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By Public Information Office

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Highlights

Main News

Decree establishing interim Abyei administration issued

(Sudan Vision) President of the Republic Field Marshal Omar Hassan Ahmed Al Bashir has issued a republican decree establishing an administration for Abyei region based on the Interim Constitution and the road map for implementing Abyei Protocol.

The decree stipulated that the interim geographical boundaries for the administration of Abyei region should be in accordance with the map annexed to Republican Decree No. (146) without prejudicing to the outcome of the arbitration, provided that Abyei region is given a special status under the sponsorship of the Presidency Establishment. The decree provides for Abyei region to be run by a council to be elected by Abyei population until an executive council has been elected.

According to the decree, the Presidency will nominate members of the first council with an administration that is comprehensive and representative of all the region's population.

Abyei region will further be run by an executive council consisting of a chief administrator, his deputy and five heads of departments while the Presidency will appoint SPLM nominee as chief administrator and NCP nominee as his deputy. The decree defined the functions of the executive council as represented in providing the required services, initiating national reconciliation, boosting stability and supervising peace and security in the region. It also provided for the establishment of a security committee for Abyei to be presided over by the chief administrator. According to the decree, the proposed council for Abyei region will undertake the tasks of issuing local legislations, passing the region's budget, adopting reconstruction, development and urbanization plans and boosting reconciliation efforts in the region.

The interim administration will continue to discharge its tasks until a permanent administration has been nominated or elected for the region and, in the meanwhile, both SPLM and NCP will be entitled to replace their representatives in the region after consulting with the Presidency.

The decree indicated that its provisions would have no bearing on the final and permanent status of the region's boundaries.

UN/Agencies

UN meets with Dinka and Messeriya native administration chiefs

(Al-Sahafa) Chairman of the Abyei Youth Association Kuol Lual has criticized the delivery of relief supplies to a deserted town adding the convoy should have been diverted to IDPs in Agok, 30 kms south of Abyei. He said the town was presently inhabited by SAF only.

He considered the recently concluded Abyei roadmap agreement as just ink on paper as NCP has already rejected Abyei Protocol and ABC.

Officials of UN and fifteen NGOs have undertaken a mission to Abyei; they also visited Agok to which Dink Ngok fled and Muglad where Messeriya resorted. They listened to statements by native administration chiefs of both sides.

UNICEF: JEM recruitment of children violates international conventions

(Sudan Vision) UNICEF Representative to Sudan Ted Chaiban described JEM recruitment of children arrested during its attack on Omdurman as violating all international conventions and treaties. Chaiban added that those who used children as child soldiers should be held to account. Moreover, he warned of risks these children would face if their identities have been made public, stating that this would also negatively affect their rehabilitation and their reintegration in civilian life in the future.

In his address yesterday at the workshop on ethical reporting on children, Chaiban said UNICEF looks at media as a partner in the field of child-related issues. He further added that media bears the responsibility of child protection and that this workshop enables media to develop a concept that strikes a balance between children's needs and raising of awareness on issues relating to them.

It is worth mentioning that a number of Sudanese media representatives attended the workshop.

GoNU

Chadian opposition prepares to overthrow government, Sudan denies participation in ongoing battles

(Al-Rai Al-Aam) Chadina opposition sources said the opposition captured Um Dam town and was advancing towards N'Djamena.

On the other hand, Sudan Defence Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein has denied any role for SAF in the ongoing battle between Chadian government and opposition. What is happening in Chad is an internal affair, he said.

Foreign Minister Deng Alor begins European tour to discuss CPA developments

(Al-Rai Al-Aam) Foreign Minister Deng Alor left yesterday for Norway on a European tour including France.

The Minister told the newspaper that the visit was in response to an invitation from the foreign ministers of Norway and France and discussions would focus on CPA.

Five courts set up to try those involved in attack on Omdurman, trials begin on Wednesday

(Al-Sahafa) About thirty of those accused of involvement in attack on Omdurman will appear before special courts tomorrow.

Chief Justice Jalal Al-Din Mohamed Osman has earlier ordered the establishment of five special courts to prosecute those involved in JEM assault on Omdurman.

