



## Local news coverage (Arabic language press, state TV and Radio)

**State Radio** broadcast that the President of the Republic Omer Al-Bashir at meeting with representatives of Arab Bar Association said Sudanese were capable of defending themselves. The President reiterated rejection to hand over any Sudanese national for prosecution abroad and that Sudan would not respond to any political blackmail.

However, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** newspaper reported that President Bashir has blocked the path for any initiative to hand over Sudanese nationals wanted by ICC. We will not bow and we will not hand over even a single hair of a Sudanese national to any foreign body, he declared. The President who was speaking at meeting with Arab Bar Association delegation has rejected the ICC allegations and interference in Sudan internal affairs.

The Government did not agree to the Arab League proposal to handle the crisis between Sudan and ICC, it has to be amended to be accepted by the government, says presidential press advisor, Mahgoub Fadul Badri, according to **Al Khartoum** newspaper. The Arab League Secretary General has declined to elaborate about the plan but according to leaked information the plan proposed prosecution of Ahmed Haroun and Ali Koshayeb by a regional tribunal while other sources say the proposal is to hand them over to save the President.

The ICC is a western forum, the request of warrant against the President is a serious matter and will complicate situations, says presidential advisor Ghazi Salah Al Din, according to **State TV**.

State TV continues showing Anti-ICC demonstrations (referred to as demos of great wrath). Masses of Um Ruwaba (Northern Kordofan) took to streets to denounce ICC decision and to declare support President Bashir.

**Al-Khartoum** newspaper reported that the Higher Committee for Mobilization has decided to postpone a large demonstration (a million-man march) supposed to take place yesterday. The demonstration was postponed as state officials were busy meeting with African and Arab leaders on ICC decisions against President Bashir. The demonstration will take place later. UNMIS advised staff not to report for duty on Monday.

The AU Peace and Security Council has urged the Security Council to suspend ICC decisions to give chance for peace completion in Darfur, according to **state Radio** news bulletin. It has also recommended the formation of an international-African enquiry commission to look into issues of accountability, reconciliation in Darfur and ICC request of warrant against President Bashir.

**Al-Sahafa** newspaper quoted the State Minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Al

Samani Al-Waseela as saying that China would use the veto to block ICC indictment against President Bashir. Whereas the Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie speaking in Doha said, “Khartoum rejects suspension of ICC indictment; it wants Arab League and AU action to revoke them completely”. According to the newspaper, the Arab league Secretary General stated after second meeting with President Bashir that Sudan agreed, without reservation, to the League’s plan to end crisis with ICC but declined to elaborate.

The ICC indictment is a conspiracy hatched by the Jews, Americans and enemies of Islam; the Minister of Interior Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid lashed out against America and Israel, while addressing Peoples Police, gathered to declare support to the President against ICC, according to **Al-Sahafa** newspaper.

**Al-Sahafa** newspaper also reported that the governor of the Blue Nile State, Malik Aqqar has warned of possibility of return to war and insurgency due to lack of development in the area. Federal commitments towards the State do not exceed 6% which is a serious indication, he told a meeting (forum of leaders) in Damazine.

I am not carrying new initiatives, I have come to Sudan as a friend, says D’Jibril Bassole in an interview to the same newspaper. I am optimistic but I carry no magic wand, he added.

**Al-Intibaha** newspaper carried a report saying the ex-Secretary General Boutrus Ghali in a lecture at the institute of peace studies in Cairo expected south Sudan secession during the forthcoming referendum. He has accused America of pursuing double standards policy and described UN as weak, unable to honour its commitments due to pressures exercised by US.

**Sudan tribune** newspaper learned from a source yesterday that a shipment of new Russian MIG-29 tactical fighters had recently arrived into Sudan from Belarus. The source who spoke on condition of anonymity said that a Belarusian company shipped a dozen MIG-29 combat fighters by planes two weeks ago. However, he could not confirm whether the fighters were actually sold by Belarus or they simply came through the East European country. The planes are now in the Wadi Sayedna airbase, according to the source that is familiar with this issue.

## Website/International news coverage

### **Sudan’s Bashir reiterates rejection to hand over Darfur suspects**

(**Sudan Tribune**) — Sudanese president, who faces indictment by the International Criminal Court, has reiterated today his rejection to hand over any Sudanese for trial outside the country.

