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(By Public Information Office)

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UN/ Agencies

UN SG: Sudan will accept non-African troops in Darfur (AlSahafa)

The United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, said eventually Sudan will accept Thai and Nepalese troops in Darfur.

Two million refugees return to southern Sudan - UN (ST)

February 6, 2008 (JUBA) — United Nations Mission in Sudan said yesterday that about two million refugees have returned to southern Sudan since the signing of the Comprehensive peace Agreement.

UNMIS Regional Coordinator for Southern Sudan, David Gressley, in a press briefing in Juba on 5 February said that that about two million refugees and IDPs had already returned to Southern Sudan, and that 50 per cent of refugees were expected back before the end of the year.

As for returns, the UN planned to support up to 350,000 returnees to Southern Sudan in 2008, both internally displaced persons (IDPS) and refugees from neighbouring countries, Mr. Gressley said.

Gressley further said the UN had supported the region with basic infrastructure, including construction of roads, bridges, airfields, schools and government offices. Some 8,000 kilometres of road had been surveyed and demined, and the Organization planned to open up a further 2,000 kilometres this year.

He also said that the UN continued to support education, observing that more than a million children were now in school. The UN also hoped to provide water to 500,000 people in 2008 and continue to support the capacity of the region's water department, he said.

1500 RETURNEES FROM KHARTOUM IN JANUARY

The mission also said today that some 1,500 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) returned to their homes in Southern Sudan from camps and settlements in and around Khartoum in January, according to International Organization for Migration (IOM) figures.

The IDPs traveled by land and water to reach destinations in Unity, Warrap and Upper Nile states.

They returned under the Joint Organized Return Plan, which is coordinated and implemented by the Government of National Unity, the Government of Southern Sudan, the UN Mission in Sudan and IOM. To date, the Joint Plan has assisted more than 47,000 IDPs to return to Southern Sudan.

(ST)

Eritrean refugees arriving on Sudan border - UN (ST)

February 6, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Thousands of Eritrean refugees, many fleeing mandatory military service or jail, have arrived in Sudan in the past year and need help, the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR) said on Wednesday.

Erika Feller, U.N. assistant high commissioner for protection of refugees, said the new arrivals added to the 95,000 mostly Eritrean refugees already housed in camps in Sudan's desert east, some for up to four decades. She said Sudan needed help from donors to continue to aid them.

Speaking to reporters after a trip to the region, she said 28,000 others from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia were also settled in the region. More than 10,000, mostly Eritreans, had arrived in 2007 alone.

"Sudan is a refugee-hosting country," she said. "This is a contribution which Sudan is making which is much under-appreciated."

Waves of refugees were driven into Sudan by Eritrea's long separatist conflict with Ethiopia, culminating in Eritrea's secession in 1993. The two countries went to war again between 1998 and 2000.

Feller said she met an Eritrean mother in Sudan who had been jailed in Eritrea because her son had dodged the draft in Asmara.

"A lot of it relates to the compulsory military service and the penalties for not doing the services and the penalties that are imposed on family members," she said.

Military service lasts a minimum 18 months but authorities can extend it to as much as 10 years, with wages less than \$25 a month. Around 10 percent of Eritrea's population is said to be in the army.

Feller said the refugees could not be returned to Eritrea. Rights group Amnesty International says any Eritrean who has avoided military service is at risk of torture or imprisonment.

She added that those who had been on Sudan's desert border with Eritrea for more than four decades could not return home and UNHCR would try to help them to be self-sufficient and to integrate into the host community.

Feller added Sudan had agreed to host 2,000 Palestinian refugees who have fled Iraq and were now living in "untenable" conditions on the Iraq-Syrian border.

(Reuters)

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Security threatens to disclose names of journalists receiving salaries from foreign embassies (AIRai AIAam)

The Head of Security and Intelligence Services, Gen. Salah Gosh, criticized in a press conference yesterday the Sudanese media coverage of fighting between the Chadian Government and rebel groups. He accused some journalists of receiving salaries from foreign embassies and threatened to disclose their names. When investigated by security some journalists have admitted receiving salaries from foreign embassies, he said.

Sudan defense minister breaks down crying at a conference (ST)

February 06, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Sudan's top military official broke down in tears at the opening of a conference by the 'martyr's organization'.

Abdelrahim Mohamed Hussein recounted the sacrifices of martyrs since the 1989 coup that brought President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir to power.

"They [martyrs] have perished while fighting for a cause and defending values" Hussein told the attendees at the conference.

Hussein was addressing the top leaders in the departments making up the 'martyr's organization'. The latter was formed in 1992 at the height of the civil war between the north and south.

The organization was established to serve the families of fallen soldiers as well as veterans.

“How would our situation be if one of the martyrs’ families complained to the God almighty against us because we have fulfilled our obligation towards their wives and children?” Hussein said before sobbing.

