

**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN****UNMIS****Media Monitoring Report, 25 February 08**

(By Public Information Office)

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UN/ Agencies

Western Darfur: following attacks, UN officials voice concern for civilians' safety

24 February 2008 – The head of the United Nations-African Union (AU) hybrid peacekeeping force, known as UNAMID, and the world body's Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan today said that they are “gravely concerned” for the safety of thousands of civilians in the Jebel Muun area of Western Darfur, which was reportedly the scene of aerial bombings.

“It is imperative that civilians are kept out of harms' way, and for this to happen, any fighting must stop immediately. The risks at this stage to civilians are unacceptably high,” according to a statement issued by UN/AU Joint Special Representative Rodolphe Adada and UN Humanitarian Coordinator Ameerah Haq.

The Government has assured them that civilians will be able to move out of the area and to safety, and they are seeking similar assurances from the area's rebel movements.

“The solution to Darfur's problems can never be a military one,” Mr. Adada and Ms. Haq said, adding that they hope to have humanitarian access to Jebel Muun and nearby areas.

“The eyes of the world are now on Darfur and the concerns of all of us have to be with the innocent children, women and men who are caught-up in the fighting.”

On 22 February, Ms. Haq expressed alarm at the level of destruction she witnessed while participating in a joint assessment of the West Darfur town of Sirba, which came under air and ground attack from the Sudanese Government and allied militia groups earlier this month.

For now, the UN can provide humanitarian assistance, “but the clear message obviously is that what the people really want is protection. They are looking for security,” Ms. Haq said. “The ability to provide that - whether from the government or the international community – is still a long way away.”

Women and girls face being raped when gathering firewood in the Wadi, and the Humanitarian Coordinator appealed to both the international community and Khartoum to recognize the need for UNAMID's speedy deployment.

[Destruction in West Darfur town shocking, reports UN refugee agency](#)

22 February 2008 – United Nations refugee agency staff participating in a joint assessment of the West Darfur town of Sirba, which came under air and ground attack from the Sudanese Government and allied militia groups earlier this month, say they were shocked at the level of destruction they witnessed.

A joint UN humanitarian mission involving the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as well as the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Ameerah Haq, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan, visited Sirba yesterday, as some locals drift back to the town in the wake of the deadly attack on 8 February.

For now, the UN can provide humanitarian assistance, “but the clear message obviously is that what the people really want is protection. They are looking for security,” Ms. Haq said. “The ability to provide that - whether from the government or the international community – is still a long way away.”

Women and girls face being raped when gathering firewood in the Wadi, and the Humanitarian Coordinator appealed to both the international community and Khartoum to recognize the need for the speedy deployment of the joint UN-AU hybrid peacekeeping mission, known as UNAMID.

“If UNAMID continues to lack the full capacity required for it to fulfill its mandate, the people will continue to be vulnerable and exposed to the types of attacks that happened here in Sirba, with houses being burnt down, children disappearing, girls being raped,” she noted. “This will continue and the story will repeat itself. Village after village the destruction will spread.”

The residents who stayed or returned pleaded with the assessment mission for help in securing their town and nearby villages from further attacks, UNHCR spokesperson Ron Redmond told reporters today in Geneva.

The residents also warned that fleeing across the nearby Chadian border was dangerous because of the continuing conflict in the area and the widespread banditry, and they voiced concern about their compatriots who have been living in eastern Chad since the attacks on Sirba and on the villages of Sileah and Abu Suruj.

UN agencies have been distributing emergency items such as food and shelter material since the attacks, while the Sudanese Government has also provided tents.

More than 200,000 people have been killed and over 2.2 million others displaced since 2003 because of fighting across Darfur, an arid region on Sudan's western flank, between Government forces, allied militia groups and rebels.

UNAMID has been dispatched to the region to try to quell the violence and humanitarian suffering, but the most recent UN report on its deployment found that the worsening security situation in West Darfur was undermining basic aid distribution efforts.

WFP has lost 28 of its trucks to thieves and bandits so far this year and 14 of its drivers remain missing as a result of the robberies and abductions.

