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By Public Information Office

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Highlights

Main News

SLM-Minnawi disrupts census in South Darfur

(Al-Khartoum) South Darfur State's census Director Al-Magbool Abdullah has deplored disruption of the fifth census in some State areas.

Speaking to SUNA, he said he was not surprised by SLM (Minnawi) decision to halt the exercise in those areas. He added the Presidency was considering measures to address the issue. He said census in other areas of the Sate was carried out by 75%.

Humanitarian crisis in Kharasana reported following withdrawal of SPLA

(Al-Khartoum) The residents of the Kharasana area in Southern Kordofan State said SPLA, which completed withdrawal yesterday, burned down its barracks, the market and water boreholes in the town, creating an acute humanitarian crisis.

The residents who spoke to the newspaper on phone urged the Government to rush food relief to the region and warned of possible deterioration of health situation.

Unity people threaten war against Arab militia

(The Citizen) Unity people Wednesday asked the members of Parliament to resign to force the Governor to revoke an agreement whereby SPLA withdrew from Karasana Heglig and to prepare for community defense against Arab militias, which have attacked Aliny and Karasana areas.

“All gallant sons and daughters of Pariang wherever they are will be asked to mobilize at all levels and assemble in Pariang for counter attack on Messeriya,” read a statement released to the press by the community yesterday. The community urged area members of Parliament at all levels to resign in a move to pave the way for amicable solution.

The communities also threatened that in case GoSS relinquish Karasana to Messeriya they would take whatever action they deem fit to protect their land.

UN/Agencies

UNMIS mandate extended for one year

(UN News Centre) 30 April 2008 – The Security Council today voted to extend the mandate of UNMIS to continuing supporting implementation of a 2005 accord that ended the long-running civil war between north and south Sudan, and called on the parties to fulfill their commitments to achieve lasting peace.

In a resolution passed unanimously, the Council stressed the importance of “full and expeditious” implementation of all elements of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) – signed by the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) – as it extended UNMIS mandate until 30 April 2009.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in a recent report, stated that the parties deserve credit for striving to overcome their tensions and problems through dialogue, but tangible progress has not been made in key areas, jeopardizing the agreement's implementation.

He noted in particular that recent clashes and tensions in the Abyei area, an oil-rich region which remains disputed by the two sides, are a potential threat to the agreement.

The Council today urged the parties to “address and find a mutually agreeable solution to the Abyei issue,” and urged them to redeploy their forces away from the disputed 1 January 1956 border and fully establish an interim administration in Abyei in accordance with the CPA.

In addition, the 15-member body “calls for all parties to immediately accept full unrestricted UNMIS monitoring and verification in the Abyei region, without prejudice to the final agreement on the actual borders between the two sides.” It also urged the Mission to consult with the parties and to deploy personnel to the Abyei region.

Resolution of that issue is just one of many which the report says must be overcome if the CPA is to be fully implemented, Mr. Ban noted in his report. The others include border demarcation; the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants; the formation of joint integrated units involving the two sides; and appropriate preparations for the current national census and next year's scheduled elections.

“Those issues are interlinked. Progress must be made in parallel; delay or confrontation in one area will affect implementation in the other areas,” he warned.

To this end, the Council urged the Government of National Unity to carry out an inclusive, national census and to prepare for the holding of free and fair elections. It also urged UNMIS to prepare to support the national elections, and the international community to provide technical and material assistance for electoral preparations.

Head of UN-AU Mission voices ‘impatience’ for positive change

(UN News Centre) 30 April 2008 – The head of the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur, known as UNAMID, said today that he is just as anxious as people on the ground are for progress.

“It has almost been 3 months into the launch of the joint peacekeeping mission in Darfur: The people of Darfur have endured enough,” UN/AU Joint Special Representative Rodolphe Adada told reporters in Khartoum. “They are impatient to see positive change and I am just as impatient as they are.”

