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(By Public Information Office)

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- 17 killed, injured in South Darfur:

## **HIGHLIGHTS :**

### **UN/ Agencies**

#### **UN-backed initiative launched to provide legal assistance**

(*The Citizen, 17 Mar.*) A new UN-backed ILegal Aid Network in Sudan, the first of its kind, brings together paralegals and lawyers seeking to provide pro-bono services to the most at risk and defenceless in the population, the organizers said.

The partners behind the network - the UNDP, the Legal Aid Department of the Sudanese Ministry of Justice, the International Rescue Committee and the Peoples' Legal Aid Centre – issued a press release yesterday saying that the initiative will contribute to justice while bolstering the reconciliation process between refugees returning to their homeland, communities and the government.

#### **Eliasson, Konaré and Salim expected in Khartoum next Saturday**

(*AlSahafa, 17 Mar.*) African Union's Commissioner Alpha Oumar Konaré and Chief Mediator Salim Ahmed Salim and UN envoy Jan Eliasson are expected in Khartoum next Saturday.

Diplomatic sources in Khartoum say the impending meeting is aimed at bolstering the peace process for Darfur. The sources say the three men will then travel to New York on the 14 of next month to brief Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the outcome of their discussions.

#### **Police arrests 17 INGOs staff in Nyala**

(*AlHayat et al*) Police authorities in Nyala have arrested 17 INGOs workers in Nyala over immoral acts, the *SMC* reports [*also quoted extensively in a number of local dailies like Alwan, AlHayat, Rai AlShaab and others*].

The news agency says the police had gained a search warrant from the Office of the Attorney-General following complaints from neighbours of the ARC guesthouse in Nyala where the 17 were arrested.

Apart from allegations of immoral practices, the INGOs staffs are accused of public disturbance as they tend to use microphones during their parties. The house is rented by an American INGO (ARC?).

The search also uncovered large quantities of alcoholic drinks.

#### **WFP activities slammed in Sudanese Eastern Equatoria**

(*SudanTribune.com*) The state minister of agriculture, Francis Okeny Olaka says a report presented on Annual Needs and Livelihoods Assessment by the World Food Programme

(WFP) unit of Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) on Eastern Equatoria State was more technical than theoretical.

He said the current situation in southern Sudan particularly in Eastern Equatoria state requires more practical solutions than a scientific analysis that does not offer immediate solutions to vulnerable people in affected states.

The report stated that there are 183,400 vulnerable people in Eastern Equatoria state that would require 10,780 metric tons of food aid assistance during this 2007.

Most of the food will be distributed through recovery and development programmes to stimulate post conflict recovery and development in the state.

*Click on the link below for the full text of the story.*

[WFP activities slammed in Sudanese Eastern Equatoria](#)

### **UN rights council locked in battle over Darfur**

*(SudanTribune.com)* Allies of Sudan in the UN Human Rights Council were locked in a battle of minds on Friday over the follow-up to a mission that accused Khartoum of orchestrating war crimes in Darfur, diplomats said.

The 47-member assembly was set to continue its debate on Darfur next week, after attempts to stifle the discussion were thwarted by tough bargaining behind the scenes, a senior EU official said.

An end to the debate would have effectively nullified findings of the Council-appointed mission led by Nobel laureate Jody Williams which released a report on Monday accusing Sudan of orchestrating human rights abuses and war crimes in Darfur.

The report also criticised the international community's failure to protect civilians.

The United States said Wednesday that it would seek a UN resolution aimed at forcing Khartoum to allow a UN-led peacekeeping force into Darfur.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair said Thursday that the international community should take a "far tougher line" against Sudan over atrocities in Darfur to prevent extremism spreading across Africa.

The eight EU countries in the Human Rights Council are now aiming to convince a majority of the 47 nations to at least "take note" of the report, and then act to follow-up on its findings, the EU official said.

China and Russia defended Khartoum, while Islamic nations signalled that they backed complaints of bias and would seek approval for a replacement mission.

Despite warnings from Western and some African states that failure to act would undermine the credibility of the newly formed Human Rights Council, Muslim and Arab states and their allies backed Sudan's line that the report had no legal basis.

"The so-called mission failed to make an onsite visit. The report cannot be considered objective ... and has no legal basis," China said in a statement to the 47-state Council, which was echoed by Russia.

Meanwhile, Sudan's justice minister says allegations the Sudanese government is partly responsible for orchestrating war crimes in Darfur are "baseless" and the country will resist any attempts to impose a U.N. peacekeeping force.

Charges that Khartoum is guilty of crimes against humanity "are just generalities, vague, baseless statements that cannot hold up in the face of any analysis," Mohammed Ali al-Mardi told reporters at the U.N.'s European headquarters in Geneva.

*Click on the link below for the full texts of the above story*

[UN rights council locked in battle over Darfur](#)

[UN rights body faces key test on Darfur - activists](#)

[China, Russia seek to block UN rights report on Darfur](#)

[Sudan rejects Darfur war crimes charges, to resist UN efforts](#)

## **The Transition Debate**

### **UN chief says Sudanese reply is not "satisfactory"**

*(SudanTribune.com; AlSudani)* UN Secretary-General today said he had told Sudan's President that his reply to UN calls for speedy deployment of a UN-African Union (AU) hybrid force for Darfur was "not satisfactory,".

