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(By Public Information Office)

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Miscellaneous

Highlights

UN/ Agencies

Floods halt Barge returns of IDPs, air returns continue

(Sudan Tribune) Several flooding in six Sudanese states has led to the embers of Sudan's Joint Return Task Force, GoNU, GoSS United Nations Mission in Sudan RRR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the UNICEF to postpone Nile barge operations to return internally displaced people to their homes in the south of the country when the rainy season ends in early October.

With the Southern Sudanese government declaring Upper Nile, Jonglei, Unity, Northern Bahr El Ghazal, Lakes and Warrap States as disaster areas, voluntary returns by river barge have been put on hold to ensure the safety of returning internally displaced people.

So far, 451 displaced Sudanese have been assisted to return home to Shambe and Bor in Jonglei state from Kosti on the White Nile by barge. Another barge return had been planned for early next month from Kosti to Malakal in Upper Nile States.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Sudan sought Al-Qaeda's help to fight Darfur peacekeepers

Monday 30 July 2007.

By: Wasil Ali

July 29, 2007 (KHARTOUM) — The Sudanese government decided to lift restrictions on Al-Qaeda members in the country in return for their help in fighting peacekeepers in Darfur.

The classified document sent to Sudan Tribune by a group named Kosh Liberation Movement (KLM) was dated April 27, 2004 and signed by senior members of Sudan's presidency, ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and the army.

One of the signatories was Sudan's presidential adviser Majzoub al-Khalifa who was killed in a car accident last month signing on behalf of the NCP.

The authenticity of the document could not be independently verified.

The document requests all government agencies to allow "foreign Jihadis who came to Sudan with Osama Bin Laden in 1994 to resume their political activities in Sudan given the circumstances surrounding foreign intervention in Darfur to support armed forces and the people of Sudan to fight Zionist enemies".

The decision outlines certain steps to be taken to allow Al-Qaeda to operate in Sudan such as unfreezing their bank accounts and returning all properties confiscated in 1996.

A copy of the order was sent to President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, Head of Security Services and a representative of Al-Qaeda in Sudan.

Last year Al-Qaeda's second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahri called on Muslims in a video released on Friday to launch a holy war against proposed U.N. peacekeepers in Sudan's Darfur region.

The Los Angeles Times revealed last month that Sudan has secretly worked with the CIA to spy on the insurgency in Iraq, an example of how the U.S. has continued to cooperate with the Sudanese regime even while condemning its suspected role in the killing of tens of thousands of civilians in Darfur.

The U.S.-Sudan relationship goes beyond Iraq. Sudan has helped the United States track the turmoil in Somalia. Sudanese intelligence service has helped the US to attack the Islamic Courts positions in Somalia and to locate Al Qaeda suspects hiding there.

The Darfur conflict began in 2003 when an ethnic minority rose up against the Arab-dominated government in Khartoum, which then enlisted the Janjaweed militia group to help crush the rebellion.

According to UN estimates, at least 200,000 people have died from the combined effect of war and famine since the conflict started in February 2003. But Khartoum disputes the figures

(ST)

Sudan's ruling party lashes out at SPLM top official

Monday 30 July 2007.

By: Wasil Ali

July 29, 2007 (KHARTOUM) — A leading figure in Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP) accused a top Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) official of adopting views of countries that are hostile to Sudan.

Qutbi Al-Mahdi a member of the NCP executive office said that statement made by the Secretary General of the SPLM Pagan Amum is a "negative phenomenon in Sudan's history".

Amum has accused the NCP of dragging its feet over implementing the Comprehensive Agreement (CPA) particularly on the disputed oil region of Abeyi.

Amum also accused Khartoum of committing genocide in the troubled region of Darfur.

Al-Mahdi said that Amum still lives with "rebellion mentality and is behind on understanding the changes in the political arena that requires everyone to rise to the occasion".

The leading NCP figure called on Amum to "stick to the CPA and the deliverables of peace and not to adopt stances of countries that are hostile to Sudan".

