



## UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN UNMIS

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(By Public Information Office)

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## **HIGHLIGHTS :**

### **UN/ Agencies**

#### **UNMIS holds press briefing hosting ASRSG Zerihoun and FC Lt. Gen. Lidder**

*The press conference was covered by most major local newspapers. Below are some excerpts from their focus:*

ASRSG Zerihoun said that monitoring the implementation of the CPA remains the backbone of the mandate of the UNMIS and that the bulk of the mission's resources is dedicated to support implementation of the agreement.

He said there are some positive developments in this regard especially with regards the launch of the new currency on 9 January this year and cited some other positive developments in the implementation of the agreement.

He said that there are other issues such as the opposition by some political parties to the Political Parties' Act, the National Security, the Judiciary Commission, the Lands Commission and the Electoral Commission Acts. He also said that there are a number of institutions and commissions that are yet to be established in the south and the Parties have to exert more effort on the population census.

The Acting SRSG also offered UNMIS' support for the electoral process and has a small electoral unit which will be enlarged. He also said that UNMIS intends to strengthen its presence in the south and, for this purpose, its Director of Administration is currently in Juba.

He also dwelt on issues of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse which he said are of much concern to the mission. He said that the UN and the GoSS have set up a monitoring mechanism on the issue and that the mission intends to send out teams to sensitize people in different parts of southern Sudan on SEA. UNMIS Public Information, he adds, will also launch awareness campaigns on mine-awareness

On Darfur, the Acting ASRSG said that the mission has a role based on its basic mandate on the humanitarian and human rights domain and is supporting the African Union effort

through the Light Support Package. This assistance, he said, will get bigger in the Heavy Support Package.

He also said that the UNMIS will have strong arrangements on the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue.

*Akhbar Alyaum* also quotes the ASRSG as saying that the UNMIS is preparing for a forthcoming visit to Darfur in which it aims to organise meetings with political leaders in Darfur and consultations with these parties and will also travel to Chad [*reference is the joint mediation support team that is preparing for consultations between the groups in Darfur and the African Union and UN Special envoys and, as the ASRSG said at the press conference, might also visit Chad to meet with some of the groups that are there*].

The Force Commander's statements on the security concerns such as redeployment and the 9 March deadline, the situation in Abyei, delays in the formation of the JIUs and DDR, among others, were also highlighted by the press.

On concerns over the implementation of the Security Protocol: UNMIS Force Commander Jasbir Singh Lidder called upon the Joint Defence Board to expedite the redeployment of forces so as to meet the 9 March deadline.

He said that redeployment and DDR is among the principal duties of the mission in the framework of cooperation with the JDB and the CPC.

In the questions and answers part, Zerihoun is quoted on the implementation of the CPA; on the ICC indictments which, on which he said the UN has no mandate and that the UN will be seeking a legal advice on interaction with Minister Haroun, citing the LRA precedent; Suleiman Jamous and efforts to resolve his issue; on casualty figures in Darfur on which he said that the UN has not issued any official figure; on the contaminated food at the WFP stores on which he said the agency had issued a statement; on the UNMIS role in elections on which the ASRSG said it intends to play its traditional role in such events and will monitor the elections should it be asked by the Parties to do so; on Eastern Sudan, Abyei and the border commission and working with state minister Haroun.

Force Commander Lidder also answered questions pertaining to DDR, OAGs, the UNMIS role in stabilizing the south and pre-empting potential flashpoints; the excellent role of the National Monitors; and on measures to prevent and pre-empt SEA.

*Full text of the near-verbatim transcript of the press conference is in separate attachment.*

### **UN's Ki-moon urges Sudan to halt aerial bombings in Darfur**

(AP) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged Sudan's government to stop aerial bombings in Darfur, deploring attacks that have killed innocent civilians in the escalating conflict.

In a report to the Security Council on Wednesday, Ban also called on countries to provide "urgent contributions of human resources and equipment" for a three- phase plan to deploy a joint U.N.-African Union peacekeeping force to Darfur.

Although Sudan's government has denied indiscriminately bombing villages, Ban's report described airstrikes that have killed more than a dozen civilians since December. Ban said

bombings of rebel strongholds have intensified in the past month, though he gave no specific casualty figures for that period.

In mid-January, AU and U.N. officials said Sudan's air force bombed villages in northern Darfur, killing at least two people.

Ban's report described a particularly bloody period over the past three months in which scores of civilians were killed.

The report highlighted escalating violence against aid workers in a region where two-thirds of the population relies on humanitarian assistance.