Omer Hassan al-Bashir on Monday repeated his opposition to try the state minister for humanitarians affairs Ahmed Haroun and a militia leader Ali Kushayb saying Sudan refuses "any interference in its internal affairs, any political blackmail and pressures." Speaking in a meeting with a delegation from the Arab Lawyers Union, Al-Bashir said, "We will not kneel, will not surrender and will not hand over any Sudanese citizen to any foreign body."

Amr Musa, the Secretary General of the Arab League discussed yesterday with the Sudanese president the possibility to hand over the two suspects in the first case, Ahmed Haroun and Ali Kushayb to a regional tribunal with the participation of the ICC. Musa who didn't speak to the media about the position of the Sudanese leader said, it would be made public after the meeting of the AU's Peace and Security Council where he had to attend it.

However, The African Union's Peace and Security Council, after supporting the deferral of al-Bashir indictment, called today for the creation of a panel of distinguished Africans to come up with recommendations on how to address issues of accountability and reconciliation raised by Darfur conflict.

Al Bashir told the Arab lawyers that Sudan is capable to protect its territory and achievements. He further praised the support of the "free world and peace lovers" to the Sudan, calling on world organizations that "are looking for justice" to send their delegations to Gaza, Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan "to see killing, torture, and humiliation" of the people in these countries.

Sudanese officials exert efforts to persuade the UN Security Council to freeze any prosecution of Bashir for 12 months, renewable, warning that peace prospects would be severely undermined. Besides, Russia and China, Sudan also seek to mobilize African, Arab Islamic leaders to block the possible indictment of al-Bashir.

The Russian Ambassador to the United Nations said that Security Council might want to consider suspending any war crimes indictment of Sudan's president. Vitaly Churkin was speaking following the AU call to suspension the indictment of al-Bashir through the 15-nation council. "We should be very attentive to their appeals," Churkin said, adding "If something of this sort is initiated, it's at least worth considering."

Nonetheless, the UN chief spokesperson Michele Montas told the reporters that the United Nations cannot interfere with the decision by the International Criminal Court (ICC) chief prosecutor to seek the arrest of Sudan's president for alleged genocide in Darfur. "The position of the Secretary General is very clear," Montas told a press briefing. "The ICC is an independent body. The secretariat of the United Nations cannot interfere nor be involved in anything that involves the ICC.

### **Africa urges suspension of ICC indictment process against Sudan's Bashir**

**(Sudan Tribune)** — The African Union on Monday urged the U.N. Security Council to suspend the probable International Criminal Court's indictment against Sudanese President Omer Hassan al-Bashir over genocide charges in Darfur.

"The African Union requests the U.N. Security Council to postpone the process initiated by the ICC," the AU council said in a statement after the meeting.

It said it had taken into account the need to avoid jeopardizing peace efforts and "the fact that in the current circumstances a prosecution may not be in the interests of victims and justice."

The African Union's Peace and Security Council also called for the creation of a panel of distinguished Africans to come up with recommendations on how to address issues of accountability and reconciliation raised by the conflict.

Nigerian Foreign Affairs Ojo Maduekwe told reporters that the African Union will file the demand in an effort to allow progress in slow-moving peace talks to end the five-year conflict in Darfur.

"We are asking that the ICC (International Criminal Court) indictment be deferred to give peace a chance," Maduekwe said; adding "Our concern is the timing and how this could impact on the peace process in Sudan."

He further warned that indictment of al-bashir could endanger the whole peace process in the country; "the whole place could turn into one huge graveyard. That could happen" Maduekwe underlined.

The Nigerian top diplomat indicated "We are asking for a delay within the rules of the Rome Statute."

In accordance with the Roma Statue, the UN Security Council can pass a resolution to defer for a period of 12 months any investigation or prosecution by the ICC and the delay may be renewed by the council under the same conditions.

The Sudanese Justice Minister Abdel Basit Sabdarat, who attended the meeting, hailed the African position.

"Sudan does not condone impunity and we would prosecute crimes of all sorts. Sudan is not governed by the law of the jungle, it is a responsible state with an independent judicial system," he told the AU council.

"The Sudan always opted for an African solution under the umbrella of the AU," Sabdarat said, adding the Africa's biggest nation "cannot be made the Achilles heels of Africa."

