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(By Public Information Office)

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Highlights

UN/ Agencies

UN resumes repatriation of South Sudanese refugees

(*Sudan Tribune.com* — 15 Dec. ADDIS ABABA) UNHCR today said it will resume repatriating hundreds of Sudanese refugees after the process has been temporarily blocked due to heavy rain season and swamp road conditions for the past 7 months. “First group of 613 Sudanese refugees will return home today from Bonga camp situated in western Ethiopia” UNHCR regional Liaison representative for Africa Lunga Ngandu said

Following 21 years long disastrous civil war in Sudan, some 80 thousand southern Sudanese refugees has arrived Ethiopia in 1983 and in 1990s.

Today's repatriation is part of the tripartite agreement signed on February 27, 2006 among UNHCR, Sudan and Ethiopia.

“1800 Sudanese refugees will be repatriated to the blue Nile state of south Sudan till the end of 2007” Nganda said adding” we expect to return some 30,000 Sudanese refuge till the end of 2008”

According to UNHCR statement released, the current repatriation of 613 Sudanese refugees will let UNHCR to shut down two of the total 4 refugee camps sheltering the brotherly Sudanese refugees.

Ki-moon: no single copter received for hybrid operation

(Sudan Vision) UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon announced that none of the pledged 24 helicopter gun-ships has been received for supporting the hybrid force in Darfur, urging the pledging countries to expedite supplying those copters.

The hybrid operation has been scheduled to function in Darfur as from first January, 2008. However, AU spokesperson, Nouredine Mezni said “The hybrid operation success depends on satisfaction of its requirements” Noting the difficulties encountered in that respect, Mezni cited helicopters inadequacy.

Miraya FM supports GoSS Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

(Sudan Tribune) The Chief of radio Miraya FM station Williams Leon assured the support development in the southern Sudan particularly in the field of capacity building and training personnel. This comes in a meeting today between the Miraya FM delegation and the minister. The told building of the Miraya FM station will be the ministry of Information and Broadcasting says Williams Leon, he added that there will be a comprehensive training between the Miraya FM and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting next year. He further added that Miraya is the best station in the southern Sudan it is considerable, reliable and can be understandable says Chief of Miraya.

H.E Gabriel Changston for the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting says Miraya FM and the Ministry is to expand radio organs in the rural areas. He added that radio Gumba station will cover the whole ten status of Southern Sudan in the near future. The Minister also says they want to promote a local languages program in the whole radio station. He initiated the development of the Miraya FM.

UN launches \$ 780 appeal for South

(The Citizen) The United Nations has launched an appeal for at least US\$2.29 billion for humanitarian, early recovery and development projects in 2008.

The appeal was launched on Wednesday in Geneva. The head of the United Nations Mission in Sudan said prior to departure that \$780 million of this was meant for the south, an improvement from last year.

In a statement from Geneva, the UN said 20 percent of the money had already been secured and the total net requested was US\$1.84 billion to implement 959 projects across twelve sectors in the whole country.

UN dissolves body charged with monitoring Darfur abuses

(*Sudan Tribune.com* — 14 Dec. GENEVA) The U.N. Human Rights Council on Friday dissolved a group of experts tasked with monitoring abuses in Darfur after demands from African countries to ease the political pressure on Sudan.

The unanimous decision to halt the mission of the seven rights experts comes a week after the group accused Sudan of failing to protect civilians in Darfur from rape, torture and other forms of violence.

The task of overseeing Khartoum's progress in protecting human rights in Darfur will now fall to the U.N.'s special envoy to Sudan, Simar Samar, whose mandate was unanimously extended for a year.

Rights groups condemned the decision not to renew the group's mandate.

"There has been an unacceptable compromise by the council on the issue of Darfur," Julie de Rivero of the New York-based Human Rights Watch told reporters.

"We feel that Sudan has been rewarded for its obstruction and its failure to implement recommendations" made by the expert group, she said.

European officials expressed satisfaction at the decision, noting Samar would be able to continue working.

On the net: *U.N. Human Rights Council*: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil>

UN chief hails end of political crisis over Sudan's CPA

(*Sudan Tribune.com* — 14 Dec. NEW YORK) The UN chief welcomed yesterday the end of the political crisis between 2005 peace partners. The agreement comes two months since the withdrawal of the SPLM ministers from the national government.