Al-Mahdi stressed that Amum's statements "do not serve the country and encourages hatred with detrimental impact on peace".

Amum is one of the outspoken figures in the SPLM which made him a target of unprecedented backlash by NCP officials.

(ST)

Sudan president defends government response to floods

Monday 30 July 2007.

July 29, 2007 (KHARTOUM) — The Sudanese president Omar Al-Bashir defended his government against charges that that the sluggish response to the floods was a result of negligence.

Sudan has witnessed the heaviest floods in recent history that left a trail of destruction in central, southern Sudan.

Al-Bashir said that even though his government expected an increase in water levels, it was not expected that the surge would amount to 300% in some cases.

Sudanese columnists have criticized the government for its failure to assist those flood stricken areas. Some people in the affected areas clashed with police to protest lack of basic services following the floods.

Al-Bashir instructed governors and members of his cabinet to exercise “caution” in dealing with the floods.

Thousands of people have been displaced by heavy rains and flash floods across Sudan that has left 30 dead and scores injured.

Sudan’s Civil Defence authority said the floods had demolished 15,000 houses across Sudan and predicted that this year’s rainy season would be more severe than previous years.

Last year the river Nile reached levels in Khartoum higher than both 1988 and 1946 when the worst floods of the century hit Sudan.

(ST)

Kiir’s China visit a success, Cabinet

By: Mona Al-Bashir

Following the report presented by the Foreign Minister, Dr. Lam Akol, on the visit of FVP Kiir to China, the Cabinet described the visit as successful as it has underlined the common vision of the Government of National Unity on issues of concern to citizens. At its periodic session held yesterday morning, presided over by the President of the Republic Field Marshal Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir, the Cabinet underlined its keenness on evolving relations with China.

Dr. Akol's report reviewed the progress of relations between the two countries, the recent developments in Darfur case and development and construction processes in the South.

The session discussed the standing of implementation of resolutions and directives related to the biannual performance report of the Cabinet's functions, presented by Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Kamal Abdul Latif.

The Cabinet further passed three draft laws for higher education, presented by the Minister of State for Education, Prof. Mubarak al-Majzoub.

Academics and researchers say Garang’s absence impacted political transformation and CPA implementation

AlSudani-- A group of academics and researchers have agreed on the second anniversary of the death of the FVP and President of the GoSS, Dr John Garang, that Garang’s death has left a negative on SPLM and its slogans. His death, they argued, has impacted the political life. Political transformation and CPA implementation.

SAF: Joint integrated forces fully capable of guarding oil sites

(Sudan Tribune), in a special statement to Sudan Tribune, the official Sudanese Armed Forces spokesman announced that an accord was reached at the meeting of the joint Military Committee to assign the task of guarding oil production sites to the joint integrated Forces with both the SAF and SPLA agreeing to withdraw their troops. The Joint Military Committee decision is binding on both parties added the spokesman who assured SAF commitment to its end of the agreement. The Joint Integrated Force made of SPLA and SAF troops is fully capable of securing oil sites in Upper Nile, Unity State and other regions and freely operating factions and militias have now been integrated into the SAF and SPLA concluded the spokesman.

Higher committee for implementation of Darfur Peace agreement (DPA)

(Sudan Tribune), The higher committee for following up implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement, chaired by President Bashir, Sunday held a meeting at the Secretariat General of Council of Ministers and appreciated the outcome of the recent visit of the President Bashir to Darfur states, which reflected the stability of the security situation in the region and the efforts of the national unity government for implementing a number of services and development projects in Darfur.

The meeting heard a detailed report on the implementation of Darfur peace agreement, and underscored the importance of the ongoing voluntary return of the displaced people to their home areas, besides provision of security and services at the home areas of the displaced people. Meanwhile, the higher committee heard a report of the Minister of Foreign affairs Dr. Lam Akol, on the situation of the Security Council and the external contacts regarding Darfur issue, and underscored the importance of exerting efforts for realization of security and stability in Darfur through the mechanisms and agreements which were made with the African Union and the United nations.

