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(By Public Information Office)

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IN THE NEWS TODAY:

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UNSC to resolve on hybrid force Monday

Al-Rai Al-Aam The UN and the African Union have agreed to hold the meeting of the African Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa on the 11th and 12th of June to discuss the hybrid force planned to be deployed in Darfur. Meanwhile, a source from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the Ministry is studying the third UN support package to AMIS in line with the DPA and the resolutions of the African Peace and Security Council.

Ban Ki-Moon informs UNSC on African proposal to amend plan for deploying hybrid force in Darfur

Al-Wihda The UNSC, Ban Ki-Moon , has informed the SC on the amendments which the African Union has proposed to be made in the UN-AU plan on deploying 23,000 strong hybrid force in Darfur . The UNSG told reporters that he is now in the process of clarifying the points that need to be amended

Sudan: Two arrested over murder of Egyptian UN soldier in Darfur,

BBC Monitoring Service Security authorities in Al-Fashir [northern Darfur] have arrested two people suspected to be involved in the murder of the Egyptian officer who was working with the United Nations forces deployed in Darfur.

Governor of Northern Darfur State Uthman Muhammad Yusuf Kibir said that the Egyptian officer died due severe bleeding after being shot. [Passage omitted]

The governor told Al-Ra'y al-Aam newspaper that the Egyptian officer died because of slowness process to rescue him. He said that the officer died after bleeding for about 40 minutes before being taken to hospital. However, the governor refused to lay responsibility on anybody.

Furthermore, the governor disclosed that police have managed to recover some of the stolen goods among them a lap top computer, which the criminals were attempting to destroy but, he refused to give more details on the case. However, he stressed that security apparatus in the state are carrying out investigations and they are closing in on the criminals.

Meanwhile, the governor has ruled out that the incident would affect the Egyptian role in Darfur. He added that a high level security delegation had visited Darfur and met with the state government and the team investigating the incident. According to Kibir, the two sides stressed that the incident does have any political motive. [Passage omitted]

CPA

Four people killed in tribal clashes in Diling

Al-Khartoum, in a further development of the tribal conflicts in Diling Locality, clashes were reported yesterday between two groups in Hagar Jawad area (10 klm south of Diling). As a result, one person has been killed and this brings the number of people who had been killed within a week to four. Local police authority intervened to stop conflicts between the two tribal groups.

Sudan's SPLM says border demarcation obstacle to implementing peace pacts

BBC Monitoring Service, The SPLM has stated that the problem of demarcating Abyei's borders still represented the main obstacles in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and that the meeting scheduled for the 9 June will discuss the issue.

Minister of Cabinet Affairs Deng Alor told Al-Ra'y al-Amm that talking about transcending the Abyei issue was not correct. "The problem is still there" he said. He denied that the two partners had agreed to form a six-member committee to visit the Abyei region, inspect it, and draft a report within one week. "This is empty talk. There is no committee," he said.

[Sudan People's Liberation Movement] SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum referred at a press conference the day before yesterday [31 May] to an agreement by the two partners to form a six-member committee.

Alor said fresh talks regarding the issue gave the impression that the problem had been transcended. He said the transitional administration agreed on enjoys all the prerogatives mentioned in the experts report except on the borders. He said the SPLM proposed going by the black line mentioned in the experts' report but the National Congress Party proposed going by the concept of an administrative unit in Abyei. "We asked them where the borders were but they said they did not know" he said. He said the conflict in Abyei was about petroleum and not about Al-Misiriyah [tribe].

GoNU

Western Union says money transfer to Sudan not affected by US sanctions

Sudan Tribune, Western Union, a leading financial services company specialized in money transfer service, said that the new US sanctions on Sudan will have no material impact on their business.

Kristin Kelly the media relations manager at Western Union told *Sudan Tribune* that the new sanctions “only imposes restrictions on who can send money to and receive money in Sudan”.

US President Bush signed an order last week enforcing sanctions against 31 Sudanese companies owned or controlled by Sudan’s government from the U.S. banking system. The sanctions also prevent three Sudanese individuals from doing business with U.S. companies or banks.

