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(By Public Information Office)

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IN THE NEWS TODAY:

- **UN/ Agencies**
 - Deputy SRSG and UN Humanitarian Resident Coordinator Manuel Aranda da Silva visits Jabal Marra
- **CPA**
 - Governor of S. Kordofan State unveils new government
 - Sudanese refugees in Kenya urged to accept repatriation
- **GoNU**
 - Arbitrarily discharged persons hand memo to the President
 - Minnawi travels to Libya today for talks with Gadhaffi, Khalil and Dierij
- **Southern Sudan/ GoSS/SPLM**
 - Dr. Akol calls for cooperation with fact-finding team in Malakal
 - Federal authorities start collection of customs in South Sudan
- **Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement**
 - Reactions to the ICC action on Darfur [*Lead story in the local press*]
 - West Darfur governor to be sworn in
 - US Cd'A admits there is calm in North Darfur

HIGHLIGHTS:

UN/ Agencies

Deputy SRSG and UN Humanitarian Resident Coordinator Manuel Aranda da Silva visits Jabal Marra

SudanTribune.com reproduces the full text of this story as appeared in the UNMIS News Bulletin of 27 February 2007.

CPA

Governor of S. Kordofan State unveils new government

(Alwan) The Governor of S. Kordofan State issued a decree yesterday forming a new government.

The decree unveils the names of the new ministers for his cabinet, advisors and commissioners.

Sudanese refugees in Kenya urged to accept repatriation

(ST) The tripartite commission on voluntary repatriation of Sudanese refugees living in Kenya is urging refugees to accept voluntary repatriation to South Sudan to enable them rebuild their country.

Immigration Permanent Secretary Emmanuel Kisombe in a joint communiqué reaffirmed the commission's commitment to implement the comprehensive peace agreement. Kisombe led a delegation of the commission's first meeting in Nairobi.

The commission noted the problems facing voluntary repatriation from Kenya, including insecurity and clear messages on prospects for return and reintegration and limited absorption capacity. The commission recommends extension of financial assistance to the returnees, provision of security and food. They also propose expediting of formalities when crossing border.

Mohamed Ahmed Alaghabash, who led the Sudanese delegation, lauded the government of Kenya for providing refuge to more than 70,000 Sudanese for more than 15 years.

UNHCR Representative Chrysantus Ache reaffirmed the commitment of the commission to help the people of Sudan as they regain hope for the future.

The two-day meeting convened by the Kenyan government, the government of Sudan and UNHCR has been reviewing the progress made and some of the challenges faced since the peace deal between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the government of Sudan which was signed on 9 January 2005.

GoNU

Arbitrarily discharged persons hand memo to the President

(AlSahafa) “Arbitrarily discharged” civil servants yesterday managed with difficulty to hand a memorandum with their demands to the Office of the President of the Republic.

Authorities had earlier collected the banners the group wielded while in a protest march.

The Office of the President has requested them to return next week to check on their demands.

Minnawi travels to Libya today for talks with Gadhaffi, Khalil and Dierij

(AlSahafa) Senior Presidential Aide Mini Minnawi travels to Libya later today for a meeting with representatives of some armed factions in Darfur, among them Ahmed Ibrahim Direij and Dr. Khalil Ibrahim, leaders of the Federal Alliance and the JEM respectively.

The paper has learnt that Minnawi will also hold talks with the Libyan leader to resolve the issue of 882,000 Sudanese employees who are likely to be deported from Libya for lack of proper papers.

Southern Sudan/ GoSS/SPLM

Dr. Akol calls for cooperation with fact-finding team in Malakal

(AlSudani et al) Foreign minister Dr. Lam Akol has issued a statement to the press refuting recent media reports that the recent Yei meeting of the SPLM executive and politburo had culminated, among other things, in the formation of a committee to investigate on what links he had to a student’s group in Upper Nile that goes by the name, “New Southern Front”.

Mr. Akol said that the committee formed was to investigate on the manner in which the SPLM is being run in Upper Nile State. He said that the committee was formed in response to allegations by some members of the SPLM leadership against that body and its alleged links to the SPLM.

Federal authorities start collection of customs in South Sudan

(ST) The federal authorities have begun collection of customs in the southern states and the collection of VAT from hotels in Juba.

The State Minister at the Ministry of Finance, Lual Deng, said that a team of the Customs Chamber is due to tour to Malakal, Bentiu, Wau, Bor, Yambiu, Yei, Maridi, Torit and Renk in south Sudan.

Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement

Reactions to the ICC action on Darfur [*Lead story in the local press*]

ICC chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo unveiled yesterday the first two names of suspects listed for Darfur crimes. Chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo asked pre-trial judges to issue summons against Ahmed Haroun, state minister of interior during the height of the conflict, and militia commander Ali Mohamed Ali Abdelrahman, also known as Ali Kushayb.