SLMM: President's visit to Darfur is NCP visit, Minawi was marginalized

Rai AlShaab—Senior Presidential Assistant and Head of Darfur Transitional Authority (DTA), Minni Minawi, will visit to day Darfur to meet the DPA non signatory leaders in the field to persuade them to join the DPA. SLMM Secretary for Information said the President al Bashir's recent visit to Darfur represents only the NCP. During the visit, he said, Minni Minawi was sidelined.

Aldo cites ambiguity in sharing oil revenues

(Sudan Tribune), officially announcing his move to join the SPLM after leaving the ranks of the NCP Aldo Ajou stated that his former party's programs are no longer compatible with his aspirations and expectations of the post CPA era. The announcement was mad yesterday at a packed press conference at the southern Sultans Council where Ajou cited that two years after the signing of the CPA disputes still continue over the boarder, Abyei and sharing of oil revenues.

Ajou criticized what he called lack of transparency in the distribution of oil revenues stating that the partnership stipulates detailed disclosure of the amount produced and not merely handing over of presumed shares.

GoSS

China to implement projects in south Sudan

(Khartoum Monitor), The Cabinet in a session yesterday said the visit of the Vice president Salva Kiir to China yielded several successes. In a report he presented to the cabinet, the Foreign Minister Dr. Lam Akol said that during the visit, the Vice President discussed with the Chinese officials the growth of Sino- Sudanese relations, the latest development in Darfur problem, development and reconstruction in South Sudan.

On his one week visit to China Kiir met with the Chinese President and several officials plus Chinese businessmen, Arab and African ambassadors.

SPLM provides 10 million SADG for Sufi Quranic schools

AlAyam-- SPLM announced that it has resolved to provide 100 million Sudanese Pounds for the Sufi Quranic schools in northern Sudan. SPLM will also provide humanitarian assistance to al Kabashi area which has been affected by the floods. Pagan Amum, SPLM Secretary General, said since before the death of SPLM leader Dr John Garang SPLM named Sheikh al Jaily al Kabashi adviser for SPLM Chairman for Sufi Affairs.

Floods leave 40,000 families homeless in South Sudan

Al-Ayam-- The GoSS said at least six States in South Sudan are facing difficult conditions due to floods. The floods have left more than 40,000 families displaced and homeless. Floods also resulted in the death of 17,000 livestock.

Darfur

Political:

Darfur faction denies abuse allegations by UN

Monday 30 July 2007.

July 29, 2007 (KHARTOUM) — The main Darfur rebel faction which signed a May peace deal with the Sudanese government denied reports yesterday that its fighters had raped and murdered civilians during a recent offensive.

The Sudan Liberation Movement mainstream leader Minni Minnawi acknowledged that his group had been involved in clashes with rival factions opposed to the peace agreement, but insisted that the others had started the fighting.

"It's not true," Minnawi said when asked about a UN situation report citing testimony from fleeing civilians in North Darfur state that they had seen fellow villagers raped or killed by his fighters.

"The statement was misunderstood and misreported," he said, referring to the African Union peacekeeping mission, which was cited as the source of the testimony. "We request that the UN accept an independent team to investigate," Minnawi added.

The situation report released by the UN Mission in Sudan on Sunday had said that some 4 000 Fur civilians had fled an offensive by Minnawi's fighters in the Tawila area of North Darfur state.

The assault had targeted the rival SLM faction of Abdul Wahid al-Nur which draws much of its support from the Fur — Darfur's largest ethnic group. The report added that the displaced said that 15 young women had been "raped and then killed" and about 40 men had been kidnapped and were feared dead.

Minnawi acknowledged that his troops had been involved in fighting with opponents of the peace deal which he signed in Nigeria in May, but insisted that he had given orders to try to avoid hostilities.

"I don't deny there are some clashes . . . but we try to avoid them. All the clashes are from the forces who want to break the peace," he said.

