



United Nations Mission in Sudan

UNMIS

Media Monitoring Report

18 May 2008

By Public Information Office

Main News

=

- **Fighting resumes in Abyei, 2000 civilians evacuated to Muglad (Al-Khartoum)**
- **UN to undertake mission to Abyei today in a bid to calm situation, Roger Winter visited the area (Al-Sahafa)**
- **AJMC to meet today to discuss situation in Abyei (Al-Ayyam)**
- **SAF says SPLA responsible for Abyei events (Sudan Vision)**

UN/Agencies

=

- **UN dispatches emergency assessment team to Sudan's disputed Abyei (ST)**

GoNU

- **23 JEM vehicles destroyed in Kordofan, 105 JEM elements detained in Omdurman (Al-Rai Al-Aam)**
- **Investigation commences with 69 JEM child soldiers captured during attack on Omdurman (Akhbar Al Yom)**
- **GoS rejects African mediation to improve relations with Chad (Al-Rai Al-Aam)**
- **19 persons wounded when a shell went off at the exhibition of weapons seized from JEM (Al-Rai Al-Aam)**
- **President Bashir receives invitation from UNSG to attend food security summit in Rome scheduled early next month (Al-Sudani)**
- **Sudan navy chief in Pakistan for discussions on military cooperation (ST)**

GoSS

=

- **Kiir signs SPLM Constitution (Al-Rai Al-Aam)**

Darfur

*NOTE: Reproduction here does not mean that the UNMIS PIO can vouch for the accuracy or veracity of the contents, nor does this report reflect the views of the United Nations Mission in Sudan. Furthermore, international copyright exists on some materials and this summary should not be disseminated beyond the intended list of recipients.*

# Highlights

## Main News

### **Fighting resumes in Abyei, 2000 civilians evacuated to Muglad**

**(Al-Khartoum)** Fighting in Abyei resumed yesterday amid exchange of charges between the belligerents.

According to emir Mukhtar Babu Nimir of Messeriya, SPLA entered Abyei two days ago, and attacked Brigade 31 adding that clashes between SPLA and SAF continued on Friday and Saturday. He said SAF held a meeting yesterday to come up with decisions on the crisis.

In Khartoum, a source, which spoke to the newspaper on condition of anonymity, said SAF would only withdraw from Abyei if the supreme command so decides.

In a new development, the remaining civilians in Abyei town, about 2000 persons, were evacuated to Muglad yesterday aboard vehicles provided by SAF.

### **UN to undertake mission to Abyei today in a bid to calm situation, Roger Winter visited the area**

**(Al-Sahafa)** A high-ranking UN military team will visit Abyei today in a bid to prevent further deterioration of the situation.

On the other hand, Roger Winter accompanied by SPLA official Edward Lino, visited Abyei to familiarize themselves with the situation on the ground. Lino accused brigade 31 of bombing the town.

Mr. Lino who addressed a press conference in Juba yesterday, attended by Roger Winter, said the attack targeted traders from Darfur and the town was now free of any civilians and might come under further attack. He said civilians have sought SPLA protection and 18 nearby villages had been bombed claiming that IDPs number reached 105.

Civilians are refusing to return to the town unless brigade 31 is withdrawn.

For his part, Roger Winter who was introduced at the press conference by GoSS Presidential Affairs Minister Luka Biong as GoSS Advisor said the city was now free of civilians and has called for formation of an international committee for Abyei and Darfur and urged SAF to withdraw from Abyei.

Speaking to the newspaper, UNMIS spokesperson Khaled Mansour said the solution lies in the implementation of Abyei Protocol adding that AJMC would convene today.

ALF leader Mohamed Omer Al-Ansari said the situation was still tense and could explode anytime adding that water, food and medicines were urgently needed.

UN assessment team began addressing IDPs needs while the Messeriya were evacuated to Muglad yesterday.