At full deployment, UNAMID is expected to have some 26,000 troops and police officers, making it the world’s largest peacekeeping operation, but to date, only 10,000 uniformed personnel have been deployed.

According to the UN, as many as 300,000 people are now estimated to have died in Darfur since early 2003, when rebels began fighting Government forces and allied militiamen. This figure includes deaths from disease, malnutrition and reduced life expectancy, as well as from direct combat.

Aside from the death toll, the fighting, the vast majority still living within the arid region on Sudan’s western flank, has displaced more than 2.7 million Darfurians. Around 260,000 refugees have had to flee to the east of neighbouring Chad.

“Underdevelopment and poverty are among the root causes of the problem and they need to be addressed,” Mr. Adada noted.

While calling on the international community to provide assistance, he stressed that Darfurians, too, must play their part “by upholding the rule of law, stopping banditry and committing to a peaceful solution.”

On the political front, the Representative urged all sides to reach a ceasefire.

“UNAMID is a peacekeeping mission,” he said. “And peacekeepers need a peace to keep.”

However, Mr. Adada emphasized that despite the challenges, UNAMID is endeavoring to help Darfurians by protecting vulnerable groups and training community policing volunteers, among other efforts.

Addressing the Security Council last week, he said it was disturbing that while the region has remained near the top of the international agenda, this attention had not been matched with the necessary action to provide UNAMID with the means to accomplish the tasks assigned to it.

Adada: Hybrid troops in Darfur deployed by 40%

(Al-Rai Al-Aam) JSR Rodolphe Adada said he was optimistic of situations in Darfur, as presently there was no fighting in north and south Darfur except banditry. He said the improvement of the situations in Darfur was the result of security cooperation between GoS police and UNAMID in South Darfur.

Addressing a press conference yesterday at UNMIS HQs Adada said hybrid troops deployment stands at 40% and was expected to reach 80% by the end of the year.

[GoNU](#)

British Prime Minister seeks to convince FM to attend meeting with armed groups

(Al-Rai Al-Aam) British Prime Minister Gordon Brown hoped his country would host Darfur peace negotiations. Mr. Brown told the House of Commons yesterday that he was exerting efforts to convince Sudanese Foreign Minister Deng Alor to attend meetings with rebel representatives in a bid to achieve ceasefire in Darfur to pave the way for political settlement.

Brown said he was hopeful of success of the planned Darfur peace negotiations in London. He said he was also trying to involve SG Ban Ki-Moon in these meetings. He told the House that he had emphasized to Deng Alor the need to start talks as quick as possible.

Brown said the proposals were also presented to the armed movements.

FVP Salva Kiir to lead Sudan delegation to donor conferences in Norway

(Akhbar Al Yom) The First Vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit will lead Sudan delegation to donors conference in Oslo on Monday.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Finance, International Cooperation as well as several Ministers, heads of Directorates, representatives of relevant institutions and about eleven Ministers from GoSS will accompany Salva Kiir on this mission, Sudan Ambassador to Norway Dr. Mohamed Ali Al-Tom told the newspaper on phone.

The conference scheduled to convene 5-7 May will be attended by over forty representatives of international and regional organizations, Ministers of many donor countries particularly USA, England, France and several European Ministers.

Parliament passes Police Act; MPs question police immunity

(Sudan Vision) National Interim Legislative Assembly unanimously passed yesterday the draft Police Act for 2007 setting the stage for the modification debate phase. During the said session, some MPs engaged in intensive debate on the Police Act, criticized the broadening of immunity for police and claimed that the Act is not in conformity with the Interim Constitution.

Justice Minister, Abdalbasit Sabdarat, refuted the MPs claim about the conformity of the Act with the interim Constitution, arguing that the Act has been derived from Articles 148 and 147 of the Interim Constitution and the CPA respectively.

He further pointed out that Articles 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the Act have identified the Police jurisdictions and specializations in accordance with the Constitution and CPA provisions.