Minnawi warned that his fighters were unable to control mounting insecurity across western Sudan and neighbouring eastern Chad, and called for the swift deployment of UN peacekeepers to Darfur to rein in the violence.

"There are many troops, militias, uncontrolled troops — in Chad also, there are the Janjaweed (pro-Khartoum militiamen)," he said.

"The government cannot control the security situation. We cannot either . . . We need the deployment of UN troops, right this year." Despite hints by senior officials earlier this year that Khartoum might accept the deployment of UN peacekeepers to Darfur, President Omar al-Beshir has since repeatedly rejected the replacement of the current, overstretched African Union force.

The Darfur rebels are particularly sensitive to allegations of rape or other abuses by their fighters. They charge that rape was systematically used as a weapon by the Janjaweed in their suppression of the more than three-year-old uprising. As many as 300 000 people have died and more than 2,4 million more been left homeless since the fighting began in early 2003

(AFP)

US expects a UN resolution on Darfur force this week

Monday 30 July 2007.

July 29, 2007 (WASHINGTON) — U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Zalmay Khalilzad, says the crisis in Darfur, a large province in western Sudan, is a high priority for the Bush administration. "One of the highest. And I went to Sudan myself, with the members of the Security Council to demonstrate how important this was for us," he said.

Speaking on CNN's Late Edition program, Khalilzad said Security Council members are nearing consensus on a U.N. resolution. I believe that we are very close. I expect that we will get an agreement this week," he said.

On Friday, though, China again called for patience on the Darfur issue. Beijing's special envoy for Darfur, Liu Guijin, told the official China Daily newspaper that coercion, in his words, "will lead us nowhere." He added that other parties must, also in his words, "learn to deal with the Sudanese government" as a "legitimate government that deserves respect."

(VOA)

UK's Brown seeks U.S. support for Darfur plan

Monday 30 July 2007.

July 29, 2007 (WASHINGTON) — Britain's new leader Gordon Brown will seek support for a peace package for Sudan's Darfur region in his first talks with U.S. President George W. Bush on Sunday, but the Iraq conflict will hang heavy over their meeting.

The British prime minister arrived at Camp David, the U.S. presidential retreat, on Sunday and was due to hold a first session of talks with Bush over dinner.

As Brown got off the helicopter, he was greeted by a color guard and Bush shook his hand.

"It's a great pleasure to be here at Camp David because there's so much history associated with it," Brown said.

Aides to Brown say he wants to focus on ending the Darfur conflict and breaking a deadlock in global trade liberalization talks in his first face-to-face meeting with Bush since he succeeded Tony Blair as prime minister last month.

Brown, with the support of French President Nicolas Sarkozy, is proposing a package of measures to try to end the conflict in Darfur.

It includes a United Nations Security Council resolution for an African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force, an immediate cease-fire, restarting a peace process and an economic aid package for Darfur, a British government source said.

It would also hold out the threat of sanctions against the Sudanese government if it failed to cooperate.

(Reuters)

Chinese, British FM discuss Darfur over phone

Sunday 29 July 2007.

July 29, 2007 (BEIJING) — Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and his British counterpart David Miliband on Sunday exchanged views on the situation in Sudan's Darfur region during a telephone conversation.

Yang said China supports the U.N. Security Council resolution on authorizing the deployment of a hybrid force in Darfur.

The Chinese foreign minister said the resolution should fully represent the consensus of the United Nations, the African Union (AU) and the Sudanese government and help deploy a mixed AU-U.N. peacekeeping mission in Darfur as soon as possible.

Yang stressed that the international community should continue to support its "double track" strategy — a balanced combination of political processes and the peacekeeping mission — and to promote a complete settlement to the Darfur conflict.

(Xinhua)

China says Sudan consent necessary for adoption of resolution on hybrid force

AlRai AlAam-- The Chinese Foreign Minister said Sudan's must agree on amendments introduced in the draft resolution on the hybrid operation. The Minister explained that should take place before the resolution is issued by the UNSC.