### **AJMC to meet today to discuss situation in Abyei**

**(Al-Ayyam)** AEC chairman D. Plumbli said he was concerned over situation in Abyei describing it as the worst since CPA conclusion.

In a statement issued by his office, Mr. Plumbli has urged the parties to exercise self-restraint and to allow UN free movement in the area.

On the other hand, UN evacuated all its national and international personnel from Abyei yesterday while the peacekeepers were retained to continue their work.

Director of UNMIS Public Information Office (DPIO) Mr. Khaled Mansour told the newspaper that scores of civilians had taken refuge at UN premises in the area for safety over the past three days adding that some have left UN office and those remained would be transported to the nearest safety.

For his part, UNMIS Deputy Spokesperson Zerrouk Kouider speaking to Miraya FM said clashes between SPLA and SAF resumed in Abyei yesterday.

UNMIS urged SAF and SPLA to abide by the ceasefire concluded yesterday. In a press release, the Special Representative of the Secretary General Mr. Ashraf Qazi has urged the parties to ensure that civilians and civilian installations are fully protected.

#### **[SAF says SPLA responsible for Abyei events](#)**

**(Sudan Vision)** SAF spokesperson Brig. Dr. Mohammed Osman Al-Agbash, refuted allegations of SPLM leader Edward Lino in which he accused SAF Brigade (31) of being involved in the incidents that took place in Abyei day before yesterday.

Al-Agbash told Sudan Vision that the allegations were totally baseless and that the cause of the events was SPLA presence in the northern part of Bahr-al-Ghazal State added to the presence of Lino himself in the area and his exercise of unauthorized powers which led to clashes among citizens. He affirmed that Brigade (31) had acted within the responsibilities assigned to it.

GoSS Minister for Presidential Affairs, Dr. Luka Biong, on the other hand called for withdrawal of Brigade 31 from the area because it violated the rights of citizens. He indicated that agreement previously reached provides that the region remains under the control of the joint forces along with the withdrawal of Brigade (31) from Abyei.

#### **[UN/Agencies](#)**

#### **[UN dispatches emergency assessment team to Sudan's disputed Abyei](#)**

**(ST)** May 17, (JUBA) — The United Nations on Saturday dispatched a first emergency assessment team to Sudan's disputed area of Abyei since evacuating staff after deadly clashes erupted, officials said.

The extent of the destruction in the town of Abyei — an impoverished settlement in the heart of a contested district on the border between north and south — is not clear and the UN had previously evacuated all civilian staff.

The team is set to arrive on Sunday to assess the emergency response for thousands of people displaced by days of fighting between Sudanese government forces and southern ex-rebels.

"The assessment team is going in tomorrow," Ted Chaiban, the Sudan representative for the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) said.

"As soon as they get in, within 24 hours we would have an immediate response," he told journalists in Juba, the capital of southern Sudan.

Aid workers and south Sudan politicians have told AFP they had reports of bodies lying in the streets, looting and fires in the ramshackle town of flimsy mud huts.

The visiting deputy executive director of UNICEF, Hilde Johnson, warned that non-resolution of the conflicts in Abyei and Sudan's western region of Darfur are derailing plans to put more children in school.

Chaiban said that half of the approximately 30,000 people displaced by the Abyei clashes are children.

A UN spokeswoman in southern Sudan, Antonette Miday, said another UN team had been dispatched to Abyei's neighbouring state of Warrap.

On Friday, the special representative of the UN secretary general in Sudan, Ashraf Qazi, welcomed an agreement to end the fighting in Abyei.

Clashes began in town on Wednesday between the army and Sudan People's Liberation Army, who fought a 21-year civil war with Khartoum ended by a peace agreement in 2005, following an isolated incident north of Abyei.

Impasse over the area — whose oil wealth is bitterly contested by the two sides — is one of the stumbling blocks delaying implementation of the peace deal and exacerbating tensions between north and south.