Defence Minister: Instability in Darfur may lead to Al-Qaeda infiltration

(Reported by all dailies) Sudan Defence Minister, Gen. Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein addressing a press conference at Sudan Embassy in Cairo yesterday has warned that instability and insecurity in Darfur might attract Al-Qaeda to deploy in the region as Sudan borders with neighbours were open.

The Minister has confirmed that presently there was no Al-Qaeda military presence in Sudan but he did not rule out a limited intellectual presence of Al-Qaeda in Sudan.

The Minister visited Cairo to convey a message from President Bashir to his Egyptian counterpart. He asked Egypt on Sunday to commit more troops to his country's troubled Darfur region.

"Sudan wants large Egyptian participation in these troops," said Minister Abdul Rahim Hussein, adding that he was also asking for police. He spoke to reporters in Cairo after meetings with Egyptian president, foreign minister and intelligence chief.

National Press and Publication Council asks court to revoke license of three newspapers

(Al-Sahafa) The National Press and Publication Council asked the court to revoke licenses of three newspapers – Al-Hayat, Al-Khabar, Al-Adwa – because of violating terms and conditions of licenses.

US holds meeting at the UN with 'Friends of UNAMID'

(ST) June 15, 2008 (NEW YORK) – The US mission at the UN will convene a meeting that includes groups of countries who pledged support to the African Union-United Nations peacekeeping Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

The Inner City Press website reported that the meeting to be held tomorrow would include the US special envoy to Sudan Richard Williamson.

This will be the first time Williamson makes a public appearance since he returned from Khartoum earlier this month where he announced that normalization talks with Sudan have been suspended after failing to bridge differences between the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) over the oil rich region of Abyei.

The US envoy was the first to announce the formation of the 'Friends of UNAMID' last March after meeting with the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. The group includes the United States, Britain, France, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Denmark,

Belgium, the Netherlands, Tanzania, the European Union and the U.N. peacekeeping department.

Washington has grown increasingly frustrated with the slow pace of deploying peacekeepers to Darfur and recently appeared to throw the blame on the UN for the delay.

The US envoy sent a letter to the UN chief made public in April urging him to speed up deployment of peacekeepers to Darfur and ensure that at least 3,600 new soldiers and police are there by June.

UN Security Council adopted resolution 1769 on July 31st which authorized a hybrid UN-AU force (UNAMID) consisting of 26,000 troops and police but so far it only has only 9,000 personnel.

Washington welcomes Abyei roadmap

(Al-Sudani) The US charge d'affaires Alberto Fernandez in statement to Al-Sudani described the Abyei roadmap agreement as major achievement for CPA partners but he pointed out that the devil was in details.

Joint Sudan force delays flashpoint deployment

(AFP) KHARTOUM (AFP) — A joint north-south Sudanese force tasked with preventing a repeat of fighting in the disputed Abyei region will deploy this week a day later than planned, its commander said on Monday.

Troops from the Sudanese army and the southern former rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army had been set to arrive in the oil-rich area on Monday, but Colonel Valentino Tocmac said a lack of planes had forced a delay.

"They will start to go to the area tomorrow (Tuesday)," Tocmac told AFP.

He said the delay was "not for a specific reason but the flight schedule is full so that's why it's set for tomorrow."

The deployment of the so-called Joint Integrated Unit of between 700-750 troops was a key part of a roadmap agreement hammered out last week by the two sides in the wake of May's fighting which caused tens of thousands to flee.

Tocmac said on Sunday that the troops should all be deployed by Wednesday, stressing that the new force was made up entirely of men who had not previously been stationed in the flashpoint.

The United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) is helping to make arrangements to move the SPLA contingent of 320 troops from the southern capital Juba to Abyei by air and road, a spokesman told AFP, asking not to be named.

He said he did not have any information on the deployment of the Khartoum-based half of the battalion in Abyei, and the Sudanese army was not immediately available for comment.

Sudanese President Omar al-Beshir signed the agreement aimed at bringing peace to the disputed central region with former rebel leader and First Vice President Salva Kiir on June 8.

