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UNMIS

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(By Public Information Office)

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Highlights

UN/ Agencies/ Partners

Sudanese minister holds meeting with UN, aid organizations on Darfur

(*SUNA via BBC Monitoring, 21 May, Khartoum*) The joint commission for carrying out aid activities in Darfur held today a meeting at the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs.

The meeting was jointly chaired by Humanitarian Affairs Minister and the DSRSG of the United Nations and was attended by representatives of the Humanitarian Aid Commission, The Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the League of Arab States and international and local aid organizations.

In a press statement issued by Humanitarian Ministry, the participants welcomed the efforts made by the joint commission to resolve pending issues.

The meeting also advanced on the issues regarding how to lift tax from goods imported as aid and how to speed up the issuance of visa [for aid workers] and [smoothing] their movements to Darfur.

The participants agreed to send a team to Darfur to ensure the implementation of what has been agreed upon on the ground. They also welcomed the cooperation between UN and Sudan government.

UN to boost civil-military coordination in South Sudan

(*SudanTribune.com*) The United Nations humanitarian body will hold a second workshop on civil military coordination in Rumbek, South Sudan, next week to address current humanitarian needs as well as recovery priorities in South Sudan.

The Deputy Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Southern Sudan, David Gressly, announced on May 19 that the second United Nations Civil-Military Coordination Workshop in the Sudan will take place from 31 May to 02 June. The training will be conducted in Rumbek, Southern Sudan, thanks to funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Workshop, which will assemble some 25 participants from civilian and military components of the UN and partner organizations, will aim to identify and discuss the main issues in civil-military coordination in the Sudan, to review the current status of such coordination in UN peacekeeping missions, and to analyze its role in the context of humanitarian emergencies.

The participants will take part in simulations, where the concepts, principles and guidelines of civil-military coordination will have to be applied to specific scenarios and situations.

“Civil-military coordination is a dialogue between civilian organizations and the military during a humanitarian operation. To strengthen this dialogue, we must have some understanding of the operating procedures of our military or civilian counterparts”, explained Marie-Sophie Reck of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which has a whole section based in Geneva as part of its Emergency Services Branch (ESB), dedicated to this discipline.

“Information sharing, for example, is a key element in coordinating our efforts, in order to avoid overlaps or gaps in our response”, she added.

In the Sudan operations, priority topics include the use of military assets for community projects, armed escorts for humanitarian workers, information-sharing on a variety of topics including security issues and road data. [*Follow the link for more on the story [UN to boost civil-military coordination in South Sudan](#)*].

UN reports new clashes in Darfur

(*UN News via SudanTribune.com*) The UN mission reports [*UNMIS' News Bulletin of 21 May*] new round of clashes in Darfur. Fresh fighting erupted at the weekend between Sudanese Government forces, rebel groups and local militias in the violence-wracked Darfur region, the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) reported on 21 May.

Government forces and rebels clashed on Saturday in the Rockero area of North Darfur state, according to the mission, which was unable to estimate the number of casualties from the violence.

In Abu Surug in South Darfur state, the Local Defence Force fought about 120 armed men, believed to be from an Arab militia, also on Saturday, UNMIS said.

More internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been arriving at Al Salam camp in South Darfur in the past few days, driving by recent attacks on their villages by armed Arab militiamen.

The weekend clashes are the latest to strike Darfur, the arid and impoverished region that has become the scene of the world's worst humanitarian crisis since rebel groups took up arms in 2003 against Government forces, which were subsequently backed by the notorious Janjaweed militias. [*Follow the link for the full text [UN reports new clashes in Darfur](#)*].

AU chief blasts attempts to sanction Sudan for Darfur crisis

(Xinhua via SudanTribune.com; Alwan et al) Visiting African Union (AU) Commission Chairperson Alpha Oumar Konare dismissed attempts by some nations to slap sanctions on Sudan for the Darfur issue, saying time was "not appropriate at all for such a talk".

After meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Konare told a press conference that any sanction on Sudan for the Darfur issue could complicate the situation.