Sabdarat, described the Act as having exclusive and joint jurisdictions and presenting a model for the States whereby they could exercise their exclusive authorities.

MP Mohammed Alhassan Alamin, noted that the Police Act tabled before the Parliament is the original copy forwarded by the Cabinet and deliberated on by the Security, Defense, Legislation and Justice Committees of the Parliament, dismissing existence of any other copies as has been alleged by some MPs.

Security and National Defense Committee Chairman, Lt. General (Police), Jalal Tawor, assured MPs that all their remarks during the Act modification phase have been considered.

Tawor presented before the Parliament a report on the Police Act jointly compiled by the two mentioned Committees. He said the Act has stressed decentralization of police force composition across its three- level hierarchy in accordance with Article (148) of the Interim Constitution with the three levels adherence to the professional, administrative, organizational, technical and disciplinary standards and principles prerequisites to police duty performance.

In that context, the Minister of Interior, Lt. General (Rtd) Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid, considered the Police Act for 2007 as instrumental to peace stage, describing it as a professional and administrative Act.

Meanwhile, the Parliament, listened yesterday to a statement presented by the Minister of Interior on the security situations in the country where he affirmed security stability during 2007 and the first quarter of 2008 disclosing existence of security threats in Darfur in terms of rebel assaults on border points in West Darfur, proliferation of small arms and banditry acts.

The Minister believes that the Darfur crisis has allowed drug farming trade flourish under Armed Movement protection, referring to his efforts in bolstering security stability in Darfur through intensification of police presence and activation of criminal work in the region. He further enumerated the factors that constrained Federal Police work conduction in South Sudan.

The said statement has been forwarded to the Security and Defense Committee for deliberation and reporting on it.

Sudan close to solving murder of US official

(ST) April 30, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The Sudanese interior ministry announced today that they are close to solving the murder of a US diplomat in Khartoum on New Years eve.

The head of the bureau for criminal investigation in the ministry Major General Abdeen Al-Tahir told the government sponsored Sudanese Media Center (SMC) that the investigation into the killing “is almost complete”.

Al-Tahir said that the case would be referred to the ministry of Justice “within the next two weeks”.

The slain officer named John Granville, 33, was working for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Sudan. He was working to implement a 2005 peace agreement between Sudan’s north and south that ended more than two decades of civil war, USAID said.

Granville was shot and killed along with his driver last January by gunmen in a passing car who cut him off and opened fire before fleeing the scene as he was being driven home in Sudan’s capital.

There has been conflicting reports on the motives behind the killing. Sudanese officials ruled out the any terrorist links. It was also mentioned that the USAID official got into an argument during the new years party after which he left angrily.

Last February Sudanese authorities arrested two suspects after an exchange of fire that led to some injuries before they were taken into custody but their names were not released.

The New York Times quoted an unidentified law enforcement official as saying that one of two men arrested is a Sudanese army officer. He said that the latter was the ringleader of a small cell of terrorists, and was not acting on behalf of the Sudanese government.

Al-Tahir said that there are a total of five suspects in the case and stressed that “they are all Sudanese”.

“There are no terrorist ties to the incident. The group that carried out the attack is small and isolated with extremist views” he said.

The cell is believed to have been formed last year after Sudan’s president, Omar al-Bashir, vehemently rejected the idea of a United Nations peacekeeping mission to Darfur.

US officials have grown frustrated at the slow pace of the investigation into the killing. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) sent a team to assist their Sudanese counterparts.

Last week the US presidential contender Barack Obama issued a statement on reports of negotiations between Washington and Khartoum to normalize ties. Obama said that “Khartoum has yet to fully account for the murder of John Granville”.