Ban Ki moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations welcomed the announcement by the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that negotiations by the six members committee have resulted in an agreement over a number of key outstanding issues.

Ban commended both parties for their commitment to preserve the integrity of the CPA through dialogue and partnership, and looks forward to the early implementation of the decisions reached by the two sides. He hoped that the Presidency will expedite a resolution to the issue of Abyei, which is essential in order to establish a firm basis for the next phase of the peace process.

UN rights body urges Sudan to prosecute Darfur suspects

(*Sudan Tribune.com* — 14 Dec. GENEVA) The U.N.'s Human Rights Council Friday sought to pressure Sudan to prosecute those responsible for atrocities in Darfur and renewed the mandate for its special rapporteur in the African nation.

The council's 47 members adopted a resolution presented by African members extending the rapporteur's mandate by one year. The rapporteur is charged with evaluating human rights in Sudan.

Another resolution proposed by the European Union and African nations urged Sudan to investigate "all allegations of human rights and international humanitarian law violations" in its western Darfur region, "promptly bringing to justice the perpetrators of these violations".

However, the mandate for a group of experts created a year ago to monitor human rights in Darfur has not been extended.

UN rights envoy to keep investigating in Sudan

(*Sudan Tribune.com* — 14 Dec. GENEVA) The U.N. human rights envoy for Sudan looks set to overcome resistance from African and Islamic states and have her mandate extended, but a team of Darfur investigators will be disbanded, diplomats said on Friday.

A compromise resolution, expected to be adopted later in the day at the United Nations Human Rights Council, addresses African and Muslim nations' arguments that there was no need to renew both Sima Samar's investigative mandate and that of a separate U.N. group of seven independent experts that she leads.

The former Afghan deputy prime minister has served as U.N. special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Sudan since 2005. She has reported war crimes by Sudanese forces and their allied militia in the troubled Darfur region.

Unlike the larger group of investigators on Darfur, Samar has the power to carry out fact-finding missions in Sudan, deemed crucial to ensuring full assessments of conditions there.

"There has been a compromise. It's a good outcome. The special rapporteur will be extended by another year," a diplomat told Reuters.

The fate of Samar's independent post hung in the balance after African and Islamic countries raised the objections to her role at this week's session of the 47-member state Council. **Read more** <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article25175>

Sudan rejection of non-African troops delays Darfur force - UN

(*Sudan Tribune.com* — 16 Dec. UNITED NATIONS) Sudan's failure to approve some non-African units of a U.N.-African peacekeeping force for Darfur is delaying preparations for its Jan. 1 deployment, a U.N. official warned on Thursday.

Deputy peacekeeping chief Edmond Mulet briefed the Security Council on weekend talks with Sudanese officials aimed at persuading Khartoum to approve a list of troop contributors that includes units from Thailand and Nepal, as well as an engineering unit from Nordic countries.

Mulet said there had been some progress on technical issues, but Khartoum had not responded on the Thai, Nepalese and Nordic units.

"This is delaying the putting in place of many of the other assets," he said. "This is an answer we need urgently." *Read more* <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article25172>

Secretary-General urges world to step up support for Darfur peacekeeping force

(UN) 13 December 2007 – Noting that this is a “critical point” regarding the deployment of an African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force in the war-ravaged Darfur region of Sudan, Secretary-General appealed for the world to step up its support for the mission.

To deploy the force as soon as possible, “this requires capabilities on the ground – capabilities which we need UN Member States to provide, but which is still dangerously lacking,” he said in a [message](#) to the three-day World Summit of Nobel Peace Prize laureates in Rome.

Most strikingly, Mr. Ban pointed out is the lack of helicopters. “In the past weeks and months, I have contacted, personally, every possible contributor of helicopters – in the Americas, in Europe, in Asia. And yet, not one helicopter has been made available yet.”