Ban demanded that the government hold accountable police and security officials who arrested and assaulted 20 people - including five U.N. staff members - in South Darfur's capital of Nyala on Jan. 19. One female U.N. worker was sexually assaulted, the report said.

The U.N. chief also called on Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir to "uphold his commitment" to the three-phase AU-UN peacekeeping plan. The first phase - which added equipment, military officers and U.N. police to the AU operation - is almost complete.

### **Security Council to discuss deployment of international force along CAR, Sudan, Chad borders**

*(AlIntibaha)* The Security Council discussed yesterday a new UN report on the deployment of peacekeepers on the CAR and Chadian borders with Sudan to protect civilians affected by the conflict in Darfur.

Members underlined the need for Chadian government consent to such a force. Some members had requested clarification over recent statements by President Debby in which he said that he will consent to a civilian component. Only civilian police may be sent to that area.

### **African Union troops knock dead some civilians in Nyala car accident**

*(AlSudani)* Hundreds of citizens protested before the African Union offices in Nyala following the death in a vehicle accident of two people.

The citizens claimed that an AMIS soldier knocked down the two and drove away leaving the dead bodies in the street. The families of the deceased expressed their anger and pointed out that this was not the first time AMIS troops fled the sight of a fatal accident for fear of the anger of the citizens.

### **HAC destroys 74 tonnes of contaminated foodstuffs from WFP stores in Damazin**

*(AlAyaam)* The Humanitarian Aid Commission has destroyed 74 tonnes of contaminated foodstuff from WFP's el-Damazin stores.

Authorities had taken samples of the foodstuffs for lab tests and found it was not good for human consumption.

## **CPA**

### **Big problems with new currency in southern Sudan**

*(Juba Post)* The Bank of Southern Sudan says that new bank notes of the old Sudanese pounds are circulating in Rumbek coming “from the north”.

The Director of the BoSS, Cornelio Koriom Mayik, also reveals in an interview that the currency conversion process is short by 94% of the money needed to complete the job, leaving southern Sudan facing a shortage of legal tender.

He says he thinks people are printing new notes of the old currency to cause problems.

### **SPLA, JIU cause of insecurity across Greater Equatoria**

*(Juba Post)* The governor of Central Equatoria State says disgruntled SPLA soldiers who have not received their salaries are involved in the road ambushes and killing in Greater Equatoria.

He blamed the vehicles being burnt on the Juba-Nimule and juba-Kajo-Keji roads on SPLA members headed by an officer called Kujo Apo from Kajo-Keji and said the problem is likely to persist unless these groups are paid monthly and promptly.

On the other hand, Commissioner Santina Sitta of Nzara County in Western Equatoria says SPLA and SAF soldiers operating under the JIU are illegally arresting and detaining civilians across the state. She said her house was surrounded by the JIU after she asked them why they were arresting and detaining civilians.

W. Equatoria State Governor Samuel Abu-John says the commissioner has fled her county for fear for her life and he, on his part, has order the JIU out of W. Equatoria but they are still present.

### **Civilian disarmament still blocked**

*(Juba Post)* High prevalence of small arms and an unwilling populace hinders the disarmament process, says VP Riek Machar during a conference to establish new proposals to disarm civilians.

He said that fear of the Lord's Resistance Army and the UPDF, coupled with the unwillingness of ordinary people to give up their weapons, have hindered disarmament in southern Sudan.

## **GoNU**

## **Sudan hails military cooperation with Iran**

(ST) The Sudanese Defence Minister, Lt-Gen Abdelrahim Mohamed Hussein, has expressed his appreciation at the way in which Sudan's relations with Iran was developing at the bilateral level.

Hussein said the two countries were witnessing excellent cooperation in their defence relations, with the two countries exchanging expertise and scientific and technological know-how.

*Click on the link below for the full text of the above and related story*

[Sudan hails military cooperation with Iran](#)

[Iran and Sudan accuse US of creating Mideast strife](#)

## **Southern Sudan/ GoSS/SPLM**

### **Kiir wants SPLM “Gospel of Unity” to be spread**

(Juba Post) At the inauguration of the SPLM offices in Bor, SPLM leader Salva Kiir urged the members to “proclaim the gospel of the SPLM as a party that unifies all”.

He said structures will soon be put in place to create a party network across the state. He further stressed that they will soon establish training institutions for cadres to sharpen them for future leadership positions.