The agency issued an urgent appeal to all parties to improve security and road conditions so that its capacity to feed up to 3.2 million Darfurians with emergency food aid is not restricted.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Sudanese official says elections will be conducted in all of Darfur

(ST) February 24, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — A senior Sudanese official said today that elections will be held in time and will cover all Darfur states.

“Elections can be held in 99% of Darfur” Sudan’s presidential assistant Nafi Ali Nafi told the official news agency (SUNA).

Last week the Information Secretariat official in the ruling National Congress Party, Kamal Obeid and the minister of State for Information said that the general elections in the country can be completed without the participation of Darfurians due to the political instability in the region.

But Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) said that any decision on the matter should be discussed between the different state bodies and with the political parties particularly the Darfurian ones.

Nafi said that security has prevailed in Darfur and that the fighting is confined to a small area in West Darfur as a result of Chadian support to Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebel group.

“If for any reason elections can’t be held in parts of Darfur they can be completed at a later date” he added.

The elections, planned for 2009, were promised as part of a peace deal that ended more than two decades of north-south civil war and are seen as crucial to the long-term stability of the region.

US special envoy to Sudan stops in Egypt

(ST) February 24, 2008 (CAIRO) — The US special envoy to Sudan Richard Williamson made an unannounced stop in Cairo to meet with Egyptian officials before heading to Khartoum.

Williamson met with the Egyptian foreign minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit to discuss the Darfur crisis as well as the North-South peace agreement.

The foreign ministry spokesperson Amr Zaki said that Aboul Gheit “was keen to meet with Williamson in the framework of continuous consultation between the US and Egypt about the issues facing Sudan”.

Aboul Gheit flew to Saudi Arabia after the meeting as part of the delegation led by the Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak to meet with King Abdullah.

Zaki said that Aboul Gheit told the US envoy that the “divisions with the Darfur rebel groups” is the main obstacle to peace in the region.

However Williamson told reporters after the meeting that “no progress can be made on the political front without addressing the humanitarian crisis in Darfur”.

“There are thousands of civilians living in villages who are scared of being attacked and there are also 3 million refugees who are living in dire humanitarian condition. Many of the Darfurians also die as a result of malnutrition” he added.

The US envoy also said that the crisis between Sudan and Chad is caused by rebel groups on both sides of the border. He further said that both countries want to stabilize their borders “because it is in their interest as well as other countries”.

The Egyptian government has generally been supportive of Khartoum’s position on the Darfur crisis. Last year Aboul Gheit has challenged the West to prove the numbers of deaths in Darfur in an interview with the daily Al-Sharq Al-Awsat.

The US envoy was due to arrive in Khartoum today for the first time since his appointment last December. He is expected to meet with the Sudanese president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir and his Vice president Ali Osman Taha.

Williamson was supposed to arrive in Khartoum late January for meetings with Sudanese officials focused primarily on the Darfur crisis but the visit was postponed for unknown reasons.

Some sources speaking to Sudan Tribune at the time said the delay was due to “security measures being taken in Khartoum” without elaborating. However some US officials told Sudan Tribune that the special envoy sought the delay to meet with Deng Alor on his upcoming visit to Washington.

Sudanese officials have expressed pessimism with regard to Williamson and noted that his background makes him a “hardliner”.

The new US envoy has described the Sudanese regime as “thugs” who will “act like thugs as long as they are allowed to do so” in an August 2005 article in the Chicago-Sun Times.

In the article he wrote, Williamson said that “bilateral and multilateral action must be taken” against Khartoum.

But the former UN diplomat has maintained a low profile and avoided the media since he was tapped by Bush for the post In January.

It is expected that Williamson will call on Sudan to remove obstacles facing the deployment of the UN-AU hybrid force in Darfur and to halt recent military operations which resulted in the displacement of thousands of civilians.

International experts estimate 200,000 people have died in the conflict, which Washington calls genocide, a term European governments are reluctant to use. The Sudan government says 9,000 people have been killed.

[Sudan president orders boycott of Danish goods and officials](#)

(ST) February 24, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The Sudanese president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir ordered today that no Danish diplomat be received in the country as well as expelling Danish humanitarian organizations and boycotting Danish goods.