He urged governments – in regions such as Europe, Asia and the Americas where thousands of different types of military helicopters exist – to bolster their support for the AU-UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

In his message, the Secretary-General also congratulated United States actors George Clooney and Don Cheadle, who both received the 2007 Peace Summit Award for their efforts to raise awareness about the humanitarian suffering in Darfur.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Salva Kiir to reshuffle again SPLM ministers in Sudan govt

(*Sudan Tribune.com* – 14 Dec. KHARTOUM) The leader Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM) is reviewing a list of ministers appointed by Sudanese president after a proposal submitted by his first deputy, last October.

The first vice-president, Salva Kiir Mayardit, has said that the SPLM’s ministers will be sworn in and rejoin the Government of National Unity after a reshuffle in the list of SPLM ministers. The list will then be presented to the president of the republic to adopt.

"The list of SPLM ministers will be reviewed and as soon as we finish reviewing it, we will present the list to our brother, the president of the republic, and once the decree is issued to the changes we make, the ministers will immediately be sworn in and resume their work in the Government of National Unity." Kiir told the Sudanese radio.

President Omer al-Bashir on Tuesday 16 October appointed three SPLM ministers: Deng Alor as minister of foreign affairs, Mansour Khalid as minister of foreign trade and Lam Akol as cabinet affairs minister. Also, Telar Deng, former state minister at the presidency was appointed state minister at the Ministry of Justice.

However, since the SPLM sacked Telar from the party also, al-Bashir had refused to appoint Yasir Arman as presidential advisor.

Al-Bashir also named prof George Bornek, minister of higher education, James Kol Rona, minister of humanitarian affairs, Kosta Manibi, minister of investment.

Peter Neyot Kok and William Ajak Deng were appointed presidential advisors.

Also Al-Bashir issued a decree nominating the following state ministers: Lual Ashol Lual, minister of state at the presidency of the republic, Telar Deng, minister of state at the Ministry of Justice, Abbas Juma Obeid Allah, minister of state at the Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries, Bol Mirial Dok, minister of state at the Ministry of Industry, Ismail Khamis Jallab, minister of state at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Aleu Anitu, minister of state at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Read more <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article25185>

Foreign Ministry sees termination of human rights committee as positive step

(Sudan Vision) Director of Human Rights Committee in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Abdulhalim Abdeen, described the dissolution of the committee of the seven human rights rapporteurs in Sudan as positive step, stressing the government's concern with human rights issues in Sudan at large and in Darfur in particular. He observed that human rights cases are mostly politicized. Abdeen indicated that dialogue between Sudan and Samar is the optimum avenue for resolving the proposed human rights issue, asserting that accusations, criticisms and haggling over these issues through the media will aggravate rather than settle them.

Sudan accepts Samar, preserves right to deport her

(Sudan Tribune) The Sudanese government conditioned for accepting the United Nations Human Rights Special rapporteur for Sudan, Sima Samar that she will maintain credibility and professional integrity. The Minister of Justice Mohamed Ali El Mardi told Journalists "We think Sima Samar's report can be described as negative or positive" adding "We have ways and means with African and Islamic countries rendering us capable of terminating her mission at any time. But we, nonetheless, accepted the appeals to give her one more chance, for only one year, with out losing out right to ask for her deportation at any time."

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: UN Security Council meeting on the hybrid proves Sudan cooperation

(AIRai AIAam) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the yesterday close-door meeting of the UN Security Council on the hybrid operation in Darfur reflected the spirit of full cooperation between the GoS and the UN. The Minister of State at the

Ministry, al Samani al Wasila, slammed the US for threatening to impose UN sanctions on Sudan. He urged the international community provide funding and other requirements of the hybrid operation.

Minister of Justice: We are capable of ending Samar's mission any time

(*AlSahafa*) the GoS said for it to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Sudan, Sima Samar has to be objective and professionally honest. The GoS added that it is capable of ending Samar's mission any time. We have contacts with many Arab, African and Asian countries which make us capable of ending her mission. Sudan has accepted extending her mandate following requests by some to give her another opportunity.

Garang: Major changes in SPLM Ministers' list

(*AlSahafa*) A delegation from the SPLM has arrived yesterday in Cairo to deliver a message from FVP and GoSS President Salva Kiir to President Mubarak. Members of the delegation include Dr. Mansour Khalid and the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Atim Garang. Atim said the delegation will brief President Mubarak on the situation in the Sudan especially after overcoming the NCP-SPLM crisis.

