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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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Interview

- Musa Hilal (**Al-Wifaq**)

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Highlights

Local Arabic and English Language Press

Al-Bashir affirms commitment to reconciliation with Chad

President Al-Bashir has affirmed total commitment to implement Sudan-Chad reconciliation pact signed yesterday in Doha, *Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports. The President made the remarks after receiving the reconciliation document from the International Cooperation Minister Al-Tigani Fedail.

Kiir calls for national reconciliation and fair elections

Addressing the governors' roundtable conference in Wau, FVP Salva Kiir has stressed the need for national reconciliation and free, fair, transparent and violent-free elections, *Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports.

According to *Sudan Tribune website* 4/5/09, Kiir also emphasized the need to end the ongoing conflict in western Sudan before the end of this year. He urged the rebel groups in Darfur to unify their ranks and to engage in negotiations in order to end the six year conflict. He called for negotiations with all the rebel groups together instead of signing separate agreements, saying rebels' unity is crucial for a lasting peace in Darfur and pledged his party's efforts to that end. Kiir also underscored that the achievement of national reconciliation in the country depends on the resolution of Darfur conflict. He said Sudanese have to face the problems in Darfur and southern Sudan and not to bury their heads in the sand. He called for the full implementation of the CPA saying it is the only way to establish a united Sudan.

VP Taha told the meeting that the government is determined to develop the country and to promote national unity and reconciliation. He further said that they want to enhance Sudan's unity through the CPA. "Today we are more determined to achieve partnership and to maintain a free and united Sudan," he said.

The Sudan's governors conference which held its first meeting last year in Merowe in northern Sudan, is organized by the council of ministers with the participation of the World Bank.

Miraya FM 4/5/09 reports Kiir stressed that reconciliation among the Sudanese people should top the Government of national unity's list of priorities.

ICC statement is "bankrupt" – Nafie

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports that the Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie has lambasted the remarks made by the ICC Prosecutor Ocampo's adviser Béatrice Le Fraper du Hellen to the effect that the ICC has established presence in the Sudan and that there are figures in the Sudanese government who favour cooperation with the ICC. "These statements represent political bankruptcy and failure on the part of the ICC," he said. "This is wishful thinking, a dream that will never come true," he added. "Her remarks are intended to incite sedition within the NCP and to make mischief between the President and his team," he said. "Ocampo's weakness forced her to make such statements," he added.

Nafie has affirmed that elections were postponed for valid reasons and in total agreement with the political parties, adding that President Al-Bashir has never interfered with the elections. He pointed out the NCP cohesion and the unity between the NCP and GoNU and their full backing

to President Al-Bashir.

Parliament endorses Criminal Procedures Act

Local dailies report the Criminal Procedures Act stirred controversy in the National Assembly's session yesterday but was endorsed by the NCP majority. According to **Al-Rai Al-Aam**, 152 MPs voted in favour of the bill, 85 MPs objected and 6 MPs abstained.

UN Humanitarian chief due in Khartoum tomorrow

UN USG for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes, is expected in Khartoum tomorrow for a week-long visit during which he will assess the humanitarian and security situations in the south and Darfur, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports.

Meanwhile, the paper's source said that the Human Rights Special Rapporteur Sima Samar had requested an entry visa to visit Sudan towards the end of the current month.

SPLM says FVP Kiir did not delay census results

Al-Ahdath reports SPLM Deputy Chairman Yassir Arman as saying that the census results release is delayed for reasons known to the technical committee, adding the Presidency received the results only late last week. "The NCP claim that FVP Kiir is the reason for delay of the release of census results is inappropriate and unacceptable," he said. He said leaks about number of southerners in the north and the national capital is "serious". He said according to the leaks, their number is estimated to be 300,000 or half a million. "If SPLM invites southerners for a dinner or symposium, the turnout will be much larger than that," he said.

Meanwhile, **Akhir Lahza** reports that the Population Census Council has submitted the census results to the Presidency for approval. The paper's source said the results are likely to be released at a press conference during the next two days to be forwarded to the NEC to delimit the constituencies.

Shooting in Khartoum II and Amarat

Al-Watan reports that the areas of Khartoum II and Amarat witnessed yesterday evening chasing and shooting, leaving residents panicky and frightened. The paper's source said while unidentified armed men broke into a house, another group of three armed men arrived in the scene and the two groups exchanged fire. According to the source, residents saw vehicles chasing each other from Khartoum II until street 43 in Amarat. Authorities arrested the two groups and the incident is being investigated.

Websites/International News Coverage

INGOS harass IDPs not to accept repatriation program - HAC

SMC 4/5/09 - Humanitarian Aid Commission HAC in western Darfur state said foreign NGOs are telling IDPs not to accept return to their original villages. It said the government insists on the implementation of repatriation program in response to the desire of the IDPs and that the commission has already repatriated about 376 households to Abu Suroj area in the state. HAC Commissioner (West Darfur) Mohamed Manzul told **SMC** that they have started coordinating with government departments and national organizations to plan and execute the repatriation program. He explains that the presence of IDPs in camps is the reason behind foreign presence in Darfur

NGO expulsions leave significant healthcare gaps in Darfur

IRIN 4/5/09 - The expulsion of 13 INGOs operating in the western Sudan region of Darfur has left gaps in health coverage, according to the UN World Health Organization (WHO) as 12 of them provided health and nutrition services to about 1.1 million people. Through mobile clinics,

hospitals and primary healthcare (PHC) facilities, the organizations had been providing essential services ranging from referrals for complicated and life-threatening cases to surveillance of epidemics, states the WHO March-April health bulletin.

