidemic, Chaignat said.

"There is probably a link with the current cholera epidemic in Sudan, especially the first cases in Gambella (western Ethiopia) in April," the Swiss expert said.

Acute watery diarrhoea has struck 16,555 people in Ethiopia, killing 200, aid agencies said. They have called for the outbreak to be declared a national emergency.

The ailment is spreading quickly in Ethiopia's south-central region of Oromiya with "the potential to spread down into Kenya", they said in an "Emergency Plan for Oromiya region", a copy of which was obtained by Reuters on Tuesday.

"We are very worried about Ethiopia, especially as the heavy flooding can accentuate the problem," Chaignat said.

United Nations vehicle driven by armed southern Sudanese injures two in accident

Allintibaha reports that a traffic accident involving a United Nations vehicle [*the paper does not state of what make but the accompanying photograph shows a registration plate with the number 8 UN 346 against a yellow background*] in Haj Yusuf, Khartoum North.

The paper says the vehicle was travelling at a "mad speed" and swerving left and right before it crashed into an electric pole, turned on its sides and seriously injured a young boy and girl who were rushed to hospital by witnesses.

Eye-witnesses reportedly said that 3 heavily armed southern Sudanese immediately jumped out the said vehicle and escaped running.

Coverage on the memo presented by the National Staff Association on salaries*

The *Khartoum Monitor* and the *Citizen* newspapers have as their lead stories covering half the first page today the story on the memorandum by the UNMIS National Staff Association on “urgent issues relating to national staff employment conditions” and received by PDSRSG Taye-Brook Zerihoun on behalf of SRSRSG Jan Pronk.

The *Citizen* reproduces part of full text of the memorandum while the *Khartoum Monitor* gives a summary and adds that Spokesperson Radhia Achouri, when approached to comment, said that she had not comments on the issue. She pointed out, the paper adds, that “the issue was an internal affair that did not demand invitation of the press to attend!”. The paper further added that she said that UNMIS does not set up the salary scale for staff in Sudan but can only present the issue to New York and it will then be up to New York to decide.

The story is also reported in *AlRai AlAam* that also reproduces part of the memo and adds that a national staff member of the mission told them that 30 national staff members have resigned from the mission last month alone.

AlRai AlAam goes on to say that the national staff members had a one-hour sit-in and added that those whom they approached for comment described work in the mission as an empty “façade” and say they are seriously seeking employment opportunities elsewhere.

** Please also see related commentary below.*

CPA

Vice-President Kiir to hold talks with SSDF on Thursday

SSDF’s number two commander, Mjr. Gen. el-Toum Daldoum, says the SSDF will be holding talks next Thursday with Vice-President Kiir on the status of the southern Sudanese armed factions in the framework of the CPA, reports *Rai AlShaab*.

He expressed hopes that the two sides will reach an agreeable solution during the meeting which was arranged by foreign minister Lam Akol.

South Kordofan forms commission for the implementation of the CPA

A prominent member of the SPLM Nuba Mountain chapter who also doubles up as advisor to *Wali* of South Kordofan believes even high ranking officials in South Kordofan have a scanty knowledge of the CPA, *AlIntibaha* reports.

Mohamed el-Mariud says the CPA has achieved only 45% of the demands of the Nuba Mountains area and the Parties are unable to turn the agreement into a reality on the ground.

The advisor said that the National Congress Party and the SPLM are yet to agree on the issue of a revolving leadership of the regional legislative assembly and that the SPLM has decided to table the issue before the Presidency for arbitration.

On the other hand, he further said that the regional cabinet in South Kordofan has agreed to the formation of a commission to monitor the implementation of the CPA in the state.

Southern Sudan

Civilians disarmament raises concern in Sudan's Upper Nile

Following the voluntary disarmament of civilians in Akobo, Upper Nile State last month, area residents are now raising concerns about attacks from neighbouring communities with whom they have had clashes with in the past, reports the *Sudan Radio Service* from Akobo.

But Jonglei State Deputy Governor Nyang Chol says the disarmament process will also take place in the neighbouring communities such as the Murle.

The Deputy Governor said that he is optimistic that disarmament will lead to more development, adding that people will have time to concentrate on more positive activities.

He said the disarmed youth now have an option of joining the SPLA, the police or reintegrating back into their communities.

Despite the violence, community chiefs acknowledge that no functioning government can be established in the region without a comprehensive disarmament of the various armed groups.

In Akobo, further east from where the clashes took place, close to the Ethiopian border, Lou chiefs and local authorities are trying to convince their constituents of the benefits of handing in their weapons voluntarily before the main SPLA force of 3,000 soldiers arrives to implement a forced disarmament.

South Sudan prepares for fifth population census

(SUNA/ST – 29th Aug. **el-Obeid**) The chairman of the Statistics and Assessment Organ in South Sudan, Azaya Chol announced that the organ plans to carry out early arrangements to launch the fifth population census in all states of South Sudan.