Granville is the first U.S. diplomat to be killed in Sudan since the 1973 assassination of U.S. Ambassador Cleo Noel, slain along with senior embassy officer George Curtis Moore by the Palestinian Black September militant group

[Museveni says Sudan waging war against him in N. Uganda](#)

(ST) April 30, 2008 (KAMPALA) – The Ugandan president lashed out against the Sudanese government renewing accusations that Khartoum is seeking to de-stabilize his government. He further said that his army is not fighting the rebel LRA but the Sudanese army.

Earlier this month, LRA commander Joseph Kony failed to show up at the signing ceremony for a final peace agreement in the nearby Sudanese jungle town of Ri-Kwangba. The historic signing has been postponed indefinitely and a ceasefire agreement was not renewed.

“Let me tell you that for the past 22 years we have been fighting with the Khartoum government but not Kony,” Yoweri Museveni said on Monday.

According to the Ugandan press Museveni told the leader of the Ugandan West Nile district "I hear people talking of 20 years of conflict with Kony. I don't want a narrow understanding of this affair. Our fight was not with Kony but with the Arabs of Khartoum who made a big mistake of underestimating us."

When the National Resistance Army (NRA) took over power, he said, Sudan looked for puppets that could topple the Government and then fight on their behalf against the black people in South Sudan.

“Kony was in Sudan because they were trying to use him to overthrow my regime,” he said.

"They (Sudanese) discovered that we were not the usual Black Africans. If you create problems for us we create more problems for you," he added.

The Ugandan President said defeating Kony and the Khartoum government has made it possible for Ugandans to trade freely in South Sudan.

He further warned that in case the LRA leader refuses to sign the negotiated peace deal he would fight him.

“If he does not come out peacefully, then we shall deal with him. I can assure you that Sudan can no longer attack Uganda through Kony,” He added.

In the past, the Ugandan government accused regularly Khartoum of supplying arms, food and shelter to Kony to fight his government. However, Kampala had stopped these accusations following the signing of a peace deal between Sudanese government and the former rebel SPLA in January 2005.

But in November 2006, Uganda renewed its allegations saying that Khartoum had created "Sudan LRA" and ordered it to attack civilians in the region.

[GoSS](#)

[Intensified fighting, inadequate aid mar return of refugees to S. Sudan](#)

(Washington Post) Clashes between southern Sudanese troops and tribal militias in a contested oil-rich region of Sudan are intensifying, and the return of thousands of war refugees is fueling friction in the absence of adequate relief and basic services, according to the aid group Doctors Without Borders.

Dozens of people have been killed since Friday, as months of intensifying fighting threaten a 2005 peace agreement between the north and south. Calm was restored Tuesday after a truce was reached, according to news services.

A key part of the peace agreement was a census, which got underway last week. It was unclear whether the fighting was related to the count, which is meant to pave the way for national elections next year and a referendum in the south on eventual independence from Sudan.

The civil war, which pitted the Arab-led government in the north against rebels in the mostly animist and Christian south, left 2 million people dead, primarily from famine and disease, and 4 million homeless.

Vanessa van Schoor, Sudan operations manager for Doctors Without Borders, said her organization is struggling to contain outbreaks of meningitis and cholera and to keep food supply-lines open. Donor countries that committed to helping the southern region recover from the war were scaling back on contributions for building schools and medical facilities, she said.

"The return of refugees in the thousands and the existence of thousands of displaced Sudanese are increasing the potential for conflict. There is a gap between emergency needs and development needs, and we are absolutely stretched to the limit," said van Schoor, who was in Washington last week to discuss the challenges her organization is facing.

For example, she said doctors operating basic clinics have been forced to debate their priorities, such as whether to temporarily close the centers so they can carry out measles vaccinations.

"Emergency funding needs to continue and we are facing the problem that money from a multi-donor trust fund is arriving in Juba but not coming on line," she said, referring to the regional capital. "So many of our development programs are not on the agenda anymore, and we are struggling to bridge this gap."