Kiir to reshuffle again SPLM Ministers

(*Khartoum Monitor*) The leader of the SPLM is reviewing a list of ministers appointed by the Sudanese president, following a proposal submitted by his first deputy last October. The first Vice-President, Salva Kiir, has said that the SPLM's ministers will be sworn in and rejoin the Government of National Unity after a reshuffle in the list of SPLM ministers. The list will then be presented to the president of the republic to adopt.

Insistence on deployment of European troops in Darfur predetermined, al Bashir

(*Sudan Vision*) In the interview he made with Dr. Mohammed Kawas, the Manager of ANB TV news channel in Khartoum, President Al Bashir described insistence on the deployment of troops from Sweden and Norway in Darfur as premeditated while he praised the role of Arab countries which contributed effectively to easing off the impact of the western siege on Sudan through their investments in Sudan and their adoption of balanced political stances, citing Qatar's recent stance at the Security Council.

President Al Bashir explained that introduction of non-African troops is subject to agreement between UN, AU and Sudan, noting that, before 31/8/2007, Sudan sent messages to the world inviting proposals for engineers and physicians, and consequently received and accepted proposals from Egypt, China and Pakistan for meeting that requirement, though Sudan was surprised by the UN proposal of engineers and physicians from Sweden and Norway - countries that had not submitted a proposal before 13/8/2007 and were moreover unwilling to participate when previously invited to by Sudan, the President said.

Fear s still remain after SPLM, NCP makeup

(*The Citizen*) the deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Atim Garang, has said there is no guarantee that the National Congress Party would not renege on the truce with the SPLM later on. Garang said that while what the NCP and the SPLM agreed was satisfactory, it remained to be seen if the major partner in the government would walk the talk.

While the National Congress Party expressed opposition to any international mediation, the SPLM sought to mobilize regional and international sponsors of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Khartoum calls on Washington to control the media message: Meeting of the S.C. reflected the government s cooperation with the UN

(*SMC*) Sudan s Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that the closed meeting of the Security Council, which was held yesterday on the hybrid operation in Darfur pointed out to the spirit of full cooperation of the Khartoum with the United Nations, demanding from the American administration to control the media message and not waving with sanctions.

US threatens UN sanctions over Darfur force

(*Sudan Tribune.com* — 13 Dec. UNITED NATIONS) The U.S. envoy to the UN on Thursday threatened Sudan with additional sanctions if it continued to drag its feet on allowing the deployment of 26,000 UN-African Union peacekeepers in Darfur. "There has been a record of the Sudanese government dragging its feet in implementing agreements," Zalmay Khalilzad told reporters after Security Council consultations on the stalled deployment of the force known as UNAMID in the strife-torn Sudanese region.

If Khartoum fails to quickly allow the inclusion of crucial Thai, Nepalese and Scandinavian units to bolster UNAMID, he said the 15-member Security Council would have to consider further action.

British government condemns attack on Kordofan oil field

(*Sudan Tribune.com* — 13 Dec. KHARTOUM) British Government today has slammed Darfur rebel attack on Chinese-run oil field in central Sudan saying it aims to increase instability in the country.

"We condemn the attacks on a Chinese-run oil rig in Kordufan State in Sudan, claimed by the rebel faction Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) led by Khalil Ibrahim." said a statement by a spokesperson of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

The statement which was distributed by the UK Embassy in Khartoum described as "unacceptable" attacks attempting to take the conflict beyond Darfur. It urged Darfur conflict parties to observe full cessation of hostilities.

Sudan opposition to be tried on Dec. 13

(*Sudan Tribune.com* — 13 Dec. KHARTOUM) Thirty opposition leaders and military figures will be tried on December 16 on charges of trying to overthrow the government, a defence lawyer said on Thursday.

The accused, who include retired military, security and police officers, were arrested at their homes in July on charges of plotting to sabotage the government and planning political assassinations. They deny the charges. Their trial was due to start earlier this month but was postponed.

Sudan urged to ensure safety of Chinese: FM spokesman

(*Xinhua via COMTEX*) China urged Sudanese authorities to take substantial measures to ensure the safety of Chinese institutions and citizens in the African country, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said on Thursday.