The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, spoke with Sudanese President Omar Hassan al Bashir last Saturday March 10 by phone, when Sudan's leader also invited him to visit the country, Ban told reporters at UN Headquarters Thursday, adding that he had not yet made a decision on this.

"I told him that while I accept his invitation in principle the details...should be discussed through diplomatic channels. I expressed my regret [about his reply]...that he made a number of reservations on ideas that were jointly proposed by the United Nations and African Union," Ban said, adding that he had urged Bashir to accept the proposals for the hybrid force.

Meanwhile, Sudan's representative in New York says the Security Council will hold a closed-door session tomorrow in which the Secretariat will be briefing the Council on the technical aspects of Sudan's response to the UN support package for the African Union, reports *AlSudani* daily.

*Click on the link below for the full text of this story*

UN chief says Sudanese reply is not “satisfactory”

### **Sudan reiterates refusal of troops under UN command in Darfur**

(*SudanTribune.com*) The Sudanese government reiterated on Saturday its refusal of deploying an international force under UN command in the war-torn western Sudanese region of Darfur.

Presidential Advisor Nafei Ali Nafei told the Sudanese Media Center that the Sudanese government had reached agreements with the UN and the African Union (AU) that the peacekeeping force in Darfur would remain under the AU’s command with the UN providing technical support.

The Sudanese official accused the western countries of "trying to detour" the agreements and understandings between Sudan and the UN, especially on the three-phase support package from the UN to the AU peacekeeping troops in Darfur and reiterated his government’s desire of realizing a comprehensive peace in Darfur, adding that the Darfur peace was imminent because of the will of the Sudanese people and the joint efforts of the neighbouring countries.

### **CPA**

#### **26,000 weapons collected in disarmament exercise in Pibor River Province**

(*Khartoum Monitor*) 26,000 weapons were collected by local authorities in a voluntary civilian disarmament exercise in the Pibor River Province of Jonglei State.

The operation was a success with locals expressing their resolve to collect illegal weapons and for the GoSS policies to realise peace and development in the area.

### **GoNU**

#### **Meeting recommends no deal with ICC**

(*AlRai AlAam*) A meeting at the Republican Palace yesterday has ruled out any possibility of handing over Sudanese suspects (Haroun and Koushaib) to the ICC.

The meeting which chaired by President Bashir was also attended by VP Taha, Presidential Adviser Mustafa O. Ismail, MFA Dr. Lam Akol, Minister of Federal Rule Sabdrat, Minister of State at MFA Ali Karti, Under-secretary of Ministry of Justice, Head of the Sudanese Bar Association and other officials. The meeting rejected a proposal on a team of experts to defend Sudan’s case at The Hague and resolved not to deal with ICC.

#### **Legal expert advises Sudan to revise oil contracts**

(*SudanTribune.com*) Sudan should toughen environmental and social clauses in its existing contracts with oil explorers to benefit fully from its energy reserves, a legal expert on exploration agreements said.

Canadian lawyer Jay Park told a south Sudan investment meeting in neighbouring Kenya on Wednesday that typical features of production sharing deals like regular environmental impact assessments were "completely absent" from cases he studied.

But he cautioned any new rules would need enforcement.

*Click on the below link for the full text*

[Legal expert advises Sudan to revise oil contracts](#)

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

### **GoSS finance minister stripped of immunity**

(*AlRai AIAam*) GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit has issued a decree yesterday stripping the GoSS finance minister of immunity ahead of investigations into the fate of \$60 million given the SPLM/A by the GoS.

The SPLM leader also ordered a number of reshuffles in the governments of Western Equatoria, W. Bahr-el-Ghazal and Lakes States.

GoSS' Presidential Affairs Minister Luka Biong says consultations are currently underway to effect amendments to GoNU ministers on an SPLM/A ticket and those in the GoSS.

### **Insecurity could hinder national census in South Sudan**

(*SudanTribune.com*) Preparations for the population census in Sudan, expected to take place in mid-November, are going on well but security remains an obstacle, says a southern Sudan census official.

The Southern Sudan Commission for Census, Statistics and Evaluation advisor to the national census commission, Daud Ali, warned that landmines and continuing insecurity in some parts of southern Sudan as well as the Lord's Resistance Army presence in parts of Equatoria may pose a challenge to the enumerators.

Ali told the Sudan Radio Service (SRS) said the Government of Southern Sudan is working to resolve these problems and secure all ten states of southern Sudan so that every single person in the region can be counted.

He said another challenge facing the census is the return of about 4 million people from displacement camps in northern Sudan and outside the country. Ali urges all southern Sudanese to try and be in southern Sudan on November 14th so that they are counted, as the outcome, he says, will determine percentages for wealth and power sharing.

## **Traditional chiefs meet in Sudan's Rumbek to restore authority**

(*SudanTribune.com*) 50 traditional chiefs from the different parts of the Lakes State are participating in the First Conference of Traditional Authorities that seeks to discuss, among other issues, the organization of the eroded traditional authorities and to stem support for the promotion of culture, local languages, dialogue and peaceful coexistence between different communities.