Besides allowing for the return of those displaced by the fighting in Abyei, the agreement includes setting up an interim administration and seeking international arbitration to resolve the dispute.

Both the United Nations and the African Union have hailed the deal, which will also allow UNMIS unrestricted access to the area.

Fighting in Abyei had threatened a return to Sudan's two-decade civil war -- the longest in Africa -- which only ended with the signing of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005.

Tocmac described the deployment as "very, very important. It's the heart of the CPA."

"If things are stable in Abyei it will mean there's progress on the CPA," he said, adding that Sudan needs a "symbol of unity."

Under the 2005 deal, the south was offered a six-year transition period of regional autonomy and participation in a unity government until a 2011 referendum on self-determination.

Half-way through the transition period, Abyei is still not governed by a functioning joint administration as stipulated in a special protocol.

The impasse has been one issue delaying implementation of the entire peace deal. In 2011, Abyei will hold a separate referendum on whether to retain its special administrative status in the north or join the south.

The Abyei fighting was described as the worst crisis endangering the entire peace process which ended the civil war between north and south Sudan in which more than 1.5 million people were killed.

The ethnic clash in Abyei is between the Ngok Dinka generally affiliated to the south who dominated the town and outlying villages, and nomadic Arab tribesmen who migrate seasonally to graze their animals.

[GoSS](#)

South Sudan cabinet adopts gender policy for the region

(ST) June 15, 2008 (JUBA) — The autonomous Government of Southern Sudan on Friday passed a Gender Policy for the region to address issues of inequality related to gender.

Presented by the Minister of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs, Mary Kiden Kimbo, the document highlighted gender issues in relations to girl-child education, maternity health care, poverty, food security, access to land, gender-based violence and decision-making in public and family affairs.

In defense of the document, Minister Kiden argued that there was need for a gender policy framework to reverse history of discrimination against women in Southern Sudan particularly by cultural and customary norms of life that “dehumanize and subordinate” women in public and family life.

The document discourages early marriages of young girls and promotes easy access to education by girl-child. It also calls for giving special consideration to establishing maternity health care centers up to the Buma (local) level of governance in order to avoid numerous deaths of women during child delivery in the region.

While praising the SPLM Chairman Salva Kiir Mayardit for his commitment to fulfill the 25% allocated to women in accordance with the provision in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the document calls for establishment of special programs that would empower women to create enabling environment and potential for them to qualify in occupying such allocations.

“Gender equality cannot be achieved without women empowerment,” argued the Gender Affairs Minister Mary Kiden, adding that women have only occupied an average of 18% out of the 25% allocation per the CPA.

Minister Kiden however commended certain state governments in the South for fulfilling the allocation and sometimes exceedingly up to 30%, which she said was the universal agreed upon percentage of special allocation for women.

After it was passed by the Council of Ministers under the chairmanship of the region’s President Salva Kiir Mayardit, the Gender Policy document will then be presented to the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA) for final endorsement before it comes into effect.

[Darfur](#)

Chad rebels seize second town

(ST/AFP) June 15, 2008 (NDJAMENA) — Chadian rebels seized a second town Sunday as they headed west towards their stated objective, the capital, but government authorities dismissed its capture as a publicity stunt.

Rebel forces took the eastern city of Am Dam "without much resistance" from government forces at around midday, said their spokesman — a day after having briefly occupied Goz Beida, closer to the Sudan border.

"Our objective is not to take towns but to clear obstacles on the road to Ndjamenana," Ali Gueddei, the spokesman for the National Alliance grouping of rebel factions, told AFP.

"We are not occupying them. Our objective is Ndjamena," he added.

French Foreign Affairs Minister Bernard Kouchner, who said Sunday that France "has not intervened and will not intervene" in the conflict, quashed the claim that rebels had made serious gains towards the capital, saying that "EUFOR forces have denied this."

Chadian authorities confirmed that Am Dam had fallen to the rebels but said it was a "PR stunt" by the armed groups.

"The rebels are effectively in Am Dam but it's a locality where there is neither a garrison nor troops deployed," said a Chadian military source.