"Any threats or attacks on Chinese institutions and people in Sudan are unacceptable," Qin said in response to questions concerning a reported rebel attack on a Chinese-run oilfield on Tuesday.

Friendly relations between China and Sudan were based on mutual respect, equality, mutual benefits and development, and they have facilitated Sudan's economic development and brought substantive benefits to its people, Qin stressed.

Chinese companies in Sudan are actively engaged in local public causes and contribute to the country's economy and social development, he added.

Press reports said that rebels attacked a Chinese-invested oilfield in Sudan on Tuesday. The Sudanese military claimed about 20 rebels attacked an army camp near an oil facility but said the attack had been repelled.

Sudanese parliament approves 2008 budget

(*BBC Mon, Suna website*) The National Assembly Saturday [15 December] approved the budget of the state for fiscal 2008 and the bills on acts accompanying it at the fourth and final reading stage after a number of morning and evening sittings. The parliament extended its current session to the 16th of next January.

Speaker of the National Assembly Ahmad Ibrahim al-Tahir said that there are a number of acts awaiting approval by the parliament.

Sudan: Presidential aide slams southern ex-rebels over disputed Abyei

(*BBC Mon, Sudan Tribune*) The presidential advisor and prominent southern politician, Bona Malwal, has criticized the SPLM for its exaggerated reaction over Abyei Protocol implementation. He blamed the influence of Abyei native within the SPLM leadership.

In a symposium organized by the South Sudan Democratic Forum on the future of the CPA under the current political crisis, held in Khartoum on 12 December, Bona Malwal said "that Abyei alone must not return the country to war. We should seek a peaceful way of implementing the terms of the Abyei protocol, without the threat of war."

Bona said that Abyei was as an area of Southern Kordofan since 1905, the Abyei area is no longer purely a Ngok Dinka area. He also criticized the report of experts saying it is "clearly favours one side and is not comprehensive enough."

Bona, who designated the self determination for southern Sudan in 2011 as ultimate goal of the CPA, urged the SPLM to negotiate patiently with the National Congress Party.

He also said if Abyei's oil is the cause of dispute then it is urgent to have that oil extracted, so that the country as a whole benefits [as published].

He also proposed to quickly set up of the local administration for Abyei, "under the leadership of the citizens of Abyei, in their entirety."

The borders of the disputed Abyei region were to be decided by an independent commission and the region would also decide by 2011 whether to be in the south or north.

But the NCP rejected the commission's report and the Abyei deadlock has continued for two years.

GoSS

Ethiopia, South Sudan sign two cooperation agreements

(*Sudan Tribune.com* – 14 Dec. ADDIS ABABA) Ethiopia and South Sudan signed on Friday two cooperation agreements that aiming to share experiences in various development sectors, the official Ethiopian News Agency reported on Friday.

Ethiopian minister of Work and Urban Development, Kassu Ilala and South Sudanese ministers of Transport and Roads, David Deng Athorbei, signed the agreements.

The first agreement enables Ethiopia to provide technical support and share experiences with South Sudan in the stated sectors besides provision of capacity building activities in education, telecommunication, agriculture, and animal breeding sectors.

The second agreement which related to cooperation in the transport sector enables to link South Sudan and Ethiopia with roads and enable the two countries to enhance cooperation in housing development sector besides exchanging experiences in rehabilitating the war-torn region, South Sudan.

Kuol Manyang appointed Governor of Jonglei State

(Sudan Tribune) The Minister of Roads and Transport, Lt. Gen, Kuol Manyang Juuk has been appointed by the south Sudan President Salva Kiir to replace governor Philip Thon Leek as new governor of Jonglei State, sources have revealed. Kuol who is currently in Bor will travel to Juba for inauguration, said a reporter to the New Sudan Vision.

GoSS budget up \$ 400m

(The Citizen) Government of southern Sudan 2008 budget is up from last year. Finance Minister Kuol Athian said the 2008 fiscal year budget is estimated at 3,415,864,076 Pounds up from about 2.8 billion pounds last year.