[GoNU](#)

### **23 JEM vehicles destroyed in Kordofan, 105 JEM elements detained in Omdurman**

(**Al-Rai Al-Aam**) PDF Coordinator Siddique Mohamed Hammad in Northern Kordofan said SAF, NISS and PDF had destroyed many vehicles of fleeing JEM fighters, 14 cars were in good condition.

He said PDF command mobilized more than 1000 mujahideen in the area and they were ready for any eventuality.

Meanwhile police detained about 105 persons suspected of being JEM fighters in Umbada area in Omdurman.

Khartoum State Police Director Lt. Gen. Omhamed Osman said police; NISS and SAF were conducting search operations in Omdurman to arrest JEM elements.

### **Investigation commences with 69 JEM child soldiers captured during attack on Omdurman (Akhbar Al Yom)**

**(Akhbar Al-Yom)** Defence Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein said according to estimates by experts \$100m must have been spent to arm those attacked Omdurman. He said such amount of money was beyond Chad capability, which confirms involvement of international quarters.

It is now certain that the Chief Justice Jalaludin Mohamed Osman is in the process of forming special courts to try JEM elements arrested during attack on Omdurman.

On the other hand, start of investigation with 69 JEM child soldiers captured during attack on Omdurman has been confirmed.

The children were kept in a separate prison and they were being treated in accordance with the law on the assumption that they have been conscripted by JEM against their will.

### **GoS rejects African mediation to improve relations with Chad**

**(Al-Rai Al-Aam)** AU Commission Chairman who is currently visiting Sudan accompanied by Commissioner of AU PSC is determined to present a mediation to President Bashir whom he would meet today to improve relations between Sudan and Chad.

However, Khartoum has announced categorical rejection to any initiative at this stage. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Ambassador Ali Al Sadiq said talk about restoration of diplomatic ties between Sudan and Chad was not sensible at this stage.

### **19 persons wounded as shell went off at the exhibition of weapons seized from JEM**

**(Al-Rai Al-Aam)** Nineteen persons were wounded yesterday when a shell exploded at the exhibition held by authorities to display weapons captured from JEM during attack on Omdurman.

Eyewitnesses said the shell exploded while an exhibitor was explaining to the public how it was used.

Hospital officials said those wounded were given necessary treatment but two conditions were critical.

### **President Bashir receives invitation from UNSG to attend food security summit in Rome scheduled early next month**

**(Al-Sudani)** Sudan Ambassador to UN Abdul Mahmoud Abdul Haleem said President Omer Bashir has received an invitation from UNSG Ban Ki-Moon to participate in an international summit meeting on food security scheduled to take place early next month in Rome.

### **Sudan navy chief in Pakistan for discussions on military cooperation**

(ST) May 17, 2008 (ISLAMABAD) — The head of the Sudanese navy met with Pakistani military officials to discuss the enhancement of cooperation between the two sides.

Sudanese Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Al-Zain Hussein met with his counterpart Muhammad Afzal Tahir yesterday at the naval headquarters.

The Pakistani Navy issued a statement saying that “mutual/bilateral cooperation between the two brotherly Muslim countries were discussed”.

Pakistani media also reported that the Sudanese naval officer also met with the Managing Director of Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works Vice Admiral Iftikhar Ahmed.

The Associated Press of Pakistan said that Hussein “was greatly impressed by the capabilities, quality of work, workmanship and enthusiasm of its employees”.

Hussein expressed interest in having the Pakistani company design some of the ships for use by the Sudanese navy.

Sudan maintains a small naval force consisting of 500 personnel and weapons of defensive nature.

### [GoSS](#)

#### **Kiir signs SPLM Constitution**

**(Al-Rai Al-Aam)** SPLM General Convention at historic meeting yesterday passed SPLM Constitution and SPLM official policy statement.

The FVP Salva Kiir signed the SPLM constitution document in presence of more than 1500 SPLM members representing SPLM across Sudan.

This constitution replaces the previous SPLM official statement adopted in 1983.

SPLM convention will resume today and will discuss speeches of the Chairman and Secretary General.

### [Darfur](#)