The Sudanese president made this decision after a meeting of the executive council in the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) to protest re-publication of cartoons considered insulting to prophet Muhammad.

A leading figure in the ruling party, Hassan Osman Rizg, said that Sudan wants to coordinate with Arab and Muslim countries for similar measures “to respond forcefully to the attacks against Islam and Muslims”.

The drawing was one of 12 cartoons that sparked protests in Muslim countries when they were first published in 2006. Danish newspapers said they reprinted it this month in support of free speech after three men were arrested in an alleged plot to kill the cartoonist.

Rizg also said that the government agencies will issue regulations to enforce the decisions taken by the NCP as early as Wednesday when a “million man march” is planned to protest the cartoons.

However Karin Soerensen, the Danish Charge d’Affaires in Khartoum told Associated Press that he had not been notified of the decision taken by the NCP.

Sudan’s president has in the past used the issue of the cartoons as an excuse to reject Scandinavian peacekeepers in Darfur. Also the former UN Undersecretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland of Norway was barred from entering Darfur for the same reason.

Sudan’s foreign Ministry spokesman at the time, Jamal Ibrahim said that “because of the special circumstances of the birthday of the Prophet Mohammad, the local authorities said it was not advisable to welcome him [Egeland] at this time”

But Egeland dismissed Sudan’s justification and said that the government doesn’t want him “to see how bad it has become in Southern Darfur”

[ICC prosecutor to investigate senior Sudanese officials \(ST\)](#)

February 24, 2008 (THE HAGUE) — Nine months after the first arrest warrants were issued for those suspected of being behind atrocities in Sudan’s Darfur region, the chief international prosecutor believes he has the masterminds in his sights.

International Criminal Court prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo has vowed to target the most senior people behind the violence and says that peace will only be possible in troubled Darfur if arrests are made and those responsible are brought to justice.

He issued a warrant last May for the arrest of Sudan's secretary of state for humanitarian affairs Ahmed Harun, but despite a UN resolution requiring Khartoum to comply with the court Harun is still at large.

"If Harun is not arrested and removed there will be no justice, no peace in Darfur," Moreno-Ocampo said in a telephone interview with AFP from his native Argentina on Friday.

He said arresting Harun "is the condition for any solution in Darfur."

The prosecutor also announced new investigations into crimes against refugees in the region blighted by five years of civil war after ethnic minority rebels took up arms against Sudan's Arab-dominated regime in February 2003.

At least 200,000 people have died in the conflict and more than two million have fled their homes, according to UN figures, although the Khartoum government maintains that only 9,000 have been killed.

Moreno-Ocampo said he aimed to hunt down the top echelons above Harun in the chain of command and behind the savage atrocities in the west of the country.

Asked for details of new arrest warrants, he replied: "The second case will be different. Harun is instructed, he's supported," he added without elaborating.

The International Criminal Court, the first permanent tribunal set up to tackle war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity, is based in The Hague and issued its first arrest warrants in May against Harun and Janjaweed militia chief Ali Kosheib.

They were accused of 51 crimes against humanity and war crimes — including murder, torture and mass rape.

Sudan has failed to hand over the two suspects, and in an act of defiance in November it appointed Harun to help overseeing the hybrid UN and Africa Union peacekeeping force currently deployed in Darfur.

"The most violent phase of the conflict in Darfur started in 2003, but it's very important to realise that it is not over," Moreno-Ocampo told AFP.

"It is still happening, before the very eyes of the international community," he added, referring to reports of communities being displaced, bombing raids on villages and attacks on refugee camps.

He alleged Harun had played a "key role" in these incidents and was also responsible for slowing the delivery of much-needed humanitarian aid.

"I think the Security Council has to do more for these mandates to be executed. I told them so," said the prosecutor who in December drew up an indictment against Khartoum which he handed to the United Nations.

Last October Ocampo criticized the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon for neglecting the issue of justice in his monthly reports on Sudan.

“Justice was not mentioned in the UNSG subsequent reports on Darfur where the UN secretariat developed a three prong approach with a humanitarian, political and security components only” Ocampo said in prepared remarks to the 11th diplomatic briefing at the ICC headquarters in the Hague.