GoSS challenges religious organizations to open more schools in south

(Sudan Tribune) The Vice President of GoSS yesterday challenged church organizations to open more private schools in Southern Sudan in order to eliminate illiteracy and pledged to support them whenever necessary. Kiir was speaking at the occasion marking the silver jubilee of scared Heart Sister's Kindergarten School in Juba.

Bomb blast injures SPLA soldiers in Juba outskirts

(Sudan Tribune) An unexploded ordnance blast injured two SPLA soldiers at the Site Camp some 5 kilometres North West Juba town at 7:00 am, December 12 2007 while they were burning rubbish and were whisked off to Juba Military hospital at 8: a.m for emergency treatment.

South Sudan passes no confidence vote against Auditor General

(Sudan Tribune.com – 12 Dec. JUBA) The Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA) on Wednesday has passed a vote of no confidence in Auditor General of southern Sudan government, Barnaba Majok Barnabas, accused of embezzling public funds and failure to deliver service in auditing government accounts.

However, the impeached auditor general earlier stated that in principle the accounts of government are normally audited after the government has closed its accounts and handed it to audit chamber for auditing but GoSS accounts have never been edited nor handed for auditing since it was established in 2005.

The withdrawal of confidence motion was raised by Hon. Peter Bashir Gbandi which stated "The house Withdraw Confidence in the Auditor General as well as other members of the Audit chamber accused of corruption and refers the matter to Ministry of Legal Affairs for further investigation and the motion was passed by 75 votes.

While the second motion of Hon. Achol Marial saying, "The August House to set up a committee to further investigate Auditor General Chamber" got ten votes while seven members abstain. *Read more* <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article25180>

Donors to disburse \$10 mln for agriculture in South Sudan

(Sudan Tribune.com – 14 Dec. JUBA) The World Bank administrated fund of donors will disburse ten million dollars in agriculture and forestry project in southern Sudan.

The Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) today said in a press statement committed to pay ten million US dollars in support of a government project to increase agricultural and forestry productivity in five States of Southern Sudan.

The World Bank indicated that this amount will cover the 2 first years.

The fund commitment known as Support to Agriculture and Forestry Development Project (SAFDP) will cover Eastern Equatoria, Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Upper Nile and Unity States.

Southern Sudan says dropout rates high but fixes underway

(BBC Mon, Miraya FM) The headmaster of Juba Day Secondary School David Lowila says this year over 50 students returnees stopped attending classes in his school. He explained that lack of accommodation and school facilities are some of the major reasons that forced the students to discontinue their education and engage in some petty business.

Mr Lowila says some of the students do not have parents and called for guidance. He appealed to the Government of Southern Sudan to handle the problem of these students seriously: "I have this year 294 candidates, all are returnees sitting for the forth coming Sudan School Certificate. Now at last the government happened to pay for their examination fees. There is three quarter not able to get money for Nationality Certificate and Assessment of Age Certificate. If the Government had not responded to rescue the situation, they would have definitely surrendered. Good enough the situation was rescued. But those in lower classes have problems."

Southern Sudan government fails to defuse crisis between tribes

(Sudanese Media Centre) The tribal conflicts between the Dinka and Murle [tribes] have entered a critical juncture following the Murle tribe's demand for secession from Jonglei state and regions adjacent to the Dinka Bor tribes regions.

Informed sources said that the efforts of the Legislative Assembly of the southern government, which had sent a high-level delegation from its membership to Murle areas for the purpose of calming the atmosphere between the Murle and Dinka Bor, had met with the solid positions of the Murle who called for the necessity of secession from the Dinka Bor.

The sources considered that the recent move initiated by the southern government headed by Dr Riek Machar, vice president of the Southern government, and Jonglei state Governor Brig Philip Ton came late to some extent and that it will unlikely accelerate an end to the crisis, especially after the solidarity received by the Murle tribe from the Lao Nuer tribe with respect to the need to secede from the state of Jonglei.

Darfur

Rebel SLM leader says SPLM efforts in Darfur doomed to fail

(*Sudan Tribune.com* – 12 Dec. KHARTOUM) Darfur rebel leader Abdelwahid Mohamed al-Nur has denounced Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) efforts to reunite rebel movements saying "Any work to falsify the will of our people is doomed to fail".