US Charge d'Affaires to Khartoum promises lifting economic sanctions imposed on Sudan

Al-Sahafa-- The US Charge d'Affaires to Khartoum, who visited yesterday the MFA National Centre for Diplomatic Studies, promised to work for lifting the US economic sanctions imposed on Sudan and to improve bilateral relations.

Three Darfur rebel Movements form one team for negotiations with the Government

AlSahafa-- Three DPA non signatory Darfur rebel groups, which participated recently in a meeting in triploi, agreed to have a unified team for the forthcoming negotiations with the Government. They also agreed to send a nineman team (three from each group) to participate in Arusha meeting. The three groups: SLM Abdallah Yahia, SLM Ahmed Abdelshafi and JEM.

Further divisions within JEM

Akhbar AIYom-- JEM Head of the Operations Mohamed Salih Abdallah Mango said, in a telephone conversation with Akhbar AIYom editor, that the Transitional Military Council of the Movement issued the following statement:

“To the Sudanese people, the marginalized in all parts of Sudan, civil society and international organizations, the members of the Movement in all sectors, based on our noble principles in regard to the issues of the marginalized, the Movement has made the following fundamental decisions:

1. Suspending the activities of the Executive Centre of the Movement.
2. Suspending the Legislative Council of the Movement.
3. Declaring state of emergency and devoting all capabilities of the Movement to military efforts.
4. The Military Council will not abide by any agreement or commitment without prior consultations.
5. The Chairman of the general conference of the Movement has to suggest the venue and time of the general conference”.

Signed by JEM 32 field commanders

Yesterday the editor of Akhbar AIYom spoke over the phone to JEM field commander Izeldin Yusuf, who is close to Khalil Ibrahim. During that telephone conversation the JEM field commander said Dr. Khalil is controlling the situation in the field. He said Dr Khalil’s JEM has defeated in a battle the forces of Commander Abdallah Banda (JEM Force commander who was relieved by Dr. Khalil).

Bashir addresses first meeting of GoNU youth meeting

AlKhabar-- President al Bashir addressed yesterday the first meeting of the youth organizations of the GoNU at the Friendship Hall. AlBashir pledged to support the youth and their projects. The President called for dialogue, resisting colonialism and emphasized that there is no alternative for the Islamic Sharia (Sharaa Allah).

Security:

Humanitarian:

45% of IDPs return home, HAC

By: SUNA

The Humanitarian Aid Commissioner (HAC), Hasabo Mohammed Abdelrahman, has announced that 45% of the internally displaced People (IDPs) have voluntarily returned to their home areas

in Darfur, noting that the number of returnees amounted to 81,762 families in North Dafur State, 78,846 families in West Darfur State and 76,841 families in South Darfur State.

In a press conference held last Saturday at SUNA premises, Hasabo described the humanitarian situation in Darfur as stable with the exception of limited insurgencies caused by Abdulshafi Movement in some pockets in South Darfur. He cited the launching of 3,528 flights to Darfur as evidence of stability in the region, noting that to encourage IDPs return, the government has established 200 villages in Darfur states.

The Humanitarian Aid Commissioner further explained that tribal reconciliation added to the facilities provided by the government and the national and international efforts of NGOs extended through 15,580 personnel and 3000 vehicles have largely contributed to the voluntary return.

Dismissing the presence of any hindrance to the voluntary return, Hasabo pointed out that the government has issued 29 Presidential decrees aimed at facilitating the flow of humanitarian aid, in addition to concluding an agreement with the UN to support the returnees in their home villages for one month.

In conclusion, the Commissioner praised China's humanitarian contribution, particularly in respect of water and basic services inputs as well as in the various health fields.

Miscellaneous

Second anniversary of Garang's death: Gatherings, alert, police in standby

Allintibaha-- Amid concerns and fear as people recall the events of the bloody Monday following the death of John Garang, the SPLM is will celebrate today the second anniversary of the death of its founder and leader at Khartoum stadium. Police authorities said their units are in standby in a precautionary measure to avoid tensions and violence.