Ocampo also disclosed for the first time that he has been approached by a number of countries suggesting that he should try and indict “lower level perpetrators, easier to arrest than Ministers or powerful militia leaders”.

However Ocampo emphasized that he will only prosecute individuals “based on the criminal evidence we collect and subject only to the judicial review of the Chambers [judges]”.

“What is at stake is simply the survival of 2.5 million people. As a prosecutor I do my part. My responsibility is to the victims.”

“Executing these arrest warrants is a test for the international community,” he said, but without answering questions about support from specific members of the UN Security Council.

Moreno-Ocampo pointed to frequent meetings held with regional powers, some of which are ICC members and others, which are not, and regional groups such as the Arab League.

“It is important to show that we are not in any kind of conflict between the West and the Arab world,” he said.

About Harun he added: “For me as a prosecutor, I know Harun’s destiny is in court.”

Sudan has not ratified the Rome Statue, but the UN Security Council triggered the provisions under the Statue that enables it to refer situations in non-State parties to the world court if it deems that it is a threat to international peace and security.

Sudan army says it has complete control over West Darfur

(ST) February 24, 2008 (El-Geneina) — Sudan’s defense minister said that the army has regained full control of Jabel Moun area in West Darfur.

“We have destroyed 9 rebel camps” Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein told the official news agency (SUNA) today from West Darfur.

The Sudanese army began an offensive to flush out the rebel presence in Silea, Sirba, Abu- Sorouj.

Aid workers in the area, who wished to remain anonymous, said the attackers had "burned to the ground" Abu Sorouj and Sirba towns, about 55km north of El-Geneina, the capital of West Darfur.

The attacks left hundreds of civilians dead and thousands more displaced according to the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR).

Hussein said his visit to Jabel Moun was to “inspect the troops and ensure that they are in good spirits”. The top military official also visited the wounded soldiers in El-Geneina military hospital.

The recent offensive has drawn criticism by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon who urged a ceasefire in Darfur saying deteriorating security is undermining efforts to help thousands of civilians caught in an upsurge in fighting.

[Sudan slams UN statements on Darfur attacks](#)

(ST) February 24, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Assistant to the Sudanese president, Nafi Ali Nafi, described the statement made by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, regarding the army attacks in Jebel Moun area, West Darfur, as unfortunate.

In his monthly report to the Security Council, Ban condemned "in the strongest possible terms" attacks on civilians in three towns in West Darfur on Feb. 8 that caused an estimated 200 casualties and forced over 10,000 civilians to flee across the border to Chad.

Nafi said he hopes that such statements were not in response to Western pressures, wishing that the UN will remain an international body for the whole world not only the big powers.

He also requested the UN Secretary General to correct his statement and allow greater opportunity for cooperation between the Sudanese government and the international organization.

He pointed out that Ban Ki-moon statements on changing the agreement with the United Nations in South Sudan senseless.

He added "we are fully aware of attempts by the Americans to transform the accord between Sudan and the United Nations on southern Sudan as one of mechanisms of action in Darfur, a matter that we reject and consider as transgression of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and we will not allow this"

[Dr. Nafie: Statements by Ki-moon Unfortunate](#)

(SUNA) Khartoum, Feb. 24 (SUNA) - Assistant to the President of the Republic Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie, described the statement made by the Secretary-General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon, regarding the combing operations of the Armed Forces at the Jabal Moun area, Western Darfur State, as unfortunate. Dr. Nafie hoped that such statements were not in response to Western pressures, wishing that the UN will remain an international body for the whole world not only the big powers. At the regular press forum of Sudan News Agency (SUNA) Sunday, Dr. Nafie hoped that the UN Secretary General would corrects his statement and give wider chance for the cooperation between the government of Sudan and the international organization. He described Ki-moon's statement on change in the agreement signed between Sudan and the United Nations in south Sudan as meaningless. He said that Sudan is aware about the attempts West to make the agreement between Sudan and the UN on south Sudan as a work mechanism for Darfur, adding this attempt is rejected and regarded as unacceptable trespass to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement

[State Minister of Information Calls for Preservation of African nature in Hybrid Operation](#)