In North Darfur, reproductive healthcare services have been interrupted after the closure of a PHC facility; the activities of other health facilities, serving at least 200,000 people, have also been curtailed.

In West Darfur, only 63 of 145 medical staff are providing services at 18 health facilities.

In South Darfur, one rural hospital in Muhajariya and some other health facilities are closed. Five of six therapeutic feeding centres are also shut.

In response, a joint UN and Sudan Government Action Plan for Darfur has recommended among other measures the redeployment of trained and qualified staff accepted by the community, supervision of clinics and provision of medical supplies to clinics, as well as the immunization of children younger than five. However, accessing children for routine immunization programmes in hard-to-reach or insecure areas remains a challenge in Darfur. Meanwhile, vaccination against meningitis is ongoing in areas such as Kalma, Bilel and Al Salaam. Already this year, some 180 suspected cases of meningitis have been reported in the three Darfur states.

The expulsions affected at least 6,500 staff, or 40 percent of the humanitarian workforce in Darfur. The INGOs were expelled on 4 March, soon after the International Criminal Court indicted President Omar Al-Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity in the western region of Darfur.

The effects of the expulsions have been felt beyond Darfur in eastern Sudan and the so-called Three Areas bordering on Southern Sudan, Abyei, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. Replacing lost expertise in Darfur will be very difficult, according to the UN.

UN chief applauds pact to ease tensions between Chad and Sudan

UN News Centre 4/5/09 - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today welcomed the agreement signed between Chad and Sudan over the weekend, expressing the hope that it will ease the strain between the bordering African nations.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson, Mr. Ban called on the two Governments to work towards fully implementing the accord signed yesterday in Doha and facilitated by Qatar and Libya.

“The Secretary-General expresses the hope that this positive development will result in a de-escalation of tensions and foster the conditions for stability in the sub-region,” the statement said.

Mr. Ban, in a separate statement issued yesterday, had voiced his concern at reports of the recent build-up and movement of armed elements on both sides of the Chad-Sudan border, and called on the two countries to ease tensions.

The UN chief had alerted the international community to the “tense and unpredictable” security situation along the border during February and March, in his most recent report on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

JEM to open training centers in CAR

Sudanese Media Centre 4/5/09 - Following escalation of recent dispute within the Justice and Equality Movement, some groups from the movement are making arrangements to open military training camps in the Central African Republic. According to some JEM commanders, the idea of relocation to CAR was created by the fact that the logistical support the movement is getting from the Chadian military is shrinking. They also believe the move is an importance step in anticipation of a possible political reconciliation between Khartoum and N'djamena. Reliable source from the JEM told (**smc**) the commanders within JEM who support relocation beyond the Sudanese Chadian borders have already started arrangements to establish training centers at Daba area in CAR and also started to attract members of some tribes living on the border strip between Sudan and Uganda to join the movement.

Ethiopian paper reports moments of “severe panic” for Al-Bashir

Sudan Tribune website, 4/5/09 (WASHINGTON) – The Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir went through thirty minutes of panic at an airport in northern Tigray region during an official visit last month, an Ethiopian news paper reported today. ‘The Reporter’ independent daily which is published in native Amharic language said that the Sudanese delegation headed by Bashir was stuck in the presidential jet at Mekele Airport waiting for the boarding ladder.

Al-Bashir had arrived in Ethiopia to lead Sudan at the meetings of the supreme joint committee co-chaired by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

The newspaper said that the delay by airport authorities in bringing the boarding ladder caused “severe panic” among the embattled president and his entourage. Quoting eyewitnesses, the newspaper said the panic was exacerbated by the sight of chartered plane with a US flag close to Al-Bashir’s plane.

Airport officials told the newspaper that the incident was caused by the absence of the duty official at the time. Sources told the paper that as a result, the Sudanese president returned to Khartoum “without visiting all the places he had intended to”.

An Ethiopian official contacted by the paper declined to comment on the issue, although he did not deny that the incident took place.

Interview

Musa Hilal: Advisor at the Ministry of Federal Government
Al-Wifaq daily – 05/05/09

On why conflict continues in Darfur despite the peace agreement and ongoing peace talks: The Darfur problem is complex given the security, social and political dimensions. Its resolution requires that all these dimensions be considered as a package or else there will be no quick. There are also some dirty hands that continue to flare the conflict. I am hopeful of a quick solution to the plight of Darfur people on whom the conflict is imposed.

On contacts with the armed groups and movements: Despite our political differences with these groups, we will continue to be in contact until an end is reached to the problems.

Whether current talks would lead to peace in Darfur: I think we have to be optimistic that peace will be realized in Darfur. But, as I said earlier, attention must be devoted to the security, social and political ramifications of the conflict.

On dependence on foreign initiatives rather than internal to resolve Sudan's problems: We consider any solution reached through an initiative by states such as Qatar or any other Islamic or African country as an internal solution. I do believe, however, that we would be able to come up with more successful solutions if the people of Darfur themselves are engaged in the peace process.

On claims of exclusion of Arab tribes from Doha talks: Some of their representatives do attend the talks but it is true that the Arab tribes of Darfur have been left out of the peace process not only in Doha but also in all other rounds of talks on Darfur.

On possible exclusion of Darfur from elections: Excluding any state from the elections would make the process incomplete.

On the Current situation in Darfur: It is better than ever. But we should be careful because it could be the lull before the storm. In the IDP camps, the situation is a lot better than before in many aspects. Many of the INGOs claim they are here for humanitarian purposes but the truth is a different story.

On the ICC: the Sudanese people have said their word. We do not care about the ICC. We are ready to defend the faith and the motherland.