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Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

Highlights

Precautionary measures taken to prevent violence in Abyei - Qazi

Al-Sahafa reports SRSG Ashraf Qazi revealed at a press conference yesterday precautionary measures by UNMIS to prevent conflict upon the announcement of the Abyei arbitration decision in July, saying he is preparing to visit the area this week for the same purpose. However, Qazi stressed that security in Abyei is the responsibility of the federal government and local authorities, pointing out that his Mission is working in total coordination with the government and local authorities ahead of The Hague-based court decision. He explained that UNMIS is a Chapter VI mission which can not use force but it would take all necessary measures to support the local authorities as well as SAF and SPLA. He said he would also be present in Abyei with others when the decision is announced as part of efforts to avert hostilities, saying the CPA partners have committed themselves in Washington that they would accept the decision and avoid escalation.

On Washington conference, he said it was an advanced shift towards supporting the CPA implementation. Qazi said there are also still challenges facing the CPA implementation especially elections, referendum, border demarcation and census results.

On census results, Qazi said he expects the two parties to overcome the problem. With regard to the border demarcation, he said the Presidency asked the border demarcation committee to finalize its report before September, adding that his mission is providing technical support to the committee.

Al-Intibaha reports Qazi expressed concern over the security situation in the three areas and called on the CPA partners to double their efforts to ensure safety of civilians and to address tribal conflicts.

Al-Ayyam reports Qazi said UNMIS is committed to assist the implementation of the agreement in all areas especially the conduct of a free and fair elections. "UNMIS has formed a team of experts to assist the NEC with electoral preparations," he said.

Al-Raed, reports Qazi stressed the need for coordination among relevant organs and described the situation in Abyei as fragile. According to the paper, Qazi appeared optimistic over the ability of the CPA partners to overcome their differences. He also expressed concern over the security situation the south, saying UNMIS has taken measures including the establishment of bases in Bor, Pibor and Akobo to assist in delivery of aid to the needy.

Khartoum Monitor reports the SRSG said Abyei arbitration result is expected to come out this July.

According to **Akhir Lahza**, Qazi expected tension among civilians in Abyei, given the fragile situation in the area. He also voiced concern over the challenges facing the CPA particularly the border demarcation, disarmament and demobilization and the tense situation in the south in the wake of the recent tribal conflicts.

Ajras Al-Hurriah reports Qazi as saying that the CPA implementation is at a critical phase, citing referendum as a source of concern because it is just 18 months away, calling for doubling of efforts to sustain peace.

Al-Quwat Al-Musalaha reports Qazi welcomed the US initiative and the commitment of the CPA partners to resolve pending issues through dialogue, saying Washington conference was a promising start for implementation of the CPA provisions.

Elections delayed to April 2010

Local dailies report the NEC announced postponement of the elections for two months. **Ajras Al-Hurriah** reports NEC SG Jalal Mohamed Ahmed has said the elections were rescheduled due to the delay of release of the census results. According to the new timeframe, polling and vote count will take place from 5th to 12th April 2009.

Reuters 30/6/09 reported NEC said delays in the release of census details and a decision to postpone voter registration until after the rainy season were reasons for changing the vote timetable for a second time in three months.

"The NEC has been deliberating and observing the circumstances relating to the national elections and has decided on the modification of the previous timeframe," said a statement signed by Commission chairman Abel Alier.

A spokeswoman for the south's dominant Sudan People's Liberation Party (SPLM) said she would need more information on the exact reasons for the delay before commenting.

"If they have postponed to help with rules and regulations for freer and fairer elections or to reach peace in Darfur then it is OK," Keji Jermolil told Reuters.

"We hope that this will be the last amendment for the timetable," the NCP's chief official for the elections Ibrahim Ghandour told Reuters.

A Commission timetable released yesterday pointed to Apr. 5-12, 2010 as the new period for polling, sorting and announcing the results. Voter registration is planned for November 2009 and campaigning will take place from February 4 to Apr.4, 2010.

Sudan Tribune website 30/6/09 reported NEC SG Ahmed as saying that they did not yet decide whether Sudanese refugees abroad will be allowed to vote and, if so, how.

Kiir says Gaddafi would back independent S.Sudan

Reuters 30/6/09 - South Sudan president Salva Kiir said he had secured a promise from Libya's leader to support his region if it voted for independence in a referendum, a statement that is likely to infuriate Sudan's north.

The report of Gaddafi's comments comes a day before the Libyan leader was due to host a meeting of the African Union, which he chairs, that will be attended by the Sudanese president, Omar Hassan al-Bashir.

South Sudan's Kiir told a church congregation on Sunday Gaddafi had called him in for a 3 a.m. meeting on a visit to Tripoli last week and assured him of Libya's support if South Sudan decided to split from the north.