Khartoum, Feb. 24 (SUNA) - The State Minister at the Ministry of Information and Communications, Dr. Kamal Obeid, has affirmed the keenness of Sudan that the contributions to the Hybrid Operation are to be assigned to African countries in order to demonstrate the ability of African Union to solve the Africa issues. Dr. Obeid pointed out to unnamed international circles that tend to speak about failure of the regional institutions in Sudan. Speaking at the regular press forum of Sudan News Agency (SUNA) Sunday, the Minister explained that the African forces are capable to deal with the situation in Darfur, saying that Sudan does not want failures of the UN forces in some countries to happen once again in Darfur states. He called on the African media to uphold the African spirit in solving the internal issues in Africa and called on the mass media to give more concern to the issue of Darfur and to boost the efforts to increase the people's awareness.

[Nafie says the government will not allow any one to circumvent the hybrid operation agreement](#)

Khartoum, Feb. 24 (SUNA) - The Assistant of the President of the Republic, Dr Nafie Ali Nafie, on Sunday said the government would not tolerate any attempt to circumvent the Hybrid Operation agreement stressing that Sudan was aware of some moves by Western state to create a crisis between Sudan and the United Nations and to abort the hybrid operation so as to serve the vested interest of a given western group of countries in the international community. Dr Nafie urged the international community to provide the necessary funding for the hybrid operation in Darfur so that the UNAMID and the government of Sudan would work for the implementation of the process and that any procrastination or posing of hurdles would not be in the interest of the Sudan or that of Darfur Addressing the regular SUNA Forum on Sunday Dr. Nafie has pointed out that there were enough offers from African countries to cover the whole operation and that if after this examination has shown there was a need for troops then priority would be given to African forces but he stressed the Sudanese leadership was noting procrastination by some Western countries to provide the funding saying such procrastination was part of the attempt to circumvent the Hybrid Operation. Dr Nafie has meanwhile denied allegations that Sudan failed to execute its share of the hybrid operation saying Sudan has provided logistic assistance, land plots in addition to allowing importation of equipment and machinery for the hybrid operation free of charge. He said the government was in full agreement with the United Nations and African Union joint mission (UNAMID) and that any talk about Sudan failing to honor its part of the deal was unfounded and was only seeking to spread the seeds of disagreement among Sudan and the United Nations and the African Union so that those western quarters would be able to pass their agenda. The Assistant of the President of the Republic has pointed out that the rebel movements in Darfur were not keen about sitting for peace negotiation as they were receiving encouragement from the West to procrastinate and that the rebel Justice and Equality Movement would not recognize the existence of other Darfur rebel movements.

[The Presidency meeting gets acquainted with security situations at the transitional areas](#)

Khartoum, Feb. 24 (SUNA)- The Presidency meeting, chaired by President of the Republic Field Marshal Omer Al-Bashir, has got acquainted with the security situations in the transitional areas in the States of South Kordofan, South Darfur, Unity and North and West Bahrel Ghazal. The meeting, which comprised the two Vice Presidents and the two Ministers of State at the Presidency at the Guest House Sunday, urged the Political Security Committee chaired by Minister of National Defence Gen. Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein and Minister of Cabinet Affairs Pagan Amum and the Joint Military Committee of the Joint Defence Council to continue efforts to calm the situations at the transitional areas and complete their achievements realized during the previous visits and follow up implementation of decisions of the Joint Defence Council, which were adopted by the Presidency. The meeting has reviewed performance of the Political Executive Committee and its accomplishments. The Presidency will review a report on the Committee of January 1, 1956 Border between the north and the south in its next meeting.

[Messeriya demands compensation for victims of oil-producing regions](#)

(Khartoum Monitor) The Supreme Committee for compensation of the victims in the oil regions requested the Presidency to instruct the competent parties to pay the adequate compensation in respect to the Misseriya territories that comprise oilfields similar to the other areas that were affected by national projects like Merowe Dam, new Khartoum Airport and the White Nile housing project. This is to avoid any duplication in assessments in respect to the compensations.