The conference is also expected to stimulate the thinking of the chiefs to adopt a process to encourage regular meetings among chiefs to help their roles in engaging the Lakes States to promote chiefs' roles and to ensure good governance and interactive participation on issue that influence their livelihood and improved quality of life for all.

## **Juba holds its breath as Dinka, Nuer headed for clash**

(*AllIntibaha*) Sources report that the situation is tense in Juba as a number of disgruntled Nuer elements within the SPLA have become increasingly vocal causing the SPLA to raise the levels of preparedness to 100% in anticipation of any eventualities that may occur from the Paulino Matip group.

The source that opted for anonymity told reporters that the tension is sparked by accusations by some Nuer elements that the SPLA is dominated by the Bor Dinka who also have a free hand in handling cash earmarked for development. Another issue of concern to the Nuer is the slow pace of incorporating the Nuer into the GoSS, adds the source.

*AllIntibaha* daily notes that about 1,500 SPLA elements had earlier walked out of their barracks in Juba and headed for West Nuer in protest over what they saw as mistreatment by some key elements in the SPLA.

## **Governor recognizes problems with E. Equatoria lawmakers**

(*SudanTribune.com*) Closing the five days Capacity Building training workshop for Eastern Equatoria state parliamentarians, today, Governor Aloisio Emor Ojetuk say the training has ushered a new turning point in the state. He further admitted he has problems with lawmakers.

That since inception of Eastern Equatoria state in 1994, there has not been such an induction training workshop given to parliamentarians of the state. The governor said the training has been an eye opener to legislatures and if any of his ministers fails to attend, it's the individual's mistakes.

Governor Ojetuk admitted that previously the executive had problems with the state legislatures; that some are administrative and some are personal grudges between individuals that should have not been presented to parliament.

On September 26, 2006, 35 state MPs of Eastern Equatoria petitioned President Salva Kiir Mayardit for removal of Governor Ojetuk from office due to failure in various managing of the state.

### **Aweil North County relocation stirs crisis**

*(The Citizen, 17 Mar.)* Relocation of the Aweil North County Headquarters from Gokmachar to Ariath has stirred a crisis in which several innocent people have been injured.

Eye-witness reports say that Lual Deng Wol has taken it upon himself to challenge the authorities on relocating the county headquarters and has went as far as flogging the people in the relevant authorities.

### **Ugandan rebels say will restart talks in South Sudan**

*(SudanTribune.com; AlRai AlAam)* Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels said on Friday they would return to peace talks in south Sudan if the government there increased security to keep the Ugandan army from attacking them.

The change of heart follows a trip on Sunday by the U.N. envoy for the conflict, former Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, to talk with fugitive rebel leader, Joseph Kony.

This week, Uganda said it had wooed LRA delegates back on promises of adding mediators from African countries besides south Sudan.

Olweny said the promise to expand the mediators to include five other countries — Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of the Congo — satisfied the LRA.

But the LRA demanded better security for their negotiators in Juba and their fighters scattered in south Sudan and on the Sudan/Congo border.

"If those concerns are addressed, we can go back," he said.

The LRA accuses the Ugandan army of ambushing their fighters in Sudan. An August truce between the two sides expired last month with no renewal.

"They (Uganda) should pull their troops out of Sudan. Only when the last troop crosses back to Uganda can we have peace," Olweny said. He said that was not necessarily a pre-condition of talks restarting.

The Uganda army insists it will stay in Sudan to monitor the LRA.

Sudan's representative in Kampala also said that among the demands of the rebels was an increase in incentives for their negotiators and that this, and other demands, have been met and the talks may take place within the next two weeks.



## **Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement**

### **SLM-Minnawi rejects attempts at formation of new counties in W. Darfur**

(*AlHayat*) The Minnawi faction of the SLM has voiced strong opposition to what it sees as attempts by the authorities to form new counties in West Darfur.

the movement described this as a violation of the Darfur Peace Agreement.

### **Kiir to meet Direj and Khalil in N'djamena**

(*AlSahafa et al*) Sources report that the Chadian authorities are making preparations for a meeting between FVP and President of GoSS Salva Kiir, NRF President Ahmed Ibrahim Direj and JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim.

The Eritrean mediation team is also expected to attend this meeting.

*Akhbar Alyaum* however doubts the credibility of this report.

### **HAC Commissioner in N. Darfur says humanitarian situation stabilising**

(*AlHayat*) Speaking at an exclusive interview, the Humanitarian Aid Commissioner described the humanitarian situation in North Darfur as “fully stable”.

Commissioner Ibrahim Ahmed said relief operations do face some problems but pointed out that all this is under control.

He said that the HAC is providing assistance to 700,000 IDPs outside the camps and vowed to address all concerns of the IDPs.

### **17 killed, injured in South Darfur:**

(*Rai AlShaab et al*) Renewed fighting between the Targem and Abala tribesmen in South Darfur have reportedly resulted in the death and injury of 17, according to *Rai AlShaab*.

*AllIntibaha* however puts the casualty figures at 31.