### **VP Machar says southern states must look after themselves**

(Juba Post) Southern Sudanese state must start to look after themselves and not rely entirely on the GoSS, advises VP Riek Machar who was speaking to governor and commissioners at a conference in Torit.

He cited inner state roads, grants and salaries as areas where these states could go their own way by collecting taxes and working reasonable, cost-effective budgets. He stressed the virtues of de-centralisation.

### **Acholi conference to push for Lord's Resistance Army peace**

(Juba Post) Riek Machar, chief mediator for the Uganda peace talks, says an Acholi conference is scheduled to convene in Juba on 1 March.

He said that the Paramount Chief of Acholi is to lead the delegation with the GoSS. He said that the GoSS is still willing to host the talks if the Lord's Resistance Army wills.

Members of the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative are currently soliciting South Africa and Kenya to host the talks.

### **Hundreds of students return from Ethiopia to Boma**

(*Juba Post*) Sudanese students residing in Pokok, Ethiopia, are returning to Sudan after their schools were closed in Ethiopia.

The returnee students who left Ethiopia are currently in Boma en route to final destinations elsewhere in southern Sudan, reports Philippe Verstraeten of the UNHCR.

### **Meningitis vaccines not yet available in southern Sudan**

(*Juba Post*) There are still almost no doses of meningitis vaccines available in southern Sudan despite 174 people having died of the disease over the last five weeks, says a government report release this week.

The Ministry of Health has ordered 800,000 doses of the vaccine for southern Sudan but there are expected not to arrive before next week.

### **Security Concerns** (*all articles sourced from the Juba Post*)

***Northern Sudanese traders were forced to close*** their shops in the Customs Market after two shops were looted on Friday night.

One northern trader pointed out that apparently only shops by northern traders were targeted and that the issue has worsened in the past few weeks with 21 northern Sudanese shops broken into since the beginning of the year. He called for better security.

The commissioner of Juba visited the market the following day and called for calm. He asked the traders to open their shops and continue business as usual.

***Residents of Baranga Village in W. Equatoria*** were looted and an undisclosed number of locals abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army last week, a press release by the Azande Community Worldwide states.

Two nearby villages were also looted.

The statement says in part, "The Lord's Resistance Army are so much in the habit of looting villages without interference from any organised forces they even loot and stay overnight in the village as was the case with the village of Mawa".

***An alarming number of children have been abducted over the last two weeks in the Bor area*** and the commission is threatening to rearm his people if the SPLA cannot disarm the marauding Murle.

County Commissioner Abraham Jok pointed out that civilians in Bor were disarmed last year and they believed all others would be disarmed but the Murle remain a disturbance to them using guns to kill the helpless.

While GoSS President Salva Kiir addressed a rally in Bor, armed men raided Anyidi, 19 miles outside Bor town and killed one staff member of the Catholic Relief Service. The following day the same group raided cattle in Akobo killing 11.

### **Iran says ready to contribute in South Sudan development**

(ST) The Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has expressed Iran's readiness to look into all projects that can help bring about development in southern Sudan.

In a meeting with the Sudanese First Vice President and President of Southern Sudan government, Salva Kiir Mayardit, on Wednesday 28 February, the Iranian president reiterated his government's commitment to support the peace process in Sudan.

The visiting president expressed Iran's readiness to grant its various experiences in the fields of construction, energy, transportation, agriculture and health to accelerate development in southern Sudan.

The First Vice-President said, "We hope that we can use Iranian experiences in the fields of road construction, school building, sanitation and security in southern Sudan."

### **Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement**

#### **ICC judges to meet with the prosecutor on Darfur case**

(ST) The judges at the International Criminal Court (ICC) today issued an order to convene a closed meeting session on March 8 with the ICC's chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo and the Victims and Witnesses Unit at the court.

The Pre-Trial Chamber I at the ICC which has been assigned the Darfur case stated in its decision that the meeting is to discuss "matters arising from the Prosecution's Application" that was made on Tuesday to issue summons to appear against two individuals suspected of committing war crimes in Darfur, Sudan.

In Khartoum, *AlHayat* reports that state minister Ahmed Haroun made his first public appearance yesterday after Ocampo's announcement and attended a meeting of the Joint Technical Committee on Voluntary Returns.

*AlRai AlAam* also reports that President Bashir held a meeting yesterday with state minister Ahmed Haroun who has been named as a suspect to Darfur crimes in the Ocampo report.

The ministers for Presidential Affairs and Federal Government were apparently present in the meeting.

