



UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN
UNMIS
UNMIS Media Monitoring Report, 16th February, 2006
(By Public Information Office)

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HIGHLIGHTS:

UN

UN official says Darfur talks deadlocked

(*ST* – 15th Feb. **Khartoum**) During a press conference today, the UN spokesperson in Sudan, Radhia Achouri, said that the seventh round of talks in Abuja between the government and the Darfur armed movements did not manage to make any achievement.

She said that the course of talks in some of the dossiers was very slow and that the security instability on the ground affected it negatively.

However, the flow of talks in some the dossiers have become a bit faster and hoped that it would continue in that way.

Achouri urged the negotiating sides to take full responsibility towards the Darfur people.

She said that at a time when the talks were moving slowly there were hundreds of thousands facing dangers of death in IDPs camps. She said that negotiation parties should take that in to regard.

The spokesperson of AU Mission in Sudan said that Sudanese parties in Darfur peace talks have realised significant progress in the wealth sharing and security arrangements,. But it seems that the negotiations are deadlocked on the question of Power sharing.

Pronk holds talks with Paulino Matip over armed factions and the CPA

(*Akhbar Alyaum* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) High rank official sources report that Mr. Pronk hosted in el-Fasher recently a meeting of representatives of tribes and all political parties in North Darfur except the National Congress Party.

During the meeting, the sources say, Pronk talked of the issue of the deployment of UN forces in the region. He said that these forces are to protect the region and its people and brings with it good and stability. He called for their support and cooperation for these forces.

The sources further add that the issue of deployment of international troops to Darfur was fiercely challenged by the tribal and local leaders who viewed it as a violation of the sovereign rights of the state.

The sources further reveal that the issue was only supported by representatives of three opposition parties all of whom hail from the Zaghawa tribe.

Pronk discusses armed factions and CPA with Paulino Matip

(*Akhbar Alyaum* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) UNMIS Spokesperson told a press briefing yesterday that SRSG Pronk held a recent meeting with SPLA deputy commander, Paulino Matip.

The two sides, she said, discussed the security situation in southern Sudan, the implementation of the CPA and the issue of Other Armed Groups and agreed to remain in touch to follow up on these issues.

The Spokesperson also revealed that the CJMC has decided that SPLA redeploy from eastern Sudan to below the 1/1/1956 lines by the 15th of March 2006 while SAF forces redeploy north of that line by the same date. The CJMC meeting held on 14th February also underlined the need to complete enrolment and training of the JIUs by 9th October this year. The chairman of the CJMC called upon the SAF and the SPLA to provide lists of forces that are not within their ranks.

On the other hand, Spokesperson Radhia revealed that a group of armed men in military attire raided the UNICEF camp in Yambio in southern Sudan but

Pronk urges rebel movements to show commitment in the negotiations

(*AlAyaam*– 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) Spokesperson Radhia Achouri reported yesterday that SRSG Jan Pronk has urged the rebel groups in the Abuja talks to unite and show commitment to the talks and end the killing in order to reach a political solution to the problems.

She added that the SRSG was in talks with an AU team headed by Ambassador Saeed Jinnit and Ambassador Kingibe and among the issues discussed was the transition of AMIS to a UN operation through partnership between the two sides.

She said that the UN and the AU will sit together to map the needs of the AU for the interim period ahead of the Brussels Summit in March when this will be discussed.

Achouri also disclosed that the SRSG visited South and North Darfur where he held talks with government officials, leaders of the political parties and civil activists. These talks focused on the issue of the transition.

The Spokesperson further revealed that the UN will transport Minnawi from el-Fasher to Abuja to give impetus to the stalled talks and break the deadlock.

The UNMIS official described the security situation in Darfur as tens and cited the recent fightings that took place in Sheiriyah area. She said that an AU team is on their way by land to that area to investigate. She also said that reports of the crash of a military helicopter has been confirmed as shot by the SLA but declined to give any further details of the crash. The UN, she says, has no presence in that area.

AMIS-UN transition

(*AlRai AlAam* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) UNMIS spokesperson Radhia Achouri told a press conference yesterday that the UN mission is waiting for a possible decision by the AU Peace and Security Council in its session next March to hand over AMIS to a UN operation.

She stressed however that the transition will not mean that all aspects of the AMIS mandate will be handled by the UN. She said that the prevailing probability is for the transition of the military field presence and added that there are no current preparations on the political side.

She also added that the priority now is to find means for a solution to the crisis in Darfur and not to allow any vacuum to be created as a result of AMIS failure to carry out its operations

in Darfur. She said no one would expect the UN that is responsible for preserving international peace and security will allow the situation in Darfur to slip back to square one.

The spokesperson also denied reports that the SRSB had requested the US to provide troops. She said that it is still too early for that but the UN is making contingency measures.

UN deploys 6,147 troops in Sudan to support peace process

(*Sudan Vision* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) Sudan Vision-- The United Nations Mission to Sudan announced that the deployment of International forces to support the peace process in Sudan is progressing satisfactorily.

