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UN/ Agencies

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Two Messeriya killed and three others wounded south of Meiram

(Akhbar Al Yom) Two Messeriya killed and three others wounded when clashes renewed between the Messeriya and SPLA in Toweisha, south of Meiram. The incident took place when a group of SPLA obstructed pastoralists in the area.

Police of South Kordofan State announced that a criminal report was registered with the police in the town of Meiram under Articles (130,139).

A police force was also rushed to the scene of the incident to complete legal formalities and transport the wounded for treatment.

Foreign Office reacts to UNAMID Force Commander

(Al-Sahafa) GoS rejected the statements by UNAMID Force Commander to the effect that UNAMID troops would stay in Sudan indefinitely and emphasized its right to set a timeframe.

Foreign Office spokesperson, Ambassador Ali Al Sadiq, made the statements while reacting to UNAMID FC Martin Luther who said the troops might stay in Darfur for ten years.

“The agreement did not provide for this issue. There is an exit strategy worked out by GoS whereby it will decide the stay or departure of the hybrid troops after the mission comes to an end,” he said.

“No other quarter has the right to decide this issue. Only Khartoum has the right to do so,” he added.

President Bashir reiterates GoNU commitment to implement CPA

(Al-Khartoum) The President of the Republic, Field Marshal Omer Al Bashir, has reiterated GoNU’s commitment to full implementation of the CPA, achieve peace in Darfur and to realize development and democratic transformation in the country.

The President made the statements while meeting with a visiting delegation from the International Leadership Foundation yesterday.

Presidential advisor, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, told SUNA that the President briefed the delegation on developments of political situation in the country, Government’s

programmes for the coming period and the remaining time for implementation of the CPA.

NCRC: NCP and SPLM are to blame for the delay of Elections Act

(Al-Ayyam) The National Constitution Review Commission (NCRC) held the partners to the GoNU responsible for delaying approval of the Elections Act and warned that the Commission might be forced to draft a new Act if differences between the two partners over the Elections Act persisted.

NCRC member, Dr. Ismail Al-Haj Musa, said the Commission could meet, issue a new draft and submit it to the Government and then to the Cabinet.

SPLM member of the NCRC, Mr. Ghazi Sulaiman, attributed the delay to the efforts to achieve national consensus on the law.

Canada's FM to visit Sudan next week

(ST) March 16, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The head of the Canadian diplomacy is expected to pay a five-day visit to Sudan where he will visit Darfur and southern Sudan.

The Canadian Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier is due to visit Sudan during March 24-29 to hold talks with Senior Sudanese officials including Sudanese Foreign Minister Deng Alor about Darfur crisis and the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Bernier will also visit Al-Fashir, the capital of North Darfur state and Juba the capital of Southern Sudan.

The Director of America Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Abdelbasit Al-Sanusi, said that the talks of the Canadian minister in Sudan will focus on the relations between Sudan and Canada, the developments in Darfur and the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Canada is a supporter of the CPA, which ended the conflict between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement. Since 2005, the Canada has pledged over \$135M in assistance to Sudan, including \$85 million for humanitarian assistance and \$50 million for reconstruction.

In August 2007, Sudan-Canada diplomatic relations deteriorated following the expulsion of the Canadian chargé d'affaires to Sudan Nuala Lawlor, whom the Sudanese government accused of "meddling in its affairs."

Canada has already cut off bilateral aid to the Sudanese government and ensures that its aid money flows through the AU mission in that country.

Since 2004 Canada has committed approximately 441 million Canadian dollars toward humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding projects, reconstruction efforts and support for the African Union Mission in Sudan, making it the fourth-largest donor to the mission.

GoSS

Kiir: Kajokeji killing by Sudanese not LRA

(Sudan Tribune) First Vice President of the Republic and President of the Government of Southern Sudan Lt. Gen. Salva Kiir has directed States Governors to pay more attention to insecurity problems in their respective States.