Asked whether he expected to name further suspects, the chief prosecutor who was speaking at a news conference in The Hague would only say that investigations were ongoing.

The prosecutor said Chad and the Central African Republic were signatories to the court's treaty, unlike Sudan, so he could launch an investigation there without a U.N. Security Council referral.

Reports *Reuters*, "The office is continuing to gather information about current crimes committed by all parties in Darfur and is monitoring the spill-over of violence into Chad ... and the Central African Republic," prosecutor said.

Below are some reactions to this development as compiled from various sources - international and local.

ICC has no evidence to incriminate the two suspects named, says justice minister Al-Mardi

Sudan's justice minister Mohammad Ali al-Mardi said in a statement following, that there is no evidence to incriminate any of the two suspects named by the world court.

Al-Mardi was quoted as saying that Haroun was already interrogated in relation to events in Darfur but there was no evidence against him. Al-Mardi also rejected the claim by the ICC's prosecutor that Kushayb was a Janjaweed leader. He said that the man is a member of the Popular Defence Forces that is answerable to the SAF and has an approved statute that the ICC prosecutor is well aware of. He said Kushayb and two others – a SAF officer and a PDF coordinator – have been in detention since 28 November last year on charges of violations of the criminal and humanitarian laws in Dileij, West Darfur.

AlSahafa also reports that he questioned ICC jurisdiction over Sudanese suspects and pointed out that the Sudan government has a firm position on the issue and that is that the ICC has no jurisdiction. He explained that the Sudan is not a signatory to the Rome Statute and, as such, the ICCs decisions are not applicable.

He said that Ocampo gathered "gross lies" given him by the armed groups on his investigations and that Haroun is a civilian who was at one time responsible over the police but did not have the authority to distribute arms or issue orders.

Al-Mardi further pointed out that the government has never allowed a team of the ICC to carry out investigations in Darfur but merely allowed the team to get acquainted to the judiciary process for the Darfur crimes.

The justice minister also added that the fact that special courts have been set up on the Darfur crimes and the fact these courts are to try suspects to the events of Dileij is further proof that the ICC has no jurisdiction over the suspects.

No comments on statements made through the press, says Ocampo over justice minister's reactions to the ICC action on Darfur

When asked to comment on Al-Mardi's statements Ocampo told Sudan Tribune that he does not comment on statements made through the press, but that his office has "strong" evidence to prosecute the two individuals. He added that Haroun was directly involved along with Kushayb in the mass crimes mentioned in his filing before the judges. Ocampo described eyewitness accounts that identified Haroun and Kushayb as being on the ground where the atrocities occurred. He said that in one instance Haroun was seen in a helicopter that was carrying weaponry supplies to the Janjaweed militias.

In response to a question as to how all these resources that were made available to Haroun could not incriminate other senior Sudanese officials, Ocampo underlined that he is guided by evidence and the threshold as defined by the Rome Statue. The chief prosecutor added that Haroun's superiors could not be prosecuted simply because he reported to them. Ocampo would not say whether he is through with investigating the events of Darfur in 2003-2004 when the peak of violence has occurred but mentioned that his office is evaluating the situation on the ground today and the spillover of violence to Chad and the Central African Republic.

Ocampo rejected the notion that the decision to indict these two people only means that he exonerates other members of the Sudanese government.

When asked why he made his filings and the names public in contrast with the other cases he is handling of Uganda and the Congo, Ocampo said that the policy is to try to be as public as possible and that in this case all witnesses were outside Darfur so their security was not an issue and thus he could reveal the suspects names.

Ocampo also said that if Sudan tries to conduct its own trials of these two individuals then they have to challenge the jurisdiction of the court before the judges who will determine if the case is still admissible.

State Minister Haroun unperturbed by the Ocampo announcement but will adhere to any decision by the Sudan government

Haroun, one of the suspects named, said on his part that he is not disturbed by these developments because he is aware that Ocampo's statements are more of a political

nature than a legal process and is part of the psychological warfare imposed on the Sudan government, reports *AlSudani* and others.

He pointed out that Ocampo's announcements come at a time of improvements in the political process in Darfur and is intended to send signals that all is not well on the ground in Darfur.

He said however that he was ready to abide by any decision the Sudan government may deem fit on the issue.

He expressed surprise over why the ICC chose to bring out his name out first but said he was in peace with himself because all that he did was in line with the law and the demands of his obligations.

He further pointed out that the national fact-finding team presided over by Justice Dafallah Haj Musa has heard the affidavits of all those concerned with the Darfur issue including himself. This, he says, is proof of transparency in the local judiciary.

The state minister for humanitarian affairs went on to say that the ICC is but full of injustice and double-standards because it regards those who carry arms against the Sudan government as revolutionaries who require international protection while those who protect themselves against their attacks are answerable for this action and those who wield arms against the US be it in Somalia or Afghanistan are fiercely confronted. He said that the ICC's attempts at installing itself as the world police body will not succeed.