Member of the Supreme committee, Adam Abdurrahman said at press conference, “The oilfields of Bafra, Blila and Heglig are located within the Misseriya territories. The Misseriya addressed the Cabinet, which referred the matter to the Ministry of Energy and Mining. However, the Ministry rejected the issue stating that the lands belong to the Sudanese Government.

A committee for the Joint Defense Council arrived in Abyei to inspect the Security situation. The Presidency is also striving to find a solution for the Abyei crisis.

[Defence Minister General Abdul Rahim says SAF destroys 9 rebel camps in Sirba, Silaia, Abu Soroj and Jebel Moon](#)

(Al-Rai Al-Aam) Sudan National Defence Minister, General Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussain, has confirmed the Sudanese Army’s control of the towns of Sirba, Silaia, Abu Soroj as well as Jebel Moun.

He said the army is in full control of Jebel Moun after destruction of rebels’ nine camps in the area.

In statements to SUNA, the Defence Minister said he visited Jebel Moun to be acquainted with the situations on the ground and SAF morale.

[SAF spokesman Brig. Osman Mohamed Al-Aqbash says helicopter made emergency landing in north Geneina \(Al-Sahafa\)](#)

(Al-Sahafa) UNAMID said it received reports of aerial bombing operations in Jebel Moun, in west Darfur.

Sudanese Defence Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein visited Jebel Moun yesterday to inspect situations on the ground.

Meanwhile a SAF helicopter crashed near Al-Geneina yesterday due to engine failure, no casualties reported.

SAF spokesperson Brig. Osman Mohamed Al-Aqbash, said the helicopter made an emergency landing north of Geneina after one of the engines fails in the air. He said after the first engine failed the helicopter landed but immediately after that the other engine was out of order and it exploded.

GoSS

Expelled Sudan SPLM official accuses Salva Kiir of 'dictatorship'

(ST) February 24, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Telar Deng, former state minister at the presidency and minister of state at the Ministry of Justice launched a fierce attack against Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) leadership and accused its chairman Salva Kiir of being a dictator.

“There is no democracy in the SPLM and they were never democratic to start with. If they were why are their members prohibited from criticizing or blaming the chairman or the Secretary General” Deng said in an interview with the pro-government Akhir-Lahza.

“The chairman is now the center of everything in the SPLM since he is the one who expels people from the movement and the army without consulting with anyone in the political bureau he added.

Telar Deng along with Aleu Ayieny, the former state minister of interior, were expelled from SPLM's political bureau and the national assembly as well as the SPLM's membership in general as of December in a decree issued by Kiir.

The chairman's decision was taken on the grounds of the report by the investigation committee that was formed to investigate Telar Deng's statements in which he accused some SPLM members of plotting to topple Salva Kiir and Aleu Ayieny's repeated statements in which he accused the Ugandan government of being complicit in the death of the SPLM's former leader, John Garang.

But Deng said in the interview that he did not meet with the investigation committee though he said he appealed the decision.

The former SPLM official said that the two main reasons for his expulsion because he said that the Secretary General Pagan Amum “does not respect Salva Kiir and gives him no consideration”.

Deng said the second reason is that some people around Kiir told him that the chairman and the nominee for the secretariat “cannot be from the same region [Bahr El-Gazal] because other SPLM members won't like it so you have to expel him so as not to jeopardize his chairmanship”.

“The SPLM chairman has no right to expel or suspend any member; this power is vested in the political bureau” he said.

Deng said that his expulsion is in line with other non-democratic practices inside the SPLM.

“There are things happening inside the SPLM that cannot be imagined. There is a General in the SPLA named Berto Mamul who has been imprisoned for over a year and a half with no charges being brought against him. There is also Queen, John Macor and Martin Macway as well who have been detained without investigation or charges or prosecution” he said.

“The purpose of these bogus accusations and non-genuine trials is to reshuffle the cabinet and bring in new people which is what happened” he added.

Deng also noted that there is a power struggle within the SPLM between different factions.

“There is an ideological struggle between those who believe in new Sudan as a strategic direction for the SPLM in the context of getting rid of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP)” Deng said.

“Nowhere in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) does it mention anything about the new Sudan. The CPA is an agreement to end the war and achieve peace and democratic transition” he added.