He said, “many civilians are still possessing illegal guns that they frequently use for causing insecurity in the area and later use LRA as scapegoat for deteriorating security situation in the region. “Lord’s Resistance Army weapons must be collected, he declared.

In the same function, the chief mediator of Uganda peace talks in Juba, GoSS Vice President, Dr. Riek Machar said the investigation reports on the last month clashes at Kajo-keji, Yei and Lainya countries of Central Equatoria State that left many people dead indicated that the attackers were not LRA as previously believed, but rather a group of disgruntled SPLA soldiers

Kiir made the statements at forum organized by GoSS Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs in collaboration with UNDP, from 10 to 13 March 2008.

South Sudan VP orders SSRDF to manage MDTF funds

(ST) March 16, 2008 (JUBA) — The Southern Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund commission should manage the Multi Donors Trust Funds (MDTF) because it has qualified staff to deliver the reconstruction and development services to southern Sudanese, the Goss Vice president Dr. Riek Machar said today.

Speaking at the closing session of the two-day workshop organized by SSRDF for Southern Sudan states governors and ministers of Finance, Machar said that there is an established body competent enough to handle the task of managing the fund.

Machar reminded the state governors and ministers of finance that Goss government was committed in implementing a decentralized system throughout southern Sudan. . The senior GoSS official recounted that during the CPA negotiations two commissions including Joint Assessment Team and SSRDF were created where Goss contributed two third shares however due to the lack of legal framework the World Bank was invited to manage funds coming from MDTF.

The Joint Assessment Mission had identified the priorities for the areas most affected by the civil war. The Goss used JAM reports to set out its priorities starting with security, provision of health services, infrastructures among others since 2005 but that by 2009 the issue of insecurity will become the second, while infrastructures in generality takes the first priority of Goss, Machar said.

“Therefore its vital that should now be a transition from World Bank managing MDTF to southern Sudan to manage its own fund through SSRDF” Machar stressed.

Machar disclosed that by next year conditional grant to states would be shifted as a block grant to enable states primary health care, hospitals, primary and secondary schools to be fully managed by each state.

However, the VP recommended that each state ensure that ghost names are wiped out of their payrolls used primarily for abusing government funds and properties.

South Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund workshop was launched yesterday under the theme; “Reconstruction and Development for Economic Recovery and prosperity in South Sudan”

There were papers presented on Economic Recovery by Dr. Revence Kalibwani, Social Recovery policy by Mrs. Hellen Murshali, State development fund by Mr. Marcello Lado, Ethiopian Experience on post conflict reconstruction by Mr. Afework Eyesus, Rural based reconstruction by Professor Peter Tingwa and lecture on comparative post conflict reconstruction in Africa, southern Sudan lesson by Professor Anyong Nyong.

After two days of deliberations the participants came out with recommendations and resolutions but the media were asked not to publish anything pending “language polishing” by the secretariat

Darfur

JEM chief: consultations under way to shift Darfur talks to Geneva

(Al-Sahafa) JEM leader, Dr. Khalid Ibrahim, said consultations were underway to shift Darfur negotiations from Sirte to Geneva explaining that Libyan officials had not objection.

Speaking to Al-Jazeera yesterday said he would only accept separate talks with the Government.

He said the mediation led by Eliasson and Salim Ahmed Salim had failed and proposed that former UN chief Kofi Annan should take over as mediator to resolve Darfur problem.

UNAMID reiterates call for protection of civilians in Jebel Moon

(Al-Ayyam) UNAMID is concerned over situations in Jebel Moon. UNAMID spokesperson, Adrian Edwards, has called upon Government and armed movements to allow civilians out of Jebel Moon and provide them protection.

Mr. Edwards told Al-Ayyam newspaper that UNAMID was concerned over non-delivery of humanitarian assistances to civilians in the area pointing out that most areas in west Darfur are inaccessible to UNAMID.

He has called on parties to engage in the peace process for provision of better protection to civilians.

It is worth mentioning that the area recently witnessed fierce fighting between SAF and armed movement led to displacement of a large number of civilians and impeded delivery of humanitarian assistances to Jebel Moon.