Money transfers by individuals to Sudan, Syria and Cuba from the US through Western Union are subject to more scrutiny than other nations. The extra measures required by the US treasury aim to prevent the flow of money to individuals or companies subject to US sanctions.

Sudanese citizens residing in a number of US states told *Sudan Tribune* that were barred from sending money last week for unknown reasons. However Kristin Kelly refused to comment saying that Western Union “does not share information with third parties about individual consumers’ transactions”.

The Western Union Spokeswomen urged any individuals in the US who have issues with sending or receiving money to contact their customer service center at 1-800-325-6000.

Sudan: Finance Ministry announces oil revenue figures, south's share

BBC Monitoring Service, Petroleum revenues for the past month of April amounted to 244m US dollars including 89.6m US dollars for locally consumed crude oil and 154.4m US dollars for exports.

The Government of South Sudan's [GoSS] share amounted to 85m US dollars. Finance Undersecretary Al-Shaykh al-Mokk told the regular meeting of the Joint Committee on Sharing Oil Revenues that the total of transfers and spending on the south and the producing provinces amounted to 92.5m US dollars, with a surplus of 7.85m US dollars in favour of the federal government. He said the share of the producing provinces amounted to 4.63m US dollars.

Finance Ministry officials to meet Sudanese president over US sanctions

BBC Monitoring Service, A responsible source in the Ministry of Finance has warned against ignoring the US sanctions. The source told Akhir Lahzah that the sanctions would negatively affect the economy. The source appealed to the government not to ignore the effects [of the sanctions] which may harm the economy.

The source confirmed that [officials from] the Ministry of Finance and Bank of Sudan met to study the effects of the economic sanctions, which were imposed on (31) companies. It added that the Ministry of Finance is organizing a meeting with President Umar al-Bashir after his return from Libya.

The source called on the [ruling] National Congress party and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement [SPLM] to resolve the crisis within the national agenda.

Southern Sudan

SPLM delegation to Asmara gets approval of some Darfur rebel factions to participate in Juba conference

AlSudani, SPLM announced that all Darfur rebel movements which it had met in Asmara have agreed to participate in Juba conference on Darfur which is planned to be held on the 21st of June. The objective of the conference is to bridge differences between the rebel factions and unify their views on political solution for the Darfur issue.

Darfur

JEM threatens to ignore SLM, negotiate with Government

Al-Rai Al-Aam, JEM have threatened to begin negotiations with the GoS without SLM if the latter is not able to unify its ranks in a period of two months. The Deputy Political Secretary of JEM Abdul Aziz Ushar said that JEM leaders have held a meeting yesterday with the UN Havesto and Sam Ibok of the African Union. According to Ushar the plan is to unify SLM and begin talks by July. Ushar explained that the negotiations will be mediated by the UN and the AU with the participation of the neighbouring and donor countries. He said they are against any Chinese involvement in the peace talks.

Consultations between DPA non-signatories before Juba meeting

Al-Sahafa, Sharif Harir, a leader of one of the SLM factions, said SLM factions will leave Asmara for Juba as soon as they conclude their consultation meetings which aim at coordinating their positions.

JEM leader (Khalil) France confiscated my passport following pressures from US

Akhbar Al-Yom, Dr. Khalil Ibrahim, the leader of JEM, said that the US has put his name in the decision of the US president which imposes sanctions on Sudan mainly because he has, contrary to US position, refused to sign the DPA. Consequently, France has withheld his French passport under pressures from the US. Khalil said he has met yesterday with envoys of the UN and AU, Havesto and Ibok and discussed with them all pending issues. He proposed that while the UN plays the role of chief mediator the AU should be assigned that of an assistant mediator. Further, Khalil said he had agreed with the two envoys on a roadmap for the peace talks. He suggested to the envoys that JEM first option is to host the peace talks in the areas under its control. He stressed that if the government insisted on the DPA as the only reference document or if they demanded to begin by DoP , then JEM will call for the right to self determination for Darfur.

UK, US have to accept they can't force Sudan over Darfur – Russia

Sudan Tribune, Russia has told Britain and America to stop being "so emotional" about Darfur and to accept that they cannot force Sudan to find a peaceful solution to conflict in the region.