He further accused some SPLM figures of seeking an alliance with Northern opposition parties to weaken the NCP.

“Why should we go to the Northern opposition parties to discuss the CPA? If we wanted to change the agreement why did we sign it in the first place? Why don’t we just sit down with the party who we signed the agreement with?” he said.

The former SPLM official said that this is the direction taken by the “northerners” within the SPLM who are “unhappy about the CPA because it grants the south the right of self-determination”.

“Where would Yasir Arman, Malik Agar, Mansour Khalid and Luka Biong go if the South decides to secede? They are all communists and all of the people in the SPLM Northern sector are communists with only one southerner present” he added.

Deng said that the SPLA units are hungry and “they are trying to provide food for themselves through their rifles. When they are hungry they create this anarchy we are witnessing”.

On the economic front Deng said that “there is no development in the true sense of the word”.

“There are roads and hotels inside Juba and nothing else. This is contrary to the vision of Late Dr. John Garang who said that he will move the city to the countryside. Currently it is the other way around” Deng said.

“There are no roads in the countryside or services or goods or water or health or schools. The legitimate question is that where did the oil money that add up to \$3.5 billion go? Why wasn’t the government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) able to get assistance from other countries?” he asked.

“There are phony jobs that exist in the south that are in excess of what is needed and their salaries are higher than anywhere in the world. The junior officer in the south is paid \$4,000 monthly and there are commissions with managers who do nothing with an army of employees such as commission for combating corruption and human rights” Deng added.

Deng also accused the SPLM leadership of having multi faces on the issue of unity or secession from the north.

“The SPLM in Egypt say that they are in favor of unity, in Nairobi they are for secession and in Khartoum for the new Sudan. There is no clear direction for the people to vote for. In addition to that they ignored the Nuba Mountains and Darfur. No SPLM official has bothered to visit the region since the CPA’ he said.

“They have not appointed any leaders from Nuba Mountains since Youssef Kuwa passed away because Abdel-Aziz Al-Hilu does not represent the Nuba people and he is from Darfur Masalit. We in the SPLM have no plan for developing the region who stood by us during the civil war years” he added.

Darfur

Chinese envoy urges pressures on Darfur rebels

(ST) February 24, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — China’s envoy for the Darfur issue on Sunday urged nations with influence over rebel groups in the Darfur region to pressure them to return to negotiations with the Sudanese government.

"The reluctance of Darfur’s main rebel groups to return to the negotiating table has resulted in the disappointing tardiness of the political process in Darfur during the last few months," Liu Guijin told Xinhua upon his arrival in Khartoum for a visit to Sudan.

"Only if those main rebel groups return to the negotiating table, could Darfur achieve a certain extent of stability and the peacekeeping mission be carried out smoothly," he said.

The Darfur peace talks, which have been deadlocked since a peace deal was signed between the Sudanese government and a major anti-government group in May 2006, were resumed in Libya last October under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union (AU).

However, six rebel factions from war-torn Darfur refused to attend the talks, claiming the Sudanese government "does not have the necessary legitimacy to negotiate."

The Chinese envoy said a settlement of the Darfur issue calls for the implementation of the dual-track strategy, which is designed to push forward political negotiations and the peacekeeping mission in a balanced manner.

International parties should give equal attention to the political process rather than merely focus on the peacekeeping mission, said Liu, who is on his fourth visit to Sudan since his appointment last May.

Liu said progress has been made in the peacekeeping mission by the hybrid U.N.-AU force in Darfur.

For instance, the advance troops of a 315-strong engineering unit from China and a police unit from Bangladesh have been deployed in Darfur, and African nations such as Egypt and Ethiopia are preparing to send their peacekeeping forces as well, he said.

Liu, who arrived in Sudan after a visit to Britain, said he was asked by Western reporters in London whether his current visit to Sudan was linked with Hollywood director Steven Spielberg's decision to quit as an artistic adviser to the Beijing Olympic Games and pressure on the games.

"I told them the answer is no. What China has been seeking is neither to defuse outside pressure, nor to seize the so-called height of morality," he said.