The Al-Intibaha paper daily in Sudan said that the defence minister had to cut short his speech because of the “emotional breakdown”.

Some Sudanese speaking to Sudan Tribune mocked Hussein by saying that his weeping was related to the defeat of Chadian rebels in their attempt to seize power last weekend. Chad along with France and US accused Sudan of supporting the Chadian rebels.

Some unsubstantiated reports said that Hussein along with Salah Gosh, the head of Sudan’s National Security and Intelligence Service have orchestrated the rebels offensive against Chadian president Idriss Deby.

(ST)

Dr. Kamal Obeid: Chadian regime faced great pressures to destabilize situations in Sudan (SUNA)

Khartoum, Feb. 6 (SUNA) - State Minister at the Ministry of Information and Communications Dr Kamal Obeid said the Chadian regime is facing immense pressure to destabilize situations in Sudan. Briefing heads of media institutions and editor-in-chiefs of newspapers at the Ministry of Defence Wednesday, Dr. Obeid said Sudan has no interest in destabilizing Chad and on contrary Sudan is keen on Chad interest. Sudan is fully aware of pressures on Chad and Chad's response to them as well, he said. The Minister hoped that Chad problems would be resolved within the Chadian framework, pointing to the economic and security ties linking the two countries. Sudan has done whatever can be done for the sake of Chad and has played a leading role in resolving Chadian issues, he said. AH/BT

Director General of National Security and Intelligence Service reviews agreements concluded between the Chadian Government and opposition with Sudan mediation (SUNA)

Khartoum, Feb. 6 (SUNA) - Director General of the National Security and Intelligence Service Gen. Salah Abdallah has reviewed the agreements concluded between the Chadian Government and the armed movements aimed at realization of peace and stability in Chad with effective participation of Sudan. In a briefing to heads of media institutions and editors- in- chief of newspapers at the Defence Ministry Wednesday, Gen. Abdallah said that those agreements included Union of Forces for Development and Democracy, Forces for Change, Chadian National Accord and Union of Forces for Development and Democracy Basic. He pointed out that the agreements underscored realization of just and lasting peace on all Chadian territories, strengthening of the rule of law, achievement of development and social progress, consolidation of basic freedoms and rights for all citizens at equal footing. He added that the agreements stipulated full respect of Chadian constitution, immediate cease-fire, amnesty for all members of the movements that signed the agreements and releasing of prisoners. He went on to say that the agreements

stipulated participation of the signatory movements in administration of the state at all executive power levels alongside giving the movements the right of forming political parties and reintegration of the movements' forces in the national army and security organs. Gen. Salah Abdallah said that the Tripoli Agreement underlined establishment of a committee under chairmanship of the Libyan Jamahiriyah and membership of Sudan besides representatives of the Chadian government and the movements that signed the agreement under sponsorship of Libyan Leader Moamar Al- Gadhafi. The agreement underscored holding of a comprehensive Chadian national meeting in Tripoli with the participation of representatives of the Chadian government and the signatory movements as well as all political parties and the civil society organizations to support the agreement under patronage of the Libyan Leader, Chadian President and President of Sudan. He attributed failure of the agreement to the inaction of the Chadian government towards implementation of the articles concerning political participation a matter that led to the aggravation of the situations there. BH/BT

Director of the National Security Service discloses Sudanese-Libyan efforts to settle the situations in Chad (SUNA)

Khartoum, Feb. 6 (SUNA)- Director of the National Security and Intelligence Service Gen. Salah Abdallah has disclosed efforts being exerted now by Sudan in cooperation with the Libyan Jamahiriyah to settle the current situations in Chad. In a briefing to leaders of the media institutions and editors-in-chief of newspapers at the National Defence Ministry Wednesday, Gen. Abdallah affirmed keenness of Sudan on the security and stability in Chad based on the relations between the two peoples, explaining that Sudan has extended all of what is possible to help the Chadian government. He said the relation between Presidents Al-Bashir and Deby was strong and personal and based on confidence and continued as good till the appearance of Darfur problem, where President Deby played a role in its solution. He went on to say that as a result of this confidence, President Al-Bashir entrusted President Deby with the file of mediation to be the sole mediator in the issue and thus the relation continued and Sudan maintained cooperation with Chad against any dangers facing the Chadian government. He referred to staging of all the Sudanese opposition from Chad and supplying it with weapons and ammunitions without approval of President Deby, pointing to the intensification of tribal pressures and plots against the regime of Deby besides the entry of the armed Sudanese opposition into the Deby's government. He added that the Justice and Equality Movement contributed to increase of suspicions about Sudan support to the movements opposing Deby, affirming that these circumstances did not change Sudan's policy towards Chad. He reviewed Sudan's efforts in mediation between the Chadian parties with the participation of Libya, which were culminated by the Tripoli Agreement between the government and opposition, pointing to non implementation of the Chadian government to the agreement. He denied Sudan involvement in the recent incidents in Chad, pointing out that the Chadian opposition moved from all parts of Chad and gathered in the centre before attacking N'djamena. Maj. Gen. Ibrahim Izz-Eddin reviewed the bilateral agreements signed between the two countries and Sudan's participation in the reconciliations in Chad since 1992, referring to the signing of a border security agreement in 1996, joint border military force and then a joint ministerial committee in which security and cultural protocols were signed besides agreement on formation of border administrative and security posts and deployment of joint troops on the border. He pointed out that the causes of the difficulties that faced these agreements