Tony Blair and George W. Bush are expected to push for support for tougher sanctions against Khartoum when they meet fellow G8 leaders at their summit in Germany this week. But privately they have accepted that the best they can hope for is a statement of condemnation for Sudan rather than solid promises of action.

The stumbling block is Russia and its refusal to play hardball with Sudan. Along with China, which has strong commercial and military links with the Sudanese regime, it has repeatedly argued in the United Nations security council that dialogue is the only way to bring Khartoum into line.

At least 300,000 people are believed to have died since the conflict in Darfur erupted in 2003 and a further 2.5 million have been driven from their homes. In the past couple of months there has been a dramatic escalation in the violence in southern Darfur and last week people fleeing the fighting spoke of fresh attacks by the largely Arab janjaweed militia which is allied with the Sudanese government.

On Friday, Tony Blair wrapped up a farewell tour of Africa with a call for fellow G8 leaders to "step up to the plate" and do more to alleviate the misery of the world's poorest continent at their forthcoming summit. But Britain's hopes of using the summit to persuade the Russians to back an extension of existing sanctions against Khartoum look doomed to failure. Yury Viktorovich Fedotov, the Russian ambassador to Britain, told *The Sunday Telegraph* that sanctions were "not a matter of punishment but a matter of achieving a political goal".

advertisement

He said Russia had received positive signals suggesting that Sudan's president, Omar Bashir, might be prepared to accept a hybrid African Union and United Nations peacekeeping force in Darfur and wanted to give him more time before stepping up the pressure.

Mr Fedotov added that Britain and America might do better to follow Russia's "less emotional, more pragmatic and more practical" approach to dealing with Khartoum, rather than becoming emotionally involved. "It is a very tragic situation and it generates a lot of emotions, which in a way is good because it helps to attract the attention of the international community to the dramatic situation in Darfur, but on the other side emotions are not always helpful to find a diplomatic solution," he said.

"At some point emotions have to be put aside and diplomats have to work in a very straightforward but meaningful way to reach a solution which could bring a lasting peace and stability.

"This problem has a lot of dimensions and if we start immediately to paint it in black and white it would be more difficult to find a necessary solution.

"I will put it bluntly, sometimes there will be compromises, there is no doubt about that, if there is to be lasting peace."

British diplomats admit there is little chance of concrete action: "It is going to be words rather than results," said one.

"We will be looking for tough language because we have come to the conclusion that we have to ramp up the pressure on Bashir, but others will be trying to water it down."

The diplomat said Britain and America wanted strongly to condemn the latest use of air attacks by Sudanese government forces, but were not certain whether even that would make it into the final communiqué.

Last week, the Sudanese military attacked towns and villages around the Darfur region after a military convoy was ambushed by a rebel militia in south Darfur. The government troops suffered heavy losses.

Government forces used the ambush as an excuse to launch fresh attacks on villages in south Darfur. About 2,500 people fled the village of Sesseban, but many were trapped in nearby Khorshamam, where they were attacked again, while government officials in Khartoum assured the UN that ceasefire talks were under way in the region.

Survivors who fled to Nyala, the capital of south Darfur, reported being separated from family members as government forces and Janjaweed militias set fire to their homes. Clutching her baby sister, Nour Nadir Adam, 10, said she feared she was now an orphan. Her aunt Fatima loaded them on to the truck taking them to safety.

"They were shooting at everyone, killing many people," said Fatima. "The rebels say they control our land and that is why we were attacked. But Sesseban belongs to us, we live there and we are civilians, not rebels. The rebels have been using us, stealing our belongings and making us pay money for water."

A UN official in Darfur said: "This new outbreak of fighting is of great concern to us. It appears south Darfur is deteriorating quickly with significant increases in militia attacks and rebel and government fighting."

Sudan, Chad discuss Darfur, bilateral ties

Sudan Tribune, Chadian President Idriss Deby and his Sudanese counterpart Omar al-Beshir held a meeting here to discuss Darfur crisis, and the on going normalization between the two countries.