Instead, "I am hoping to use my visit to Britain and Sudan to give the international community an opportunity to gain an understanding of the situation in Darfur more actually and concretely," he said.

Liu, a veteran diplomat and a former ambassador to Zimbabwe and South Africa, has been engaged in African affairs for more than 25 years. Since resuming his current post, Liu has visited Sudan several times and shuttled between the United States, Britain and other countries over the issue.

"What China is pursuing is aimed at realizing peace in Darfur as soon as possible and helping Sudan achieve stability and development as soon as possible," Liu said.

"China's commitment to resolving the Darfur issue is for the sake of peace, rather than for expediency," he added.

Liu said China is playing its role in resolving the Darfur issue in an open manner and will support any proposal or measure, which is conducive to the settlement of the issue.

The Chinese envoy appealed for further international support for the U.N. and the AU — the other two important players of a tripartite mechanism that also includes Sudan in resolving the Darfur issue.

"Once again, I would like to urge the international community to further support efforts by AU envoy for Darfur Salim Ahmed Salim and U.N. envoy for Darfur Jan Eliasson to solve the Darfur issue," Liu said.

The U.N. Security Council in July 2007 authorized the deployment of a U.N.-AU hybrid force in Darfur, which would comprise 20,000 troops and more than 6,000 police and civilian staff.

Until now, there are only some 9,000 uniformed personnel on the ground, including 7,000 troops and 1,200 police who had been serving with the AU force.

Liu said he is confident of a final settlement of the Darfur issue as long as all parties concerned make joint efforts toward this end.

China ready to help for peaceful solution of Darfur crisis- envoy

(ST) February 24, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Chinese special envoy to Darfur on Sunday said he wanted to extend a "helping hand" towards solving the Darfur conflict, after criticism over Beijing's role as Khartoum's main arms supplier.

Liu Guojin arrived in Khartoum for top-level talks with Sudanese officials amid reports of fresh aerial bombings in western Darfur as the United Nations expressed grave concern for the safety of thousands of civilians.

"China is ready to cooperate with the government of Sudan, the United Nations, the AU (African Union), regional countries and all the other important stakeholders," for a permanent solution to the conflict, Liu told reporters.

"For the Chinese government side, we're ready to extend our helping hand," he told a joint news conference with Sudanese Foreign Minister Deng Alor.

Noting some progress on the deployment of a joint UN-AU peacekeeping mission in Darfur, with only a third of military and police personnel deployed, Liu said remaining "technical kind of problems" should not be politicised.

"The Chinese government and people are ready to make our own positive and constructive contribution to the solution of the Darfur issue," said Liu, calling for a "holistic effort" on Darfur and balanced media coverage.

Liu intends to visit Darfur on Tuesday, the day most experts consider the fifth anniversary of the conflict pitting ethnic African tribes against government-backed Arab militia over demands for resource and power-sharing.

China is Sudan's main overseas supporter and arms supplier and has come under growing pressure to use its influence on the East African regime to end the bloodshed in Darfur, an area more than twice the size of Britain.

Activists have sought to pile the pressure on China as the world's spotlight has increasingly turned on China ahead of the Beijing Olympics in August.

Hollywood film-maker Steven Spielberg this month resigned as an artistic consultant for the Games over Darfur, where the United States describes the conflict as the first genocide of the 21st century.

The Sudanese foreign minister told reporters that Khartoum did not want China to suffer for its close ties with Sudan.

"China is not directly involved in what is happening in Darfur," said Alor, saying that Sudan was working on improving its relations with the West.

Adada: GoS is still rejecting non-African troops

Interviewed by Al-Watani newspaper, the JSR, R. Adada, said the implementation of the hybrid operation was slow as Darfur is a vast area and the operation is still at the initial phase.

“We have expressed our concern over the situations in west Darfur. Yesterday we met with the Ministry of Defence and we asked the government to withdraw SAF and militias and replace them with police, facilitate humanitarian effort and IDPs return,” he said.

Asked whether the hybrid operation is facing obstacles he said, “Yes, Sudan Government is still refusing non-African troops but consultations are continuing”. “I believe the operation is international, not African only”, he added.

Miscellaneous