were attributed to the Chadian side, which continued to refrain from sending the troops representing it in the joint forces. BT/BT

Tribal conference on problems arising from north-south border demarcation (Sudan Vision)

By: Al Sammani Awadallah, Leaders of local administration in the borderline between North and South Sudan would hold border conferences to acquaint themselves with problems related to demarcation of the borders.

Chief of Misseriya Hirioka Izzeldeen stated that the aim of border conferences is to consolidate the situation and support the citizens.

He added that there is a trend to strengthen local administrations and offer them power to maintain security. He said that the technical committee for border demarcation piled up support especially from the local citizens.

Of his part, representative of GoSS in the demarcation committee Engineer Colonel Rek Degol observed that there are expected problems connected with demarcation especially in oil and agricultural areas. He affirmed that the committee would solve any grievances of the citizens arising from demarcation.

Netherlands, Canadian Red Cross Societies agree to extend assistance to war-affected people in Kassala State (SUNA)

Khartoum, Feb. 6 (SUNA) - The Netherlands and Canadian Red Cross Societies have agreed to extend the term of their implementation to humanitarian aid programmes for the war-affected people in Kassala State and Hamashkoreib area till December 2009, through a funding of two million dollars. This was announced by the Director of International Cooperation Department at the Sudanese Red Crescent Society, Abu-Baker Al-Tigani Mahmoud, during a visit of a joint delegation of the Sudanese Red Crescent Society and the Netherlands and Canadian Red Cross Societies to Kassala State to inspect the implementation of the programme which began in the year 2007. Mahmoud said that agreement was reached to map out a plan to boost the branch of the Red Crescent Society in Kassala State with regard to capacity building and institutional development. He indicated that the Sudanese Red Crescent Society and its Netherlands and Canadian Red Cross partners have discussed implementation of an emergency aid programme. He said that the delegation also met with number of the officials and representatives of a number of International organizations operating in Kassala State. The comprehensive Assistance programme for war-affected people in Kassala State and Hamashkoreib area aims to improve the health conditions of IDPs as and providing them with clean water and sanitary services and to enhance their living conditions. MF/MO

Minister of Defence affirms Sudan keenness on security and stability in Chad (SUNA)

Khartoum, Feb. 6 (SUNA) - The Minister of National Defence, Gen. Abdul-Rahim Mohamed Hussein, has affirmed Sudan's keenness on the security and stability in Chad and developing the relations between the two countries in the political,

economic and security fields. This came while the minister was giving a briefing to the media men, editors-in-chief and columnists at the Ministry of Defence Wednesday. The minister said that deterioration of the security situation in neighboring Chad is not for the interest of Sudan in view that instability in Chad affects the stability and security in Darfur. The minister described as false and untrue the allegations on Sudan's support to the Chadian opposition. Gen. Hussein said that Sudan will go ahead in its efforts for achieving a peaceful solution in Chad and preserving good neighbourliness relations with Chad. MF/MO

GoSS

Clashes in Malakal between Pagan's and Lam Akol's supporters (Alwan, AllIntibaha)

Security authorities in Malakal have yesterday arrested 30 people following clashes between the SPLM supporters of the Secretary General Pagan Amum and those of SPLM leader Dr. Lam Akol. Akol's supporters reacted against the result of SPLM grass-root conferences in which the majority supported Pagan Amum.

Reports on reshuffle in GoSS: Lam Akol for Presidential Affairs, Mantwil for Unity State, Galwak for Upper Nile (Alwan)

Private sources in Juba affirmed to Alwan that there are indications of a possible reshuffle in the Government of Southern Sudan's constitutional portfolios. According to these sources the reshuffle may be announced today or tomorrow. The sources explained that Kiir may appoint Joseph Mantwil Minister of Health and Governor for Unity State, Galwak Deng Governor of Upper Nile and Dr. Lam Akol Minister of Presidential Affairs. Dr. Luka Biong (GoSS Minister of Presidential Affairs), Taban Deng (Governor of Unity State) and Dak Dob (Governor of Upper Nile) may be relieved from their present positions. According to sources, Kiir is said to be happy with the civilized behaviour of Dr. lam Akol after relieving him from the position of the Foreign Minister and his respectof decisions taken by institutions.