"What is strange is that some sides start talking about sanctions at a time when an agreement is reached with the Sudanese government," Konare said, quoted by Egypt's official MENA news agency.

Some members of the UN Security Council, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom, have been discussing imposing sanctions against Sudan for the Darfur issue.

Konare said the AU has, after long months, managed to reach an agreement with Sudanese President Omer al-Bashir, which allows to increase the number of foreign peacekeepers in Darfur to 20,000.

These forces will be under the command of the AU but will include soldiers from the UN, he said, adding the AU currently maintained a 7,800-strong peacekeeping force in Darfur.

African Union delegation in Khartoum

(AlRai AlAam) The head of the African Union delegation currently visiting the country says that the visit is in an effort to realize peace in Darfur and consolidate the tenets of stability in Sudan, Chad and the CAR and the region at large.

In a statement to the Sudan News Agency following a meeting with the African Union Mission in Sudan, a spokesperson for the delegation said that the duties of the delegation is to assess the problems on the ground between the three countries and to report to the African Union Peace & Security Council.

He said that the delegation will meet tomorrow some high ranking Sudanese officials, African ambassadors, representatives of civil society organizations and African Union partners. The delegation, he says, will do the same in Chad and the CAR.

Visits to el-Fasher and Geneina are in the delegation's itinerary as well as a press conference at the end of the tour.

Suspects acquitted in African Union translator's murder trial

(Sudan Tribune) The special criminal court in Nyala has acquitted the suspects in the murder trial of an African Union translator killed while on duty as part of a team accompanying then United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator Jan Egeland on a Darfur tour.

An attorney called the ruling “unfortunate” and pointed out that the suspects had made a confession earlier which they later retracted. The attorney also points out that an African Union eye-witness had made a positive identification of the suspects and most had expected a guilty verdict.

The family of the deceased has filed an appeal.

British aid group returns to chaotic Darfur camp

(Reuters via SudanTribune.com) A British humanitarian group has returned to Darfur’s largest displaced persons camp after being forced out in December following a coordinated attack on relief groups in which an international aid worker was raped.

The December attack on relief workers in rebel-controlled Gereida was the biggest single assault on the Darfur aid operation, the world’s largest, since it began operations in Sudan’s war-ravaged west in early 2004.

The attack, in which a staff member of French aid agency Action contre la Faim was raped, led to the immediate evacuation of 71 aid workers and restricted humanitarian aid reaching the region’s largest population of war victims.

Only the International Committee of the Red Cross kept its international staff on site.

But medical aid group Merlin said on Monday it had re-opened a primary health care clinic in the camp last week, and was flying in international staff including doctors and nurses for day trips once a week by helicopter to assist local staff.

Internationals were not spending the night in Gereida.

Aid community sources said while other relief groups were assessing a return to Gereida in the coming months, only ICRC and Merlin had internationals on the ground.

A spokesman for British aid group Oxfam, which had five vehicles stolen and whose compound was fired on during the attack, said his group had no immediate plans to return. Oxfam had provided water to the camp, and maintains a skeleton staff of locals working on hygiene issues. *[Follow the link for the full text [British aid group returns to chaotic Darfur camp](#)].*

Infant mortality rate in Sudan decreased by 25%, Save the Children USA

(Sudan Vision) Sudan has made some solid progress but still has a long way to go in saving the lives of children the eighth Annual Save the Children USA report issued last week said.

According to the report, Sudan ranked 16 out of 60 on the child survival progress rankings and has recorded a 25% decrease in infant mortality – a decrease describe by the organization as “significant in the progress of child and maternal health care and well-being”.

Ruling party says aid organizations issuing false reports on Darfur

(*SMC via SudanTribune.com*) The [ruling] National Congress Party's [NCP] Secretariat is engaged in an evaluation process of the activities of foreign humanitarian organizations working in Darfur in order to pave the way for tough action to be taken against those violating humanitarian work regulations in Darfur.