On the sidelines of the 15 summit of the Community of Sahel and Saharan States (CEN-SAD) Sudanese and Chadian presidents discussed until late on Saturday. Darfur crisis resolution and the normalization of the bilateral relations. This face-to-face meeting was held in Sirte after a four-

party meeting between President Omar al-Bashir, Chadian President Idriss Deby, Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi and Malian President Amadou Toumani Toure.

Foreign Minister Lam Akol said the meeting is a continuation of the last meeting between the four leaders last April, which discussed the situation in Darfur and convincing the Darfur holdout groups to join the peace process.

Akol added that the meeting also discussed bilateral ties between Sudan and Chad and the results of meetings between government officials of the two countries.

It also touched on the plan to deploy troops along the common border and prevent rebels in from both countries from using the border areas. He also pointed out to the visit by President Deby in mid June.

In their closing statement, CEN-SAD heads of state said that "intervention by outside forces could complicate the situation in Darfur," where a scorched earth response to an ethnic minority rebellion launched in 2003 has sparked US charges of genocide against the Arab-dominated government in Khartoum.

They called on rebel factions that rejected a peace agreement signed in the Nigerian capital Abuja in May last year to "participate in the Darfur peace process as soon as possible."

They also urged the United Nations to honour its commitment to support an embattled 7,000 strong African Union peacekeeping force in the western Sudanese region that has struggled to patrol a region the size of France.

The world body has reached agreement with the Sudanese government on the first two stages of a plan to bolster the AU force, but UN efforts to replace the existing mission with a robust joint force of up to 23,000 soldiers and police have so far been rejected by Khartoum.

23,000 peacekeepers planned for mission in Darfur

Sudan Tribune, Some 23,000 hybrid UN and African Union (UN-AU) forces will be involved in the peacekeeping mission in Sudan's Darfur region, Nigeria's outgoing Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) Martin Luther Agwai said over the weekend.

Addressing a farewell parade by soldiers of the 2nd Mechanized Division of Nigeria Army in Ibadan, capital of southwestern state of Oyo, Agwai explained that the peacekeepers would comprise 20,000 military and 3,000 police personnel.

Agwai, who was last month appointed by the UN as the force commander of the UN-AU peacekeeping force in Sudan, said that the joint UN-AU operation in Darfur was necessitated by the lack of funds experienced by the African Union which hampered the payment of the peacekeeping force.

Last November, the African Union said it was broke and that it did not have the resources to continue to run the operations in the Darfur region, according to Agwai.

And that is why the United Nations is taking over the operations named "UN-AU Hybrid" force in Darfur, he added.

Darfur rebel faction suspends contacts with the SPLM

Sudan Tribune, A Darfur rebel faction has suspended its contacts with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement to protest hostile statements made by the Sudan's envoy to Washington who described rebels groups as "terrorists".

Esameldin Elhag, the spokesperson of a rebel faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM), said in a press statement that his faction suspended contacts with the SPLM which intends to organize a finding common ground meeting in Juba for the different rebel factions before to engage peace talks with Khartoum.

Elhag, who represents a splinter faction from Minni Minawi, condemned statements made by Sudan's Ambassador to the USA, John Ukec Lueth Ukec, during a press conference held on Wednesday May 30, to protest the new sanctions imposed by the US against Sudan.

Ukec accused the US government and NGOs of exaggerating the Darfur crisis and denied that genocide took place in the war ravaged region of Sudan. He further criticized the international community for not treating the Darfur rebels who rejected the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) as "terrorists".

The SPLM Washington office condemned Ukec's statements saying it represents his personal view. But as it was said by many Darfur rebel leaders to the Sudan Tribune, this condemnation is considered as insufficient. They are waiting for the reaction of the SPLM leadership.

The rebel spokesperson considered Ukec statements as the continuation of the negative role played by the SPLM delegation during peace talks in Abuja last year and repetitive hostile press statements by the SPLM leadership.

Since the death of the late John Garang, a silent crisis is looming between the SPLM and the Darfur rebel groups. First Vice President Salva Kiir is considered as little concerned about the resolution of Darfur crisis. Since the failure of Abuja talks Salva Kiir is speaking about SPLM role in Darfur crisis resolution but even after the announcement of Juba Conference few steps are effectively taken in this direction.