Chad's Minister of Communications, Mahamat Hissene, said the government was not overly alarmed.

"We are serene. The army is deploying its plan and is taking control of the situation," the minister told AFP.

Meanwhile General Nouri, who leads the National Alliance uniting several rebel factions, told AFP that their forces were still on the move and that the capital remained their ultimate objective.

It was Nouri who led the rebel offensive in February that breached the capital before being beaten back.

"We want to gradually destroy the enemy, the Chadian army," he told AFP by telephone.

Nouri refused to set a date on the attempt to topple Chad's President Idriss Deby Itno, saying only it would be "in the short term."

He rejected Ndjamena's claims that Sudan was behind the current offensive.

"Sudan is a partner, but we are not part of Sudan. The Chadian government can say that, but we consider it an insult. We are sovereign."

A negotiated solution was nevertheless possible, he added.

"We have always said negotiation is preferable to war. It is a hundred times better than war. Unfortunately Deby does not want peace."

President Deby blamed Sudan for backing the February assault that was led by Nouri, a claim denied by Sudan.

Ndjamena, on the western edge of the landlocked central African state, is about 600 kilometres (370 miles) west of Am Dam.

Am Dam is another 110 kilometres north-west of Goz Beida, which the rebels briefly occupied Saturday — and Goz Beida is just 75 kilometres west of the border with Sudan.

Fighting near Goz Beida on Saturday saw Irish members of the European Union force (EUFOR) guarding Sudanese refugees exchange fire with unidentified gunmen. There were no apparent casualties.

There are nearly 80,000 displaced Chadians and some 36,000 refugees from neighbouring Sudan's war-battered Darfur region living in camps around Goz Beida.

Staff with German and Italian aid agencies in the area said that their supplies had been pillaged, with vehicles stolen and a garage set ablaze in the attacks Saturday night.

Nouri said he regretted the clash with EUFOR troops. "It is unfortunate and regrettable. EUFOR's role is justified," he said. But he criticised France's role in its former colony.

"The French position is not neutral," he said. "The French are making our life more difficult. Their aircraft participate (in the fighting) by surveying our positions and furnishing the Chadian army with information."

Kouchner said at a press conference in Abidjan marking the end a trip to Ivory Coast that France would stay out of the current conflict.

"There is no position for France to maintain," Kouchner said when questioned about Paris' stance. "France has not intervened and will not intervene."

France, the former colonial power, has had air and ground troops stationed in Chad since 1986 as part of a distinct operation named Epervier under a defence agreement between Paris and Ndjamena.

The rebel forces have accused it of actively supporting Deby's regime.

Fugitive Darfur rebel leader makes first appearance on TV (ST)

June 15, 2008 (PARIS) – An interview with the leader of the Darfur Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) was aired on the Al-Jazeera Arabic language television weeks after it actually took place in an undisclosed location.

Al-Jazeera has previously showed excerpts from the interview. The Sudanese government at the time questioned the authenticity of the video saying that some of his guards shown were arrested during mopping-up activities by Sudanese army after the JEM offensive.

The delay in airing the tape led to speculations that Khartoum is pressuring Al-Jazeera to prevent broadcasting it.

Ahmed Sheikh, editor-in-chief of Al-Jazeera television, told Sudan Tribune earlier this month that there was no deliberate holdup but that the network was waiting for the tape to arrive.

This is the first time Ibrahim appeared on TV since commanding a lightning attack on the Sudanese capital on May 10th that took the government and international community by surprise. However, the Sudanese government managed to repulse the attack and accused Chad of backing JEM in its attempt.

The rebel leader has been on the run the days following the assault and the Sudanese government put a bounty of \$250,000 for anyone contributing to the rebel leader's arrest.

The Sudanese government managed to arrest a number of senior JEM officials attempting to flee the country including Abdel Aziz el-Nur Ashr, who is believed to be the top military commander in the rebel group.

But Khartoum has failed to nab Ibrahim despite their earlier indications that they were getting close to rounding him up. The Sudanese defense minister said the army intercepted a telephone call between JEM leader and the Chadian authorities urging them to send a helicopter to airlift him from the border area.

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