Efforts step up to resume Darfur peace process

(Sudan Vision) The government has urged the two mediators, Salim and Eliasson, to intensify efforts to expedite the Abuja opponents joining the coming round of peace talks. It also called on the international community to pressure the rebel factions to come aboard the peace process.

Meanwhile, official spokesman of the Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Ali Al-Sadig, revealed that a meeting will be held today and tomorrow in Geneva, to be attended by the mediators team and Darfur peace partners, namely Egypt, Libya, Eritrea and Chad, in addition to Sudan and representatives of the permanent members of the Security Council and the European Union, to activate the Tripoli agreement signed last July. He described the meeting as an important step for pushing forth the peace process in Darfur.

"Efforts made by Salim and Eliasson to urge the two main Abuja opponents to join negotiations have failed. We have therefore enjoined the two mediators to intensify efforts to convince these two factions to join peace," he said.

For his part, Omar Adam Rahama, member of the Abuja peace talks, praised the efforts made by the two mediators for setting up a climate favourable for holding the coming round of negotiations.

In a statement he made to Omdurman Radio, Rahama accused parties he did not name of committing acts that undermine Darfur case, such as opening an office in Israel, he added, noting that these parties have interest in making Darfur case take such an adverse course. "We appreciate the big efforts made by mediators, though these efforts have to be supported by other parties," he stated.

Armed group broke into compound of Medicin Sans Frontiers in El Fasher, got away with 50 million pounds

(Ray Al-Shaab) Police in North Darfur Sate began intensive investigation to lay hand on an armed group who broke into compound of Medicin Sans Frontiers in El Fasher and got away with about 50 million pounds kept in the safe.

The Agency said a group of four persons yesterday broke into the office, threatened the guards who were also tied with ropes and got away with the money in the safe.

A report was registered with the police and they are hunting for the criminals.

Miscellaneous

Sudan sends troops to quell rebellion in Comoros

(ST) March 16, 2008 (MORONI, Comoros) — Sudanese government is sending troops to participate in the African Union operation to quell a separatist rebellion on the island of Anjouan. Some 150 Sudanese soldiers arrived in Comoros on Thursday February 13.

In a new attempt to stem conflicts in the continent, the African Union has decided to support a military operation by the federal government of Comoros to dismiss Colonel

Mohamed Bacar, who heads Anjouan since March 2002, but whose re-election in July 2007 is not recognized by the Union of the Comoros, led by Ahmed Abdallah Sambi.

The first batch of the 400 Sudanese troops arrived to Moroni, the capital of Comoros Islands to take part in the first AU military operation against an internal rebellion to restore the authority of federal government in the Island of Anjouan.

Five hundred Tanzanian troops arrived this week, Sudan and Senegal have offered troops, while Libya has offered financial support and logistics for military action that the United States has also said it would support. France provides the planes to transport the African troops.

The African troops will be soon deployed in Moheli Island the closest island to Anjouan. The operation is expected to involve about 1,600 African soldiers.

Comoros' own army is 1,060 soldiers strong.

Last week Comoros rejected a call for talks from the rebel island saying the time for dialogue had passed and African Union-supported military action to take back the island was imminent.

On Saturday 15 March the federal army launched a military operation in Anjouan to release political prisoners. Two soldiers are wounded during the attack. The operation targeted the gendarmerie of Domoni, where the political prisoners are detained.

South African President Thabo Mbeki, wrapping up a two-day visit to nearby Mauritius, on Thursday March 13 had urged restraint to allow Anjouan time to hold legitimate elections. South Africa has led mediation efforts to end the crisis that has escalated since Anjouan's leader, Mohamed Bacar, declared himself the winner of an illegal election last year.

Government officials say Bacar wants to separate from Comoros but the rebel leader says he wants more autonomy for Anjouan rather than independence. Comoros' national government has repeatedly said a military solution is the only option left.

Comoros has a history of political instability and inter-island bickering, The Islands suffered about 20 coups or coup attempts since winning independence from France in 1975.