"He (Gaddafi) said 'If southerners want to vote for independence they should not be frightened of anybody ... I will stand with them'," said Kiir, in a recording of his address heard by **Reuters** on Tuesday.

Sudan's ministry of foreign affairs declined to comment on what Kiir said Gaddafi had said. There was no immediate comment from Libya or confirmation of the remarks.

During the address at St Theresa's Roman Catholic Cathedral in the south's capital Juba, Kiir said Gaddafi had told him it had been a mistake to keep south Sudan's people unified with the north at the end of British colonial rule in 1956.

"(Gaddafi said) they should have been separated either to become an independent state or join any country in east Africa," Kiir was heard saying on the recording.

Kiir said Gaddafi had promised to send Libyan experts to south Sudan to help rebuild infrastructure and agriculture.

SPLA detain 50 demobilized elements in Renk

Al-Intibaha reports SPLA detained 50 demobilized troops while on their way to the town to receive some agricultural machinery. The group threatened to wage war on the SPLA if their demobilized soldiers are not freed within 24 hours. Sources told the paper SPLA transported the detained soldiers to Juba late yesterday, accusing them of spying for the NCP.

Government efforts to normalize with US doomed to fail – Amum

Al-Sahafa reports SPLM SG Pagan Amum as saying that the efforts by the Sudan government to normalize its relations with Washington would fail, saying SPLM was not consulted so it has nothing to do with it.

Amum upon return from Washington yesterday said the forum did not achieve breakthrough on the CPA pending issues but they two parties agreed to hold monthly meetings in Khartoum and Juba for further consultations, saying the US would play a role in these meetings to push the parties towards settlement.

Unknown armed men attack Darfur peacekeepers

Sudan Tribune website 30/6/09 – Unidentified gunmen shot some peacekeeping police officers in West Darfur state wounding one in the leg, the UNAMID said yesterday.

The peacekeepers who belong to the Nigerian Formed Police Unit came under attack on Monday about 03:15 local time "by unknown gunmen in Ardamata area, near UNAMID camp in the West Darfur capital of El Geneina."

The commander of Nigerian unit was shot in the leg. But UNAMID said he was in a stable condition and he is receiving treatment in the mission hospital.

MFA ridicules Chad's allegation on Sudanese opposition presence

SUNA 30/6/09 - The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has ridiculed the statements of the Chadian Foreign Minister on absence of any Sudanese opposition on the Chadian territories. The spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Ali Al-Saddiq, described the statement of the Chadian minister as false, clashing with facts and an attempt to escape responsibility. Responding to a question of a journalist, Ambassador Al-Saddiq stressed that Chad is quite aware about the intensive presence of the Justice and Equality Movement at a number of areas in N'djamena and outside it, especially at the border area and the training camps. He expressed hope that Chad will work to dispose of this opposition so as to create a favourable atmosphere for the dialogue with Sudan, settlement of the pending issues and

ending the tension in the bilateral relations.

NCP not invited to Juba meeting – Nafie

Al-Sahafa reports Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie as saying that his party has not received an official invitation to attend Juba forum for political parties.

MFA to brief foreign missions on Doha talks

Al-Raed reports head of government delegation to Doha talks Amin Hassan Omer will brief diplomatic missions and international organizations in Khartoum on outcomes of Doha talks over Darfur.

US ready to beef up UN peacekeeping operations

AP 30/6/09 - The United States is prepared to provide more military observers, police and civilian staff to beef up the U.N.'s far-flung peacekeeping operations, the U.S. ambassador said Monday.

U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice said President Barack Obama's administration will explore ways to assist peacekeeping operations including by training peacekeepers and providing equipment and transportation.

Through the U.S. Global Peace Operations Initiative, she said, the United States has already trained 75,000 peacekeepers and helped some 49,000 peacekeepers deploy to 20 peacekeeping missions around the world, mostly in Africa.

In addition to training, the United States has provided trucks, water purification plants, fuel trailers, helmets, flak jackets and other essential equipment to thousands of U.N. peacekeepers, U.S. officials said.

"Over the next five years, the Global Peace Operations Initiative will continue direct training but will make it its top priority to help partner countries become self-sufficient in peacekeeping training," Rice told the U.N. Security Council.

The United States does not provide troops for U.N. peacekeeping forces, which would mean putting American soldiers under U.N. command.

But Rice said the United States "is willing to consider directly contributing more military observers, military staff officers, civilian police, and other civilian personnel _ including more women _ to U.N. peacekeeping operations."

The U.S. has already increased its military observers in the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Liberia and is providing two additional military staff officers to the mission in Chad and the Central African Republic, U.S. officials said.

Rice said an immediate U.S. priority will be to help find the extra forces and specialized units required for the joint U.N.-African Union force in Darfur as well as for the U.N. peacekeeping mission in the neighboring Central African Republic and Chad "to better protect civilians under imminent threat of physical, including sexual, violence."