The founder of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) was reacting to the creation in Juba of a new rebel group with the name of Sudan Liberation Movement headed by Ahmed Abdelshafi on Friday.

Darfur reunited factions choose Ahmed Abdelshafi as chairman

(*Sudan Tribune.com* – 15 Dec. JUBA) Darfur rebel groups which are in Juba since more than two months have succeeded to form their leadership office headed by Ahmed Abdelshafi Toba.

The rebel groups announced their reunification on 29 November in a meeting attended by the Sudanese First Vice-President, Salva Kiir who urged the united groups to also work hard to bring on board those few who are still hanging on fence.

Darfur rebels groups gathered in Juba that decided to reunite under the name of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) have chosen Ahmed Abdelshafi Toba to be the Chairman of the movement and Commander In Chief of the Sudan Liberation Army, and member of the Supreme Command Council.

Al Nour blames SPLM after Darfur faction replaces him

(*The Citizen*) Abdel Wahid A AlNur said the SPLM was creating rebel factions. He said that creation of new factions is an old phenomenon of the National Congress Party. He said the NCP does this secretly. He said the SPLM entered in the game of creating rebel factions very openly.

Fighting between SAF and JEM north of Serba area in Darfur

(*AlRai AlAam*) Clashes between SAF and the JEM forces have been reported yesterday in Serba area (between Geneina and Kulbus) in Western Darfur. SAF spokesperson denied truth of report by JEM in which it said it has seized 32 vehicles and arrested 50 SAF troops. However, SAF spokesperson confirmed clashes with JEM in the area.

Three Habania killed in clashes with Alsalamat

AlSahafa-- Clashes between the Habania and Salamat east of Buram resulted in the killing of three Habania and causing injuries to three others. According to sources a group from Falata and Salamat has attacked on Friday the area of Gabadh (25 kms north of Buram) of the Habania. This area is only 5 kms far from a regular force camp in al Turda Om Galoola area.

Gadhafi criticizes 'internationalization' of Darfur

(*Sudan Vision*) Libyan leader Moamer Gadhafi on Tuesday criticized the “Internationalisation” of the conflict in Darfur which he said would sort itself out if the people were left alone.

“The world’s interest in Darfur is well-meant, but it is now going against the original intentions,” he told members of the French National Assembly. “If we leave the inhabitants of Darfur to manage by themselves, the crises will end by itself” he said.

Darfur rebels claims capture of 25 vehicles after attack

(*Sudan Tribune.com* – 15 Dec. KHARTOUM) A Darfur rebel group claimed it captured 25 military vehicles during an attack carried out against the Sudanese army in North Darfur.

In a sign of the escalation of violence in the war-torn Darfur region, the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) said Saturday in a military communiqué it captured 25 army vehicles from the Sudanese army and destroyed a similar number of vehicles.

JEM said it engaged a battalion of the Sudanese army moving between Sibra and Saliaa in North Darfur.

"Government battalion was summarily defeated." The statement added.

JEM didn’t indicate the exact number of casualties among the Sudanese army. However it indicated that one of its commanders was killed during the attack.

Islamic donors conference for Darfur to discuss infrastructure projects

(*Sudan Tribune.com* – 15 Dec. KHARTOUM) Preparations are going on in the Sudanese capital to hold Darfur Islamic donors in here. The conference will discuss how to raise two billion US dollar to finance infrastructure projects in the region.

The High National Committee in charge of preparing projects for the Islamic Donors Conference for supporting Darfur has completed listing projects prior to be submitted them to the donors conference, scheduled to be convened in Khartoum by the beginning of 2008.

The projects will cover education, health, water, infrastructure, model villages and producing families at initial cost of two billion dollars.

Bush OK’s transfer of Darfur camps to UN-AU force

(*Sudan Tribune.com* – 14 Dec. WASHINGTON) President Bush approved transferring 34 U.S.-operated camps and related assets to the U.N.-African Union mission working in the war-wracked Darfur region of Sudan, the White House said Friday.

The United States Jan. 1 will turn over about \$40 million worth of camp equipment, communications and other assets that it has been operating and maintaining since 2004, White House spokesman Gordon Johndroe said.