South Sudan orders Islamic banks to leave (ST)

February 6, 2008 (JUBA) — Three Islamic banks in Sudan's semi-autonomous south are liquidating assets ahead of a deadline to close at the end of February, a south Sudan government official said on Wednesday.

Under a 2005 peace deal to end decades of civil war between the Islamist government in Khartoum and the mainly Christian and animist south, only conventional banking will be used in the south with Islamic banking in the north.

Banks were given the option last year to close up or adopt only conventional banking.

"They have opted to keep with Islamic banking," Kornelio Koriom, deputy manager of south Sudan's central bank, told Reuters.

(Reuters)

South Sudan army leaves RDC border after 10 years (ST)

February 6, 2008 (BUNIA) — Police and other security services from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have begun deploying near the Sudanese border after the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) withdrew troops who had occupied the area for a decade, officials said.

“We raised the Congolese flag over Kengezi Base on Sunday 3 February, regaining our territorial integrity. They [the SPLA] agreed to withdraw unconditionally. We ourselves favoured an amicable solution without trying to create other problems,” Dieudonne Rwabone, commissioner of the northeastern district of Ituri, told IRIN.

In 1998, the SPLA, a former rebel group that is now the official army of Southern Sudan, established a base in Kengezi, which lies at the junction of the DRC, Sudanese and Ugandan borders, about 350km north of Ituri's capital, Bunia. This was at the start of a civil war in DRC that lasted five years; the SPLA had been persuaded by the DRC rebels to support their fight against the government in Kinshasa, the capital.

(IRIN)

Darfur

Darfur rebels condemn Sudan's intervention in Chad's affairs (ST)

February 5, 2008 (PARIS) — Darfur rebel Justice and Equality Movement has condemned the Sudanese intervention in Chad's internal affairs by backing rebels who attempted to topple President Deby, a rebel official said.

Ahmed Hussein Adam, the JEM spokesman, told Sudan Tribune that Justice and Equality Movement “strongly condemn the Sudan's government intervention in the Chadian affairs, in particular, the recent operation financed planned and managed by Khartoum.”

(ST)

Miscellaneous

Chad's Prime Minister says Libya backing rebels (ST)

February 6, 2008 (NDJAMENA) — In an expected move, Chad has accused Libya of backing rebel attempt to oust the President Idriss Deby while Tripoli was seen by many as fervent supporter of the current ruler.

Chadian Prime Minister, Delwa Kassire Coumakoye, Wednesday accused Libya of supporting the rebels who launched an assault on Ndjamenana last weekend from bases inside Sudan.

Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi "helped in the arming of these people," Coumakoye said.

"They were armed by Sudan and supported by Libya." He added.

However during a press conference held with the visiting French Defence Minister Herve Morin the President Deby downplayed any differences with Libya. "Relations between Chad and Libya are excellent," he said.

(ST)

(Some information for this report are provided by the AFP)

Chad's president says government in control, chasing fleeing rebels

TOM MALITI, Associated Press Writer, N'DJAMENA, Chad-- Chad's president declared himself in control of the country Wednesday, even while acknowledging that three-fourths of his government had disappeared since rebels attacked the capital.

President Idriss Deby wore a military uniform as he received reporters in the presidential palace to make his first public comments since the coup attempt.

He denied reports that he had been injured as N'Djamena was besieged, spreading his arms wide and saying, "Look at me, I'm fine."

"We are in total control, not only of the capital, but of all the country," Deby said after meeting with the French defense minister, who came to Chad in a show of support for the government.

Deby said the Chadian army was chasing the rebels, who were fleeing east. "We are going to catch them before they enter **Sudan**," he said, speaking for about 30 minutes while seated in a chair in front of the flags of Chad and the African Union.

"I am working with less than a quarter of the members of my government," he said. "I do not know where the rest have gone."

"There are traitors. When the time comes we shall work on that issue," he added.

Wife of Sudan's former prime minister [al Sadiq al Mahdi] dies (ST)

February 06, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Sara Al-Fadil, wife of former Sudanese Prime Minister and leader of the opposition Umma party Sadiq al-Mahdi has passed away in Khartoum yesterday, party figures told Sudan Tribune.

Al-Fadil died around 2 pm local Sudan time after the adjournment of a meeting she attended between Umma party and Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) delegation led by its Secretary General Pagan Amum.

Al-Fadil was a member of the Umma Party political bureau as well as the general secretariat. She suffered a massive heart attack following the meeting. All attempts to revive her were unsuccessful.

Sara Al-Fadil married Al-Mahdi after finishing college in the US in 1962. She was an active political figure as part of the Umma party and was jailed during former president Ja'far Nimeiri presidency as well as after the 1989 coup led by Omar Hassan Al-Bashir.

The funeral will be held today in Omdurman.

(ST)