In a special statement to SMC [Sudanese Media Centre], the NCP organizations [affairs] secretary, Dr Qutbi al-Mahdi said the secretariat is evaluating the activities of several humanitarian organizations by observing and monitoring their activities.

He said the secretariat will deliver a detailed report of all organizations that are really active in humanitarian activities and of those that are there to tarnish the name of Sudan internationally through false reports. He added "We will give recommendations to concerned authorities on all the activities of humanitarian organizations."

UN support Package

Sudan representative to United Nations criticizes United Nations policy of jumping over stages

(*SUNA via The Citizen et al*) Sudan's Permanent Envoy to the United Nations has criticized the "jumping over stages" policy adopted by "those speaking of a hybrid operation" at a time when the second phase of the Heavy Support Package is yet to begin and when the Light Support Package is yet to complete.

In an interview to the Sudan News Agency, Ambassador AbdelMahmoud AbdelHaleem said this policy was intended to exercise pressure on Sudan where making threats and pressure has in itself turned policy with the aim to distract attention from what is going on in other parts of the world.

He said that waving the sanctions threat has no justification at the time when the Government of Sudan, the African Union and the United Nations have began implementing a peace plan through the support packages to the African Union and are working to bring the non-signatory factions on board the DPA. He said that dialogue is the only means of resolving the problems and not threats and spreading wrong information.

He further pointed out that those who exercise pressure on Sudan overlook the tangible improvements in the situation in Darfur and the improvements of relations with neighboring countries, especially with Chad.

"Instead of assisting in the regional rapprochement and the peace process, they are adopting a policy of pressure and threats," laments the Sudanese representative.

Sudan says UN "slowing down" implementation of heavy aid packages agreement

(*Sudan Radio via BBC Monitoring, 21 May*) Presidential Advisor Dr Majdhub al-Khalifah met at his office yesterday with the Chinese envoy [Liu Gui Jin]. The meeting dealt with the latest emergent issues on developments in the Darfur crisis . Dr Al-Khalifah briefed the Chinese envoy on the agreement reached with the UN and the AU concerning the heavy aid packages that Sudan has approved and stressed that the government has approved a mixed operation and not a mixed [hybrid] force.

[*Begin Al-Khalifah recording*] We explained to him that we have agreed to the heavy aid package and now there is a slowing down on the part of the UN in implementing it, and that China should play an urgent role to implement it quickly, now that this has become the subject of consensus among the AU, Sudan, and UN. We also explained to him that the Security Council must adopt a resolution to finance the AU forces because this is an important issue and a commitment on the part of the UN, and now that the heavy aid package has been signed the only thing that remains is to issue this resolution. [*End recording*]

[*Presenter*] Dr Al-Khalifah expressed appreciation for China's position in seeking to protect the country's unity and sovereignty, and adoption of dialogue as a basis for solving the conflict in Darfur.

France wants to bring China, US in talks on Darfur

(*AFP via SudanTribune.com*) France's new Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner is seeking to bring China, the United States and other countries together for talks on the crisis in Sudan's Darfur region, an aid organization said Monday.

"The goal for the coming weeks is to set up a contact group in which there would not only be Americans, British, Germans, Canadians, Chinese and Russians but also the neighbouring countries, including Eritrea and Egypt," said Jacky Mamou, president of the Urgence Darfour non-governmental organisation.

Mamou on Saturday attended a meeting of experts and diplomats called by Kouchner to come up with a strategy for addressing the Darfur crisis.

The new foreign minister hopes to press for action on Darfur at next month's Group of Eight summit in Germany and the European summit in Brussels. [*Follow the link to the full text [France wants to bring China, US in talks on Darfur](#)*].

AEC visits Heglieg

(*AlRai AlAam*) The Assessment and Evaluation Commission appraised yesterday the environmental effects of Sudan's oil industry and the services provided and how much this has reflected to the peace process in the Heglieg area.

The delegation from the commission lauded the experiences of the Greater Nile Petroleum Company in the treatment and utilization of water drawn from the oil wells.

The head of the AEC pointed out that all this was carried out without negative effects to the environment.