On its part, the SPLM has called for an emergency meeting of its leadership with the National Congress Party to discuss the issue and forge out a government position.



The movement says however that it prefers that the trial of these suspects take place within the country provided the conditions for justice are availed.

The minister of justice also held meeting yesterday with the Presidential Advisors on the developments with the ICC. The discussions focussed on pinpointing the legal shortfalls and the loopholes in the Ocampo report.

*AlSahafa* meanwhile says that views are varied on the ICC action. It points out that some legal experts warn Sudan to abide by the ICC's report and extradite the suspects while others are fully against the action and point out that the ICC is not an alternative to the Sudanese judicial system and its statute has given state parties the right not to accept its jurisdiction.

The people in Darfur also differ in their views over the ICC action.

On the other hand, the minister of interior has stressed his total rejection to the handing over of any Sudanese suspect to Darfur crimes, reports *AlSharei AlSiyassi* daily.

The paper reports that the minister stated that no one can impose control over the independent peoples of Sudan and vowed to slay any foreign official who seeks to accost the suspects named in the Ocampo report.

He said that the ICC should try Bush and Blair if it wanted to pursue perpetrators.

*Akhbar Alyaum* carries a ¾-page summary of various reactions to the ICC action on Darfur. In summary it says the International Centre for Justice, the US, the UK, the EU, the National Umma Party and the Ba'athist Party of Sudan have all welcomed the move while local civil society organisation, student bodies the federation of workers' unions and the Sudan Bar Association have all rejected the action.

*Sudan Vision* adds that political parties such as the DUP and the National Congress Party have also expressed objection to the action.

### **Special Courts on Darfur start sittings in el-Geneina**

(*Sudan Vision*) The Chief Justice in W. Darfur State says the Special Criminal Court on suspects to the crimes in Dileij will start hearings next week in el-Geneina.

State prosecutor Abdel-Dayem Zumrawi told reporters that the accused are from the SAF and the PDF and charges include abduction, arrests and scorching some villages. Zumrawi says these measures came following investigations carried out by local authorities and have nothing to do with the ICC action.

### **Governor of W. Darfur says will strive to improve the humanitarian and security situation**

(*AlHayat*) The new governor of West Darfur says his government's plans are to improve the humanitarian and security situations in his state.

He said he will also encourage voluntary returns of IDPs and pointed out that compensations to the affected could contribute to resolving a good portion of the crisis.

Governor Abu-el-Gassim Imam also said that his faction is also trying to engage the non-signatory groups in dialogue. He expressed confidence that their efforts will pay dividends.

### **Governor of North Kordofan reiterates rejection to UN forces**

(*AlHayat*) The governor of N. Kordofan says his state will not retract from its position against the deployment of a UN force.

The governor who was speaking at a session yesterday of the state's legislative assembly said that the recent days have seen a concerted political effort especially after President Bashir's visit to the area.

### **Aircraft crashes on el-Geneina airport with 54 on board**

(*AlKhartoum and others*) Pilot error caused an Antonov aircraft operated by AlArabiya Aviation Company to crash yesterday on el-Geneina airport with 52 [*other versions quote the figure at 54*] on board.

The aircraft had mistakenly touched down on the dirt track. Fire-fighters rushed to the sight and managed to safely pull out all passengers. Some suffered minor injuries and were taken for treatment.

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### **Opinion/ editorials:**

*AlSudani*: Columnist Zuheir el-Siraj says the government response to the ICC indictments has so far been logical and calm and wonders whether this is thanks to the ongoing visit of the Iranian president. He expresses hope that government's preparations for a legal or political challenge to the ICC action would not turn its attention away from the "millions in Darfur who have long craved for security and stability".

Osman Mirghani, another columnist of *AlSudani* says he read with displeasure the statements of ICC indicted Ahmed Haroun following Ocampo's report and non of what the state minister said such as likening his bravery to Saddam Hussein and so on pleased him.

He pointed out that the issue was not an issue of two people being extradited for hearings at The Hague but rather an issue of crimes against his countrymen. He advises the state minister to show his bravery by resigning in the first place so that the local judiciary will carry out an investigation into the evidence in an unbiased fashion.

*AlWatan* columnist Ahmed el-Sherif writes in his article: *Darfur: a war over resources* that on the surface there is conflict in Darfur between the armed groups and the government while in fact behind the conflict is a struggle between France and the US over the natural resources in Darfur. He says the grand puppeteers, France and the US, could only set their hands on the resources of a socially and culturally strong society such as that of the Sudan through inciting conflict.