Outpatient capacity has doubled and vaccination campaigns to prevent meningitis, cholera and other epidemics are necessary, but there is a shortage of experienced staff, van Schoor said. The few skilled south Sudanese are leaving nongovernmental organizations to work with their regional government, she said.

"The food distribution system in south Sudan is also strained due to last year's flooding, and we are starting to see pockets of malnutrition. Food convoys are being stopped," she said, adding that robberies of nongovernmental organization compounds and agencies were on the rise.

"Two of our vehicles were stolen last week," she said.

Frictions between tribesmen in the Bahr al-Ghazal region and Sudanese defense forces have been aggravated by political splits and approaching political deadlines, and conflicting claims to the oil-rich region of Abyei are a particular source of tension, van Schoor said.

"People are spilling back to the south, while there is nothing for them there, no schools for their children, no electricity," she said. "Yet they have high expectations of the troops coming in."

SPLM State Congress formations kick off all over the Sudan

(ST) April 30, 2008 (BENTIU) – The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) State Congress formations began yesterday throughout the ten states of Southern Sudan.

Participants are drawn from all Payams of each state to form the party's state congresses and elect their respective leaderships.

Speaking to the press yesterday in Bentiu town, the capital of Unity state, the Vice President of the Government of Southern Sudan and Deputy Chairman of the SPLM, Dr. Riek Machar Teny, urged all the SPLM members who are constitutional post holders in Southern Sudan to actively participate in the SPLM Congress formations in the ten states.

Dr. Machar said the current exercise of the SPLM State Congress formations is the first of its kind in the Movement and the beginning of the real democratic transformation of the SPLM into a political party.

He added that the exercise will strengthen democratic institutionalization of the Party structures.

Unity state kicked off its SPLM Congress formation on Tuesday, April 29, at Rubkona County, the SPLM state headquarters, in which the current state Governor Brig. Taban Deng Gai will contest for the Party's state chairmanship in the election against his challenger, Dr. Joseph Minytil Wiejang, the current Minister of Health in the Government of Southern Sudan.

Delegates to the upcoming May 10, 2008, SPLM Second National Convention in Juba will be elected and forwarded from these State Congresses all over the Sudan.

The SPLM Juba Convention will deliberate and resolve on the way forward and elect the top SPLM leadership that will contest in the next 2009 general elections in the country.

The outcome of the five-day Convention is expected to be announced on May 16, 2008, to coincide with the SPLM/A 25th Jubilee.

Dr. Ann Itto, SPLM Deputy Secretary General for Southern Sector informed the press that twenty-five per cent of the delegates to the Convention will be females and five per cent will come from the SPLM Chapters in the Diaspora.

Darfur

Violence forces 12,000 refugees to flee in South Darfur

(ST) April 30, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Around 12,000 civilians fled their homes following an outbreak of fighting in South Darfur according to the spokesperson of displaced and refugees in the region.

Hussein Abu-Sharati told Sudan Tribune that the freshly displaced civilians were made up of 2,700 families who arrived at the Kalma camp in south Darfur. He said that fighting erupted between forces loyal to Sudan's senior presidential assistant Minni Arcua Minnawi and Janjaweed militias.

Abu-Sharati said violence was triggered by differences over the census process underway all over Sudan. He also said that he is scheduled to meet with UN officials tomorrow to discuss the recent developments.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the North and South in 2005 mandated that a census be conducted as a prerequisite for next year's elections.

However, the five year conflict in Darfur cast shadows over whether the census can be fair at a time when millions of Darfuris are displaced in and out of Sudan. All Darfur rebel groups including the signatory to the peace agreement rejected the census.

The Darfur leading figure said the displaced people came from the towns of Muhajriya, Tani Affendi, Labado, Om-Kassab, Tegaisha, Drumai, Umpoi, Um-Ta'ali and Um-Turu. He added that the homes in these towns were burnt down.

"The displaced belong to wide array of tribes including Fur, Daju, Zaghawa, Tanjor, Tur. The people of Darfur are still paying a high price to this war" he added.