Another immediate priority will be beefing up the 22,000-strong U.N. peacekeeping force in Congo, she said. The Security Council in November approved 3,000 more troops for Congo but the U.N. has had trouble getting countries to contribute the soldiers.

Rice said the United States will seek mandates for U.N. peacekeeping operations that are "credible and achievable" and will also seek to expand the pool of countries contributing troops and police.

The U.S. will also intensify diplomatic efforts "to give new momentum to some of the stalled or faltering peace processes," particularly in Sudan and neighboring countries.

U.N. peacekeeping chief Alain Le Roy told the council a clearer consensus is needed on the role of peacekeepers in protecting civilians. There is also a need to ensure "sustained political support for the missions," to improve the U.N. training system, and to attract specialist military units _ "not just numbers," he said.

President Al-Bashir arrives in Libya

Local dailies report President Al-Bashir arrived in Libya yesterday heading Sudan government delegation for participation in the AU summit.

African summit overshadowed by Qaddafi, Ahmadinejad

AFP 30/6/09 - Africa's conflicts took a back seat Tuesday to a surprise visit by Iran's hard-line president and Libyan leader Moamer Qaddafi's drive to create an "African government" ahead of a continental summit.

Qaddafi was elected president of the African Union in February, and the self-styled "king of kings" is using his term to press his scheme for African unity under a stronger AU executive, despite objections from key countries including South Africa, the continent's biggest economy.

His drive had already diverted attention from African trouble spots when Tehran announced that President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad would visit Libya on Wednesday to address the summit, after Iran's top electoral body confirmed his re-election despite massive opposition protests.

Diplomats expressed surprise at Ahmadinejad's visit, indicating Qaddafi had extended the invitation without consulting the bloc's 53 members.

Qaddafi has also invited Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, whose country hosts the Group of Eight rich nations summit next week, when leaders will discuss possible sanctions against Iran.

Ahmadinejad's impending arrival immediately grabbed attention away from African hotspots like Mauritania, due to hold elections in July after a coup last August, or Guinea-Bissau, where elections were held last weekend after the president's assassination.

Ousted Madagascar leader Marc Ravalomanana has also come to plead for tougher action to return him to power, while rights groups are urging the AU to abandon its reticence over the international war crimes warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Beshir, who will also be attending.

Qaddafi was already brushing aside those issues in favour of his plans to group the AU's existing organs under a single authority with more meaningful executive powers.

"We need to resolve this, even if we have to take it to a vote," Qaddafi told a preliminary ministerial meeting Sunday. "If two thirds agree, the remaining third must respect the decision of the majority."

Sirte – Qaddafi's hometown that he has built into an ultra-modern administrative centre -- is draped with banners to encourage the delegates, running from the inspiring "Africa is hope" to the menacing "Death to Africa's enemies".

The city squeezed between the desert and the Mediterranean is festooned with twinkle lights and curbside laser shows that belie the severity of the tensions among the 53 AU members.

AU Commission chairman Jean Ping has already made clear that he feels the continental bloc's priorities should focus on resolving the political and armed crises plaguing Africa.

In what delegates said was a tense opening session to the ministerial talks Sunday, Ping pointed to the ongoing unrest in Sudan and Somalia -- where the AU has a 4,300-strong peacekeeping force -- as examples of the work facing the bloc.

"The overall situation on the continent remains alarming, with the persistence of coups d'etat or unconstitutional changes" in government, he said, referring to Madagascar and Guinea-Bissau.

"It's nothing less than a worrying, regressive political evolution that calls for a coherent response on the part of the competent organs of our Union," he said.

Bashir's presence will also highlight defiance of the warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur.

The official agenda of the three-day summit is less controversial, centering on boosting investment in agriculture on the continent.

International court under unusual fire

Washington Post 30/6/09 - UNITED NATIONS -- When Luis Moreno-Ocampo charged Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir with war crimes last year, the International Criminal Court prosecutor was hailed by human rights advocates as the man who could help bring justice to Darfur.

Today, Moreno-Ocampo appears to be the one on trial, with even some of his early supporters questioning his prosecutorial strategy, his use of facts and his personal conduct. Bashir and others have used the controversy to rally opposition to the world's first permanent criminal court, a challenge that may jeopardize efforts to determine who is responsible for massive crimes in Darfur.

At issue is how to strike a balance between the quest for justice in Darfur and the pursuit of a political settlement to end an ongoing civil war in the western region of Sudan. In recent months, African and Arab leaders have said the Argentine lawyer's pursuit of the Sudanese president has undercut those peace prospects.

Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi and Gabon's Jean Ping, the two leaders of the African Union, are mounting a campaign to press African states to withdraw from the treaty body that established the international tribunal. "The attacks against the court by African and Arab governments in the last nine months are the most serious threat to the ICC" since the United States declared its opposition to it in 2002, said William Pace, who heads the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, an alliance of 2500 organizations.