The commission also visited a county neighbouring the oilfields. The commissioner of that county hailed the services provided by the oil company.

Others :

- [Darfur diaspora leaders urge UN action to end genocide in Darfur](#)

CPA

South Kordofan State faces difficulties in political partnership

(*Khartoum Monitor*) Governor Ismail Jallab of South Kordofan State says that the political partnership between the parties to the CPA is facing difficulties in South Kordofan State.

Speaking to the Khartoum Monitor, he pointed out that the integration of the SPLM/A in the police forces and the civil service is yet to be accomplished with the National Congress Party saying that the CPA does not provide for such a measure.

The governor also said there are problems in the local administration. He called for a stronger civil service and a rehabilitation of its institutions.

On development, the governor pointed out that development is below expected levels mainly because of budget deficits as they only received 25% of their projected budget.

Ex-rebel movement committed to protect peace accord, says official

(*SRS via BBC Monitoring, 21 May*) The secretary-general of the SPLM [Sudan People's Liberation Movement] has reaffirmed the party's commitment to protect the Comprehensive Peace Agreement [Comprehensive Peace Agreement] and ensure stability in southern Sudan.

Speaking to a gathering of SPLM supporters on Wednesday [16 May] in Malakal, Pagan Amum Okiech warned armed groups accused of destabilizing peace in the region that the SPLA would defend the CPA, "even if it means fighting those trying to destroy peace."

Mr Amum said that the people of southern Sudan have worked hard for peace to be realized and, in his words, "will not just sit and let it go to waste."

Amum's remarks echo those of other Government of Southern Sudan leaders who are insisting that all militias must join the SPLA or Sudan Armed Forces, as stipulated in the CPA.

Meanwhile, southern Sudan's President admits that there are still some obstacles hindering the implementation of the CPA protocol on Abyei.

Addressing the same gathering in Malakal on Wednesday to mark the 24th anniversary of the SPLA's founding, Salva Kiir said the SPLM and National Congress Party have so far been unable to agree on how to implement the Abyei protocol, but he remains optimistic that the parties will reach an agreement in a meeting scheduled at end the of this month.

President Kiir said that the two parties will also discuss issues concerning the other so-called transition areas of Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan.

Salva Kiir also told the crowd that the upcoming census must be taken "seriously" as it have a huge effect on elections scheduled for next year.

President Kiir said southerners are usually not forthcoming when it comes to counting their families. He added that in some tribes people do not allow their children to be counted for fear that they will be bewitched and die. President Kiir said this must be overcome because inaccurate counts of the population will negatively affect elections and all issues of self-determination for the south.

To help ensure a proper census count, President Kiir directed the Governor of Upper Nile State to do everything possible to return displaced people in the north to their respective areas in the state.

Meanwhile, the process of identifying population centers, an early step in the census, has started in eastern Upper Nile. This mapping process, as it is called, will help census takers know precisely where to do the counts.

Reports the census process is being started immediately to reduce challenges brought about by the rainy season when many areas are only accessible by boat and bicycle.

Others:

- *Better Future for the Nuba Mountains*, sourced from the Citizen and attached separately, makes for some interesting reading on the CPA.

GoNU

Salva Kiir leads Sudan's delegation to COMESA summit

(*SudanTribune.com*) The first vice president, Salva Kiir has left for the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, leading the Sudanese delegation to attend COMESA summit which begins on Tuesday 22 May and continues for two days.

Leaders of the 20-member Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa are expected tomorrow to approve the final steps leading to the launch of a customs union by December 2008. [Follow the link to the full text for more [Salva Kiir leads Sudan's delegation to COMESA summit](#)].

Press body urges Sudan to stop use of criminal law Vs journalists

(*SudanTribune.com*) The National Press and Publications Council has called on the Sudanese government to stop the use of Clause 130 of the criminal procedures law in cases relating to the press.

The council further called for the issue to be looked into urgently taking into account the fact that the clause lacks jurisdiction over the press.