The UN Mission spokesperson in Sudan, Ms. Radhia Ashouri, said in a press statement Wednesday that the total number of UN forces in Sudan had reached 6147 troops till now, out of the specified number of 10,000 International troops, adding that 614 International observers, 164 officers and 5,369 troops are now working within the UN Mission in Sudan. Ms. Ashory said that all countries that pledged to send troops to operate among the UN forces in Sudan have fulfilled their commitments, stating that the UN Mission is awaiting arrival of Russian and Chinese forces in Sudan during the coming period.

UN police

(*AIRai AIAam* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) UN police has started training of 500 police officers of the SPLA.

Radhia Achouri says this training program that span 3 weeks is aimed at training police personnel on VIP protection and investigating crimes of murder.

Just FYI

(*Alwan* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) After UNMIS issued its newspaper and the technical preparations were concluded for its radio to go on air, it informed the National Press and Publications Council as an afterthought.

The National Press Council was informed by one of UNMIS representatives that they will leave some of their publications produced by virtue of their agreement with the foreign ministry at the National Press and Publications Council thus setting the Council in a position whereby it can do nothing on UNMIS media including its newspaper.

Even its radio station that will soon be on air will exceed the range of the local FM stations to be received from every part of the country.

Achouri to leave Sudan

(*Alwan* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) UNMIS Spokesperson Radhia Achouri surprised the media yesterday that she will be leaving the country as her tour of duty in Khartoum has come to an end and she has been transferred to a duty station outside Sudan.

She declined to say where she was going.

Achouri who has been known for her statements on behalf of the UN on Darfur, eastern and southern Sudan, told the media after answering their questions and by way of farewell, "This will briefing will be my last encounter with you."

It is worth noting that Achouri hails from Algerian roots and has managed to create open relations with the media in Sudan during her course of work at the UN mission in Sudan.

CPA

Mjr. Gen. Babur says JIUs in southern Sudan have not yet received their salaries

(*AlAyaam* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) Mjr. Gen Babur, Spokesperson for the Joint Defence Council, said that the JIU personnel in Juba have not been paid their salaries.

He pointed out that the JIUs in Khartoum have received advances of up to three months' pay while their counterparts in Juba have received only one months' advance pay.

He further pointed out that no budget has been drawn for these forces and they lack training and guns and don't even have a unified uniform.

The spokesperson also said that among the problems facing the JIU's is the redeployment of the SAF and the SPLA and pointed out that the SPLA is yet to fully withdraw from eastern Sudan and the SAF also has to redeploy to north of the 1/1/1956 line.

In answer to a question on the SAF announcement that 17.5% of their troops have been redeployed north of the 1/1/1956 line, the spokesperson pointed out that this can not be verified as the SAF has not provided the Joint Defence Council a list of the number of troops and the areas from which they are redeploying.

He said that the Council sat only once when it was inaugurated by the President and First Vice-president of the Republic.

GoNU

Sudan's NCP withdraws controversial presidential decrees

(*Reuters/ST* – 15th Feb. **Khartoum**) A first political showdown between Sudan's former foes has forced the withdrawal of six presidential decrees including one which gave wider powers to security services, widely condemned for their brutality.

Ex southern rebels, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), formed a coalition government with its former northern enemies following a peace deal last year which enshrines wealth sharing and democratic transformation.

But SPLM parliamentarians blasted the northern National Congress Party (NCP) earlier this month for trying to pass important laws about human rights and conduct of the armed forces as presidential decrees, which cannot be amended by parliament. They said it violated the new peace deal.

"I consider this as a victory for all, as a victory for the democratic transformation and the new system," Yasir Arman, the head of the SPLM parliamentary bloc said on Wednesday.

He said the decrees were now to be debated as bills, which parliament could amend.

NCP officials were not immediately available for comment.

One of the decrees gave police and army officers immunity if they used deadly force against civilians and allowed any of Sudan's tens of thousands of largely uneducated police rank and file to use live fire at their own discretion.

U.N. human rights chief Louise Arbour said last month that security services in Sudan operated in a "climate of impunity." Civilians are often arrested without charge and tortured, sometimes to death.

Another decree regulated the work of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Sudan, requiring them to place their funds in accounts run by the government and allowing them to be ejected or shut down if they publicly disagreed with government policy.

The NGO act has worried the many international and national groups working to rebuild the south and in the separate and ongoing conflict in the western Darfur region, where one of the world's largest humanitarian operations is being hindered by continued fighting.

Sudanese authorities already place stringent regulations on their work and last year they arrested two international aid workers from Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), after the organisation published a report detailing more than 500 rapes over a few months in Darfur, where more than 2 million live in miserable camps.

The charges, which included spying and destabilising society, were dropped weeks later but scared many NGOs into silence about the atrocities they were witnessing in the remote region.

Tens of thousands have been killed in three years of raping, killing and looting in Darfur, violence Washington has called genocide. Khartoum denies the charge but the International Criminal Court is investigating war crimes there.

Parliament endorses Voluntary Works Act

(*AlRai AlAam* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) Parliament endorsed yesterday the draft Voluntary and Humanitarian Works Act despite requests from MPs from different blocs that extensive discussions be held on the issue.