Moreno-Ocampo defended his work in a lengthy interview, saying that his office offers the brightest hope of bringing justice to hundreds of thousands of African victims and halting mass

murder in Darfur. "It is normal: When you prosecute people with a lot of power, you have problems," said Moreno-Ocampo, who first gained prominence by prosecuting Argentine generals for ordering mass murder in that country's "dirty war."

The International Criminal Court was established in July 2002 to prosecute perpetrators of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, building on temporary courts in Bosnia, Cambodia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone.

Since he was appointed in 2003, the prosecutor has brought war crimes charges against 13 individuals in northern Uganda, Congo, the Central African Republic and Sudan, including a July 2008 charge against Bashir of orchestrating genocide in Darfur. Pretrial judges approved the prosecutors' request for an arrest warrant for Bashir on March 4 on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, but rejected the genocide charge.

The Bush administration initially opposed the court, citing concerns of frivolous investigations of American soldiers engaged in the fight against terrorism. But President Obama -- whose top advisers are divided over whether Sudan continues to commit genocide -- has been far more supportive of the court.

The violence in Darfur began in early 2003 when rebel movements took up arms against the Islamic government, citing discrimination against the region's tribes. The prosecutor has charged that Bashir then orchestrated a campaign of genocide that has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Darfurian civilians from disease and violence, and driven about 2 million more from their homes.

Bashir has openly defied the court, saying that it has only strengthened his standing. "The court has been isolated and the prosecutor stands naked," said Sudan's U.N. ambassador, Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem Mohamad.

The prosecutor's case "has polarized Sudanese politics and weakened those who occupy the middle ground of compromise and consensus," said Rodolphe Adada, a former Congolese foreign minister who heads a joint African Union-U.N. mission in Darfur.

In remarks to the U.N. Security Council in April, Adada challenged Moreno-Ocampo's characterization of the situation as genocide and said that only 130 to 150 people were dying each month in Darfur, far fewer than the 5,000 that Moreno-Ocampo says die each month from violence and other causes. "In purely numeric terms it is a low-intensity conflict," Adada said.

African leaders with abysmal human rights records seek to discredit Moreno-Ocampo because "they fear accountability" in their own countries, said Richard Dicker, an expert on the ICC at Human Rights Watch. Dicker concedes that Moreno-Ocampo has made missteps that have played into the hands of the court's enemies.

In September, Human Rights Watch raised concern in a confidential memo to the court about low staff morale and the flight of many experienced investigators. It also cited the prosecutor's 2006 summary dismissal of his spokesman after he filed an internal complaint alleging Moreno-Ocampo had raped a female journalist.

A panel of ICC judges, after interviewing the woman, concluded that the allegations were "manifestly unfounded." Then an internal disciplinary board recommended that Moreno-Ocampo rescind the dismissal, arguing that the prosecutor had a conflict of interest in firing the spokesman.

An administrative tribunal at the International Labor Organization ruled that while the spokesman's allegations were ultimately proved wrong, he had not acted maliciously because he believed his boss had engaged in improper behavior. It required a settlement payment of nearly \$250,000 for back pay and damages.

Moreno-Ocampo, in the interview, declined to respond to the criticism of his personal reputation, saying, "I cannot answer unfounded allegations."

The case against Bashir rankles many African leaders, who say it is hypocritical. They note that the Security Council, which authorized the Sudan probe, has three permanent members who never signed the treaty establishing the court: the United States, Russia and China. "The feeling we have is that it is biased," said Congo's U.N. envoy, Atoki Ileka.

Alex de Waal, a British expert on Darfur, and Julie Flint, a writer and human rights activist, maintain that Moreno-Ocampo is the problem. They recently co-wrote an article in the World Affairs Journal citing former staff members and prominent war crimes experts who are critical of the prosecutor for not conducting witness interviews inside Darfur and for pursuing a weak charge of genocide against Bashir.

"It is difficult to cry government-led genocide in one breath and then explain in the next why 2 million Darfuris have sought refuge around the principal army garrisons of their province," Andrew T. Cayley, a British lawyer who headed the prosecutor's Darfur investigation, wrote in the Journal of International Criminal Justice last November.

Christine Chung, a former federal prosecutor and senior trial attorney for the prosecutor until 2007, dismissed the piece as "character assassination" and said the prosecutor's decision to stay out of Darfur was "in the end correct. The Sudanese government indeed detained and tortured persons believed to be cooperating with the ICC."

Moreno-Ocampo said he remains convinced that Bashir is committing genocide. "I have 300 lawyers, all brilliant people, with different opinions, but then I make the decision," he said. "I still think it's genocide, and I will appeal."