The misuse of Article 130, which punishes any breach of the confidentiality of investigations, is one of the authorities' favorite weapons. Since the start of 2007, al-Sudani has fallen victim to this ambiguous piece of legislation which is supposed to prevent "influence being brought to bear on an on-going investigation".

The council's secretary-general, Hashim al-Jaz, told Al-Ra'y al-Aam that the council's leaders headed by Ali Shamou had met Vice-President Ali Osman Taha yesterday and had stressed the importance of making a decision regarding Clause 130 and for it not to be applied against the press and in issues of publication.

Al-Jaz said he was optimistic that the government would respond to the demands raised. "We do not want clause 130 to be used to suspend papers," he added.

On the other hand, the Media and Communication Council of ruling National Congress Party has said today it was determined to ensure freedom of press. [*Follow the link to the full text for more [Press body urges Sudan to stop use of criminal law Vs journalists](#)*].

AlAyaam daily also reports that reporters yesterday boycotted the Minister of Justice's report before parliament in protest over use of Article 130 of the Criminal Code against the press.

Southern Sudan

Governor disappointed over failure of donors to meet their pledges

(*AlIntibaha*)The Governor of Warrap State told a meeting with representatives of European donors yesterday that he was disappointed over the failure of donors to meet their pledges towards southern Sudan.

He pointed out that citizens in his state were dying of cholera due to lack of roads to facilitate access to drugs.

He lamented that southern Sudan is being neglected ever since the signing of the CPA and that thousands of returnee IDPs and refugees are facing a hard time.

Ugandan rebels abduct four civilian in Southern Sudan

(*UN News via SudanTribune.com*) UN Mission in Sudan has reported [*UNMIS News Bulletin of 21 May*] that a group of the Ugandan rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has recently abducted four civilians at a village in Central Equatoria state in southern Sudan.

The LRA, which has been waging a notorious insurgency in northern Uganda since 1986, has a record of abducting children and then using them as soldiers or porters, while subjecting some to torture and allocating many girls to senior officers in a form of institutional rape.

UNMIS said it learned of the recent abductions from the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the former rebel group which is now involved in the Government of southern Sudan as part of a power-sharing deal after the end of the north-south civil war in early 2005.

A team of negotiators led by the Southern Sudanese Information Minister and an LRA Brigadier-General went to the area around Dimo, the village where the abductions occurred, on Saturday, to try to negotiate the release of the civilians.

Southern Sudanese Muslims to organize all-embracing conference in June

(Sudan Tribune) The Chairman of the High Committee formed for the convening of the general conference of Southern Sudanese Muslims has refuted reports that Muslims face harassment by the GoSS but admits they have occasionally been inconvenienced by individuals.

Addressing a press conference at the Sudan Media Center yesterday, Lt. gen. el-Tahir Bior announced that the general conference of southern Sudanese Muslims will be held in Juba next June with the primary aim of unifying Muslims in southern Sudan and forming a single integrated body.

Darfur

Non-signatory groups meet in N'Djamena today

(AIRai AIAam) The Coordinator of the Justice and Equality Movement says he received a phone call yesterday from an SPLM delegation inviting him to a meeting in Juba on 11 June and announcing that an SPLM delegation will soon be traveling from Ethiopia to meet with them to put the final touches for the meeting.

Coordinator Taj-el-Deen Niam said however that the JEM intends to inform the SPLM delegation its views that it prefers the meeting to take place outside Sudan – preferably a neighboring state.

The paper goes on to say that the SPLM delegation under Edward Lino travels to N'Djamena for a meeting with the non-signatory group later today.

The JEM coordinator also revealed that the JEM received call yesterday from the United Nations on preparations for talks between all non-signatory factions over means to resume talks with the government.

Niam says these are preliminary consultations on the date and venue, participants, observers, etc. and said agreement will be reached on these issue through a meeting being organized by the United Nations but said that the issue is still under discussion.

On the other hand *AllIntibaha* daily reports that Vice President Kiir will be traveling to Darfur to hold discussions with local leaders over solutions to the problems in the region.

Clement Janda, SPLM envoy for the Darfur peace process, said that