Abu-Sharati criticized the UNAMID force and accused it of "failing to discharge its mandate of protecting civilians".

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.

However, the deployment was impeded by Khartoum's objections to the composition of the force and lack of helicopters. The UN has for months been seeking 6 attack and 18 transport helicopters to support the force with no success.

International experts also say more than 300,000 were killed and 2 million have been driven from their homes by the conflict in Darfur, a region that is roughly the size of France.

Western governments should pressure Chad's president to stop using his oil wealth to fund rebels in Darfur

(Los Angeles Times) As the international community searches for ways to bring an end to the violence and suffering in Darfur, we must pay more attention to the sources of funds that are allowing this deadly conflict to rage on. It is well known that the Sudanese government is heavily dependent on oil sales to China for revenue, and there is mounting pressure on the Chinese government to use its influence with Khartoum to end the calamity. But there is another angle that deserves just as much notice.

Chad, one of Sudan's neighbors, is an integral part of the Darfur problem, and it must be part of the solution. Chad's eastern border with Sudan's Darfur province is porous, and many rebel groups -- Sudanese and Chadian -- are operating in this area where several hundred thousand Sudanese refugees are stranded. Chadian President Idriss Deby came to power through a military coup launched from Darfur in 1990. He and many Darfur rebels belong to the Zhaghawa tribe, and he is now repaying his debts to his tribesmen by supporting one of Darfur's rebel groups, the Justice and Equality Movement, with arms financed by oil money.

At the same time, Deby himself is fighting armed rebel movements operating from this region, some of which are supported by Sudan. One of these movements is led by former members of Deby's inner circle, including his nephew, Timan Erdimi. Erdimi decided to take up arms after his uncle abolished presidential term limits in Chad's Constitution in 2005, setting himself up to become president for life. The control over oil revenues looms large in this internal power struggle -- and in Darfur.

Not unlike Sudan, Chad's government is largely dependent on the sale of oil, not to China but to an Exxon Mobil-led international consortium. Remarkably, the World Bank played the key role in turning Chad into an oil-producing country. Exxon Mobil had made World Bank participation a precondition for launching its \$4.2-billion oil project, an insurance policy for its investments in this politically volatile region. Once the World Bank approved co-financing for the project in 2000, other lenders, such as the U.S. Export-Import Bank and the European Investment Bank, followed suit. Before the World Bank's decision, several donor-government agencies and environmental and human rights organizations from around the world pointed to the legacy of impoverishment, human rights abuses, poisoned landscapes and violent conflict that oil and mining projects had left in Africa.

Brushing aside these concerns, the World Bank touted the Chad oil project as an unprecedented framework to translate oil wealth into benefits for the poor and as a model for investments elsewhere. And, indeed, largely in response to public protests, the bank had requested voluminous environmental studies and undertaken innovative measures, such as requiring a law in Chad meant to ensure transparency in the use of oil revenue and establishing a committee to monitor implementation of the law.

Sadly, these measures were largely ineffective in a repressive political environment in which basic human rights are not respected. Chad's already impoverished people have become even more destitute since their country has become an oil exporter, as little of the income is used to better their lives. And because much, if not most, of the oil income gets diverted to weapons purchases and to finance patronage networks within the army, it is the people in Darfur who are most placed at risk.

But there is a precedent for Western governments using this oil income as leverage. Chad's oil revenues pass through a London bank account, which holds only those funds. In 2006, the World Bank temporarily froze the funds when Deby blatantly violated his agreements with the bank to spend the bulk of the money on the social sector.

This tool can be used again -- to cut off funding to the Darfur rebels and to encourage Chad to move toward democratic rule. For the latter, Chad needs a broad national dialogue that includes the government, rebel groups, human rights organizations and unions, and that will need international pressure and mediation to get it going. Such a step toward peace would also benefit the people in Darfur and the troubled borderlands.