"The rapid and successful deployment of a robust U.N. /A.U. operation in Darfur remains a top administration priority," Johndroe said. "Use of existing peacekeeping support infrastructure in Darfur is critical to the mission's ability to quickly deploy and assume responsibility for Darfur peacekeeping."

Bush has pushed for more troops and equipment to support the 7,000 African Union soldiers in Darfur trying to help end the conflict, which the U.S. president has called genocide.

Darfur force still faces obstacles to Jan. 1 start

(*Reuters*) Sudan's failure to approve some non-African units of a U.N.-African peacekeeping force for Darfur is delaying preparations for its Jan. 1 deployment, a U.N. official warned on Thursday.

Deputy peacekeeping chief Edmond Mulet briefed the Security Council on weekend talks with Sudanese officials aimed at persuading Khartoum to approve a list of troop contributors that includes units from Thailand and Nepal, as well as an engineering unit from Nordic countries.

Mulet said there had been some progress on technical issues, but Khartoum had not responded on the Thai, Nepalese and Nordic units.

"This is delaying the putting in place of many of the other assets," he said. "This is an answer we need urgently."

US envoy threatens Sudan with UN sanctions over Darfur force

(*AFP, 13 Dec*) The US envoy to the UN on Thursday threatened Sudan with additional sanctions if it continued to drag its feet on allowing the deployment of 26,000 UN-African Union peacekeepers in Darfur.

"There has been a record of the Sudanese government dragging its feet in implementing agreements," Zalmay Khalilzad told reporters after Security Council consultations on the stalled deployment of the force known as UNAMID in the strife-torn Sudanese region.

If Khartoum fails to quickly allow the inclusion of crucial Thai, Nepalese and Scandinavian units to bolster UNAMID, he said the 15-member Security Council would have to consider further action.

Senegalese peacekeepers to leave for joint UN-AU mission in Darfur

(*Xinhua via COMTEX*) The first batch of Senegalese servicemen are expected to be deployed in the troubled western Sudanese region of Darfur as part of a joint United

Nations- African Union peacekeeping mission is ready to depart, official sources have said.

According to the official Senegalese News Agency Friday, the contingent comprising 535 soldiers received its flag Thursday at a colorful ceremony that was presided over by Senegal's chief of general staff Ablaye Fall.

"This is a demonstration of our willingness to contribute fully to the maintenance of peace and stability in Africa and the world," General Fall said, calling on the troops to build on the example that had been set by their predecessors in Darfur.

Stop sending Darfur camps money, EU rights champion

(*Reuters*) The European Union must stop feeding Sudan's Darfur refugees in camps which only makes them an easier target for ethnic cleansing, the bloc's top human rights prize winner said.

Two days after he was awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, Sudanese lawyer Salih Mahmoud Osman said security, not financial aid, was what the region's people wanted most.

"Survivors are grateful that you are sending money and humanitarian relief," he told a panel discussion organised by the European Parliament in Berlin. "But they don't want to remain any more in the camps. You are keeping them there."

"Indirectly, you are helping the conspiracy of ethnic cleansing. Please don't feed them any more in the camps: help to protect them (so they can) go back to their homes."

Osman, an opposition member of the Sudanese parliament who works for the Sudan Organization against Torture, also urged the EU not to provide any money for African Union peacekeepers.

French aid workers in Chad to go on trial Dec 21

Dec 13 (*Reuters*) - Six French humanitarian workers accused in Chad of trying to smuggle 103 African children to Europe will go on trial on Dec. 21 after authorities speeded up the handling of their case, lawyers said on Thursday.

In an affair that has strained ties between France and its former colony, the six face criminal charges including attempted kidnapping and fraud after they were detained in late October for trying to fly the children, aged 1-10, out of Chad.

The accused French nationals are members of a humanitarian activist group called Zoe's Ark which said it planned to place children from Sudan's war-torn Darfur region with European families for fostering.

Chadian authorities and United Nations officials who questioned the children said the majority were not orphans and came from villages in the frontier region of eastern Chad.

The six accused, who could face forced labour terms if convicted, have denied the charges and started a hunger strike on Friday, refusing food but drinking water. They said they had been abandoned by the French government.

Three Chadians are also due to go on trial as accomplices.