*Prepared to trade bullet for bullet and shell for shell should they dare step into Sudan,
Interior Minister Zubeir Bashir Taha*

On his part, the minister of interior downplayed the Ocampo's announcements and described it as a "grand act by the ICC's old men and women who are cued by Zionists".

He said that the Sudan is prepared for war should it be imposed on it.

The minister who was speaking at a rally of the Popular Defence Forces as part of celebration of the Popular Police Forces in Port Sudan, said yesterday that the SAF and the Popular Defence and Police forces are ready to trade "bullet for bullet and shell for shell should they dare come into Sudan".

Of the war on Darfur, the interior minister described it as spurred by western greed for the country's resources. He said the SAF and the Central Reserve Forces have captured in Darfur 128 vehicles the "colonialist forces" gave to the rebels of Darfur.

*Ibrahim Ahmed Omar: NCP intends to launch media campaign to reveal without
exaggeration the truth on the humanitarian situation in Darfur*

The deputy head of the National Congress Party says the National Congress Party plans to launch a campaign to unveil the truths of the humanitarian situation in Darfur.

Ibrahim Ahmed Omar says that the campaign will seek to bring out the truth without exaggeration.

Dean of the Sudan Bar Association says Ocampo report is part of pressures on government

The Dean of the Sudan Bar Association says chief prosecutor Ocampo's report comes within the framework of pressures exerted by some parties on the Sudan government.

He told *SUNA* that he is aware of the pressures exerted on Mr. Ocampo to issue that "desperate report".

He said that the Sudanese judiciary is more qualified to try its suspects.

Expert: not signing the Rome Treaty is alone not enough to avert ICC action on Darfur

The Executive Director of the Sudan Human Rights Group, Izaeldeen Osman, said that the fact Sudan did not ratify the Rome Statute on the ICC is alone not enough to avert an ICC action on Sudan. He pointed out that the referral was made through a Security Council Chapter VII resolution.

Osman said that statements by some elements from the foreign ministry that they will cooperate with the ICC and will stage the defences necessary to overturn the indictments is much more appropriate and "respectful".

He called on the government to stage a legal defence of its position in order to avert confrontation with the international community.

SLM-Minnawi: ICC action marks a festive day for Darfur

DPA signatory and non-signatory groups have welcomed the ICC action on Darfur. SLM-Minnawi says this marks a festive day for Darfur while the SLM-Unity faction, the NRF, the JEM and the Freewill faction have all welcomed the move and has called for the trial of all those implicated in what they described as "the genocide in Darfur".

SLM-Minnawi has called on the international community to bear its responsibilities towards Darfur by pressuring Sudan into implementing International Law and UN Security Council Resolution 1593 that calls for an ICC referral for all those implicated in crimes in Darfur.

The movement says it is pleased by the announcement that it sees as a first step towards putting an end to "the last episode of genocide and ethnic cleansing practiced by the Khartoum region on the people of Darfur.

AbdulWahid: ICC action a harbinger of coming salvation for Darfur

SLM-AbdulWahid has expressed satisfaction over the Ocampo announcement.

Leader AbdulWahid has described the move as a harbinger of a coming salvation for Darfur. He said that the law must take its course.

US welcomes ICC's indictments on Darfur

The United States endorsed the International Criminal Court's indictment of two prominent Sudanese on charges they committed war crimes in Darfur and urged President Omar al-Bashir's government to cooperate.

State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said the United States fully supports "bringing to justice those responsible for crimes and atrocities that have occurred in Darfur."

He said: "It is now incumbent upon the government of Sudan, we believe, to cooperate with the ICC."

The United States generally opposes the court and refuses to transfer military equipment to countries that do not exempt U.S. soldiers from prosecution in the court.

McCormack said Tuesday that U.S. views toward the ICC are well known. "In the case of Sudan ..., we didn't oppose a referral to the ICC because we support accountability for the crimes that have been committed in Darfur," he said.

The International Crisis Group has also welcomed the indictments.

West Darfur governor to be sworn in

(*Alwan*) Abu-el-Gassim Imam will be sworn in to take over from Shartai Jafar AbdelHakam as Governor of West Darfur State.

Imam is the leader of an SLM/A faction and this step comes in line with the provisions of the supplements to the Darfur Peace Agreement.

US Cd'A admits there is calm in North Darfur

(*Alwan*) The Charge d'Affaires at the US Embassy in Khartoum admits that calm has returned with regards to the security and humanitarian situation in North Darfur.

In a meeting in el-Fasher with the *Wali* yesterday, Cd'A Cameron said that during his tour of the region he noticed improvements in the humanitarian and security situation in

the state and commended efforts exerted by the federal government and all concerned parties in the realisation of stability and peace in Darfur. He also congratulated governor Kibir for having won the President's trust for a renewed tenure at the governorship.

The governor on his part thanked the Cd'A and reiterated government commitment to peace in the region.