Reverend Clement Janda, who is appointed as SPLM special envoy to Darfur "has did nothing since his designation" and many Darfur rebels say SPLM leadership statements on Darfur resolution are just for the "public consumption".

Darfur rebels are also frustrated to see the repetitive verbal attacks made by the SPLM foreign minister, Lam Akol, who used to attack the hold out rebels without any reaction from his political leadership arguing that he represents the national unity government.

During his visit to Chad two months ago to explain his initiative, Salva Kiir only met the former governor of Darfur Ahmed Diraij who has no real political influence among the rebel groups. The other rebel leaders were out of the Chadian capital and didn't appreciate the lack of coordination before the visit.

Observers consider Ukec statements as "the last drop that made the vase overflow". They consider that the SPLM leadership should have an effective political steps in this regard before losing a precious ally in its political struggle with the National Congress Party.

Darfur war crimes suspect no-show at press conference in Khartoum.

Sudan Tribune, A key suspect indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) failed to appear at a press conference sponsored by the Sudanese government last Saturday.

Ahmed Haroun, state minister for humanitarian affairs, was scheduled to speak at the government owned Sudanese Media Center (SMC) to celebrate the national volunteer's day. Haroun was invited in his capacity as the government minister who oversees the activities of aid groups operating in Sudan.

There was no word from the ministry as to why Haroun was not present at the press conference. Last Tuesday the US Treasury imposed financial sanctions on Haroun accusing him of playing a direct role in "the terrible atrocities of Darfur".

The other speakers at the press conference included Kosti Manibe the minister of humanitarian affairs at the full ministerial level and Abdul Rahman Abudom, a senior adviser at the ministry. Both speakers hailed the improvement in humanitarian work in Darfur saying it at its best in more than two years ago.

Sudanese rebel leader discusses situation in Darfur with UN envoy

BBC Monitoring Service, The leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement, Abd-al-Wahid Muhammad Nur, held talks with European Union envoy and officer in charge of Darfur file, Torben Brylle. The talks focused on Darfur and realization of peace in the region. The SLM leader told the EU envoy that he is very keen on attainment of peace.

Abd-al-Wahid urged the "international community to take necessary measures and procedures to protect the remaining souls, stop the bombing of civilians and work towards the disarmament of the Janjawid militias which is hindering the flow of humanitarian assistance". Abd-al-Wahid added that the government is not concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Darfur.

Abd-al-Wahid said the SLM is ready to cooperate with the international community for a cease-fire and called upon the international community to provide protection for the affected civilians since the AU is unable to do so.

African meeting in Libya rejects foreign interference in Darfur

BBC Monitoring Service, Sirte, and 3 June: Upon concluding its proceedings in Sirte today, the 9th session of the Presidency Council of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, Comessa, issued the following statement on the situation in Darfur:

The Comessa Presidency Council in its 9th ordinary session held in Sirte, the Great Jamahiriyyah, on 2, 3 June 2007 stresses that it had continued to follow, with great concern, developments in the Darfur region in Sudan, member of the Comessa.

The Presidency Council's interest in this matter is within the community's keenness to establish security and stability in the member states based on the Comessa security treaty approved by the N'djamena summit held within the African framework.

As such, it [Presidency Council] rejects the external interference of some foreign powers, which aim to exploit the crisis to interfere in Sudan's internal affairs and impose custody. A matter that further complicates the Darfur issue and prolongs it.

The Presidency Council wishes to hail the progress made in the implementation of the Abuja agreement which culminated in the creation of the interim authority in Darfur and the assumption of its duties.

The Comessa Presidency Council, furthermore, values the agreements reached by the Sudanese government with the AU and the UN on ways to provide the necessary support for the AU forces in Darfur. It, moreover, urges the UN to fulfil its commitments pertaining to the necessary provision of financial and logistical aid for the AU forces to enable them handle their tasks appropriately.

The Comessa Presidency Council seizes this opportunity to urge all factions who had not signed the Darfur peace deal to join in the peace process in Darfur as soon as possible.