Yassir Erman of the SPLM parliamentary bloc had requested that the house be given more time to discuss the bill and expressed hopes that the Justice and Legislation Committee join in the debate over the bill.

An MP on the NDA ticket supported Erman's requests and pointed out that such issues should not be viewed from a narrow partisan perspective.

US delegation to visit Darfur and south Sudan to bolster the peace process

(*AlRai AlAam* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) A US congressional delegation is expected in the country on an official visit on Saturday.

An informed source reports that the delegation will hold talks during its two day visit with official is in Khartoum before travelling to southern Sudan and Darfur to get acquainted to the humanitarian and relief situation of those affected by the war.

Their tour is in a bid to bolster the peace process in the country.

Darfur/ Abuja talks

Bashir and Konaré agree on need for AU to remain seized of the Darfur matter

(*AlSahafa* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) President Bashir and AU Commissioner Alpha Oumar Konaré agreed in a meeting in Khartoum yesterday that the issue of Darfur remain an African issue.

Foreign minister Lam Akol said that the talks focused on Darfur and the practical steps required on the ground and n the Abuja talks.

On his part, Konaré said that their talks underlined the need to accelerate the peace process for Darfur and that the AU remain seized of the matter in all African issues including that of Darfur.

AU summons Minnawi, gives negotiators 48 hours to break the deadlock

(*AlRai AIAam* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) AMIS Spokesperson Nouraldeem el-Mazni says the AU has called upon the rebel commanders in the field to come to Abuja within 48 hours to break the deadlock in the Abuja talks.

Minnawi, leader of the SLM, says he will be in Abuja later today at the head of a delegation of military commanders to give the talks the required shove through sincere negotiations.

He called upon AbdelWahid who heads the other faction to listen to reason and review his earlier decision to sever links with his faction and the JEM because, he adds, “the issue of Darfur can not stand partial solutions.”

SLM Spokesperson Issam-el-deen el-Haj, expressed optimism that an agreement is near.

He further pointed out that the head of the African Union Peace and Security Council has given them until the end of this month to reach an agreement but pointed out that to do so requires a strong will and called upon all the parties to make brave decisions.

“We reject any solution that does not take into consideration the historic rights of the people of Darfur as this may lead to a reproduction of the conflict.”

Spectre of split looms over SLM

(*AlRai AIAam* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) Sources in Abuja and Darfur predict that the Minnawi wing is likely to split.

Their report is based on recent reports that Minnawi had ordered the deputy commander of the SLA to strike a position of the AbdelWahid faction of the SLA.

AbdelWahid calls for a confederation

(*AlAyaam* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) AbdelWahid Nour has called upon the AU to grant the people of Darfur a confederation.

He threatened to launch attacks against the government on all fronts should the government fail to meet their demands for confederation.

US SJC produces fabricated material about genocide in Darfur

(*SMC* – 15th Feb. **Khartoum**) Civil Society Organization in Al Fashir capital of northern Darfur state demanded investigations with a US Society for Justice and Confidence (US SJC). The respective organizations stated that USSJC has produced fabricated materials to propagate ethnic cleansing, genocide and rape as being committed inside IDPS camps in Darfur region.

The statement noticed that US SJC provides foreign delegates who visited the region with these fabricated materials.

N. Darfur State Governor forms committee for elimination of violence against women

(*SMC* – 15th Feb. **Khartoum**) Northern Darfur state governor Osman Mohamed Yousf Kibir has issued a resolution forming a committee responsible for elimination of violence against women. The committee composed of 13 members and headed by manager general of the ministry of animal resources Dr. Hawa Silaman.

The committee mission focuses on following up cases of violence against women and all forms of exploiting them.

Eastern Sudan

Reports of talks on east to be held in Nairobi

(*AlAyaam* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**) Factions of the Eastern Front have started talks in Hamishkoreib in a bid to come up with a unified position on forthcoming negotiations with the GoNU.

These talks started yesterday amid unconfirmed reports of a move to shift the venue of the talks with the government be shifted to Nairobi to allow for Eritrean participation instead of Libya.

Others

Danish and Norwegian NGOs asked to evacuate Darfur

(*AlSahafa* – 16th Feb. **Khartoum**). The Humanitarian Aid Commission offices in Nyala and el-Fasher have formally asked the Norwegian Church Aid, Danish Church Aid and Norwegian Refuges Council to evacuate their staff to Khartoum for their own safety.

This follows the widespread protests witnessed in Darfur following the publication in a Danish newspaper of a cartoon depicting Prophet Mohamed and comes a day after the people in Darfur staged a sit-in at el-Fasher airport to prevent an aircraft carrying Norway's deputy defence minister from landing.

Sources say that representatives of these organisations held talks yesterday with high rank officials at the offices of the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs in Khartoum to study the impact of these decisions on humanitarian work in the area and possibilities of finding alternatives better than withdrawal.

It is worth noting that the Norwegian Church Aid had received threats in writing in their offices in Zalinge after which they relocated their staff to el-Fasher.