France downplays AU, Arab requests for blocking Sudan ICC indictment

(Sudan Tribune) — The French Ambassador to the UN Jean-Maurice Ripert reiterated his country's position that the UN Security Council (UNSC) should not interfere with the International Criminal Court (ICC) proceedings on Darfur. "The UNSC should not interfere with the due process of law in terms of letting the ICC do its work" French diplomat said.

"We remind the authorities in Khartoum that they have some obligations and commitments vis-à-vis the UNSC which repeatedly asked for their cooperation with the ICC and it is not too late for them to cooperate" he added. Ripert stressed that the ICC judges have not made a decision on prosecutor request for an arrest warrant.

Asked to comment on the African and Arab bloc at the UN requests to suspend indictment, the French diplomat said he respects AU decision but scathingly dismissed any imminent decision on the matter. "They can do whatever they wish. It is a free country. As soon as they find a country to do it we will look into it," Ripert said.

## **Sudan 1st VP visits Uganda for talks on ICC indictment and troops presence**

**(Sudan Tribune)** — The Sudanese First Vice President Salva Kiir will fly to Kampala for a meeting with Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni. The meeting is expected to tackle the recent decision by the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo to seek an arrest warrant for Sudan president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir.

The two sides will also discuss the presence of Ugandan troops in South Sudan following recent statements by Kiir's deputy Riek Machar in which he ordered withdrawal of the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF) from Southern Sudan territory. But Machar's boss speaking to the daily Al-Rayaam said that he gave no such orders. UPDF is in South Sudan to pursue Lord Resistance Army (LRA) fighters.

The Ugandan Daily Monitor said that Kiir wants Museveni to lend support to Al-Bashir in front of ICC indictment. They also quoted diplomatic sources as saying that Kiir will travel to Tanzania for talks with President Jakaya Kikwete, the current chairman of the Africa Union (AU).

The African Union (AU) today asked the UNSC to invoke article 16 of Rome Statue and suspend any indictment of Sudan's head of state.

### **Neighbors Oppose Sudan President's Arrest**

UNITED NATIONS, Jul 21 (*OneWorld*) - African and Arab nations are calling for the UN Security Council not to take any action on the move to indict Sudan's president Omar Al-Bashir over Darfur war crimes.

At a meeting held in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa Monday, the African Union (AU) foreign ministers said the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor's request to charge Al-Bashir would hinder international peace efforts.

"The AU requests the Council to defer the process initiated by the ICC, taking into account the need to ensure that the ongoing peace process is not jeopardized," said Nigerian foreign minister Ojo Maduekwe at the end of the meeting.

The AU has contributed some 9,000 troops to support international efforts to restore peace in Darfur. The armed conflict in Darfur has claimed nearly half a million lives since 2003 when the government-backed Janjaweed militia started looting and killing innocent civilians.

Diplomats say the 15-member Security Council has the power to delay ICC indictment for up to one year. The United States and its Western allies in the Council want Al-Bashir to be prosecuted, but China and Russia are opposed to his indictment.

Both Moscow and Beijing have strong economic and military ties with Khartoum, and many believe those dealings are influencing their votes on human rights issues.

Like the AU, last weekend, at a meeting in Cairo, the 21-member Arab League strongly criticized the ICC's call to indict Al-Bashir on war crimes charges. In a statement, the

group's head Amar Moussa said the Court's move was "unbalanced."

When asked to comment on the AU's opposition to the arrest of Al-Bashir, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's spokesperson Yves Sorokobi told OneWorld that it is "up to the member states in the Security Council" to decide what action will be taken. "However, we have taken note of this new development," he added.

The Darfur dispute comes just as news was breaking Monday that the former president of the Republic of Srpska, within Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been arrested. Radovan Karadzic was charged with genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, including the massacre of up to 8,000 Bosnian men and boys, after the fall of the town of Srebrenica in July 1995. "Today's arrest is a step toward redress for Bosnian victims and families who have suffered horribly," said HRW Monday.

### **African Union and Sudan meet over Darfur war crimes**

ADDIS ABABA (AFP) - The African Union's Peace and Security Council on Monday held talks with Sudan's justice minister over the International Criminal Court's possible war crimes charges against President Omar al Bashir.