Chol says training for census officials has started in the three states of Greater Equatoria and Lakes State.

Chol arrived in el-Obeid to attend the technical group's meeting for the fifth population census in North Kordofan State.

Darfur/DPA

21 NRF soldiers killed in SLM-Minnawi attack in Darfur

Eight NRF soldiers have been killed and thirteen injured as a result of clashes with SLA-Minnawi forces, *Rai AlShaab* reports.

SLM's field commander, Adam Bashir, said that the clashes occurred in Muzbad and the SLA lost 8 vehicles – 3 of them seized – but managed to set the NRF fleeing.

Other developments:

Activist arrested ahead of planned protest over price hike

(*Rai AlShaab* - 30th Aug. **Khartoum**) Security authorities obstructed yesterday a team of activists of the national opposition forces committee formed to protest the increase in the prices of sugar and combustibles and arrested some of them as they campaigned for a mass rally due to take place today.

Gurashi Awad, information officer for the committee, said that some of the activists are still being detained by the authorities but added that this will not deter them from staging the protest as scheduled.

Commentaries:

Give them what they want, Pronk, or else ...!

Mekki el-Maghrabi ends his column in today's *AlWatan* daily with a tribute to the UNMIS National Staff Association for the memo presented to the PDSRSG yesterday demanding a review of prevailing employment conditions.

He starts by highlighting the main points in the memorandum mentioned and imagines what will happen should the national staff proceed ahead to present their case before the Labor Office or the international labor court.

He goes on to express hope that the demands thus tabled will bankrupt Secretary-General Kofi Annan and his "rogue" son.

The writer imagines a time when national staff salaries will delay and when they will say, "We are yet to receive our pay for the month and today is the 15th already". Then, he adds, employee will turn against employer; national staff members will start revealing the crimes that take place behind closed doors in UNMIS-rented apartments; anonymous telephone calls to the police reporting alcohol and drug use will increase ... and so on.

He said that this will then be enough fodder for those opposing a United Nations presence to show their opposition before UNMIS' offices in Garden City, the UNMIS space at the airport, the UNMIS offices at the "Italian Camp" and its offices in a number of states in Sudan and "possibly elsewhere". He said that this may also help uncover western spies in sensitive positions in the mission.

The Salvation regime – between the Community Police and the international forces

Under this heading and the sub-heading, *When Radhia Achouri smiled*, Dhia-el-deen Bilal writes in a page 3 article about the changes in the social behavior of the Sudanese.

He first begins with recalling a press briefing he attended at UNMIS last year during which he had expressed anxiety that the people of Sudan are afraid that the African Union Mission in Sudan troops deployed in Darfur may become catalysts for the spread of HIV/AIDS in the local society.

He recalls that before commenting on this, Spokesperson Radhia Achouri gave a smile that haunts him to this day as she answered, "I hope that our brothers and sisters in Sudan will understand that we are afraid of HIV/AIDS as they are and to know the true extent of the spread of disease in Sudan. People are only afraid of the foreigner ... the statistics in Sudan make the foreigners afraid for themselves!"

He goes on to say that the Spokesperson's smile and that answer given about a year ago still haunt him to this day as he goes through statistics of crimes of immoral behavior committed the nationals in the country.

He winds up after citing many statistics of such crimes and says that the opposition calls for a demonstration against the price rise; government calls for a protest against a possible deployment of international troops, avian flu and watery diarrhea threaten the health of the citizen; the health minister declares Sudan as having the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in the Arab World; Transparency International puts Sudan in the list of most corrupt states – all this while no one could spare a tear for the citizens killed around the country or elsewhere like in Cairo.

He says that the Sudanese have become passive to any news, be it good or bad. Reports just remain reports on paper and it does not matter whether it is an increase in commodity prices or crimes committed by female students.

In his final statement and after lamenting the passage of the old-time Sudan, the writer draws a bleak picture and says it no longer matters to the citizen whether the enemy is the Salvation regime of the international forces ... nothing matters anymore.

Demonstration and Demonstration

Zuhair el-Saraj of *Alwatan* chooses the above as his title for today's column.

He refers to the story of the demonstration in Khartoum airport during the arrival of the US Assistant Minister for African Affairs.

He says that authorities permitted the rally to hold up the banners and protest the international intervention in Sudan and stood by watching with the view that the citizens were expressing their constitutional right to freedom of expression.

He says that the demonstrations in front of Sharga Hall protesting the increase in the prices of sugar and combustibles was a different story as the authorities use the tears gas to disperse the crowd.

He further points out that the political parties are organizing a rally today to protest the price rise and wonders whether the authorities will permit the citizens to exercise the constitutional right to such a peaceful expression of opinion or use teargas instead.

He urges government to allow the people to rally.