Abdel Basit Sabdarat, who leads the Sudanese government delegation to Addis Ababa, met with the AU envoys to discuss the best way to deal with the issue.

"We don't want a precedent to be created because Sudan is not a member of the ICC. We are committed to the Darfur peace initiative within the umbrella of the African Union," Sudan's deputy envoy to the AU, Hawei Bonamalwal, told.

### **Kenya warns against prosecuting Sudan leader**

NAIROBI (AFP) - Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki warned Monday that any bid to put Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir on trial for war crimes in Darfur would prove counter-productive.

Kibaki said international efforts would be better expended on seeking a lasting solution to the violence in Darfur, rather than bringing Beshir before courts "that may not have an understanding of the conflict".

"Any isolationist policy against the sitting government of Sudan will be counter-productive," Kibaki said in a statement released after talks here with Beshir's special envoy, Bonal Malual.

Sudan has rejected the request as damaging to Darfur peace hopes, and the African Union warned the indictment of Bashir would create a power vacuum that risked "military coups and widespread anarchy".

Kibaki said the best way forward in Darfur was through the offices of the regional East African Inter-Governmental Authority on Development and the African Union.

"What we need is a genuine peace process that brings together all the parties in the conflict, so as to end the conflict that has led to great suffering for many people," Kibaki said.

## **US hints at opposition to suspending ICC indictment of Sudan president**

**(Sudan Tribune)** — The US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said that the Sudanese government has an obligation to comply with UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions.

Rice who was speaking to reporters on board the plane to Abu-Dhabi, United Arab Emirates said that Sudan “needs to live up to the obligations and responsibilities that have been put upon it by the UN Security Council”.

The US top diplomat was responding to questions on the Arab League’s statement issued on Saturday supporting Sudan president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir and condemning the move by the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor to seek arrest warrant for Al-Bashir.

Today the US envoy at the UN Zalmay Khalilzad said that he does not expect UNSC action on suspension "in the foreseeable future" and added that "there should be no impunity".

Another US official echoed Khalilzad’s remarks.

"We strongly support holding accountable those who are responsible for genocide in Darfur," Richard Grenell, spokesman for the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, told The Associated Press on Monday.

## **Darfur JEM proposes an interim government to deal with Sudan’s “new reality”**

**(Sudan Tribune)** — A Darfur rebel movement proposed the formation of an interim government saying that the indictment of the Sudanese president by the International Criminal Court (ICC) has "eroded his legitimacy" and created a "new reality" in the country.

"The erosion of legitimacy of the current Sudanese government obligates all political parties and forces to intervene in a responsible way and prevent the country from sliding into chaos, anarchy and constitutional vacuum." The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) said in a statement issued by the head of the Political affairs bureau Ahmed Lissan Tugud.

JEM motivated its proposal by the need to preserve the national agreements that are crucial for maintaining peace and stability in the country.

The rebel movement formulated a number of objectives for the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGONU). Among these goals, it proposes to maintain "institution of rule of law and preservation of citizens rights" and to put "an end to war, compensation of war victims and initiation of reconstruction of war affected areas."

## Sudanese president to visit Darfur on Wednesday

(**Sudan Tribune**) — President Omer Hassan al-Bashir will visit Darfur next week for the first time since his indictment by the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Al Bashir will visit North and South Darfur states on Wednesday 23 July amid a national and international mobilization orchestrated by the ruling National Congress Party denouncing the request of the Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo who charged al-Bashir of three counts of genocide, five of crimes against humanity and two of murder.

The governor of North Darfur, Osman Mohamed Yousef Kibir, expressed in a statement to the Sudan TV the readiness of his state to welcome al-Bashir adding that there would be an important demonstration to show the rejection of the ICC indictment against the president.

He also reaffirmed the states rejection of the allegations of the ICC chief prosecutor who is making efforts to destabilize Sudan's unity and added that world will see how much Darfur people supporting him.

The governor of south Darfur, Ali Mahmoud, said Bashir's visit to the state discredits the allegations of the chief prosecutor of the ICC and affirms the unity of the internal front.

He pointed out that the president will open a number of development projects including an electricity project as well as a number of secondary schools. He will also tour the Nyala water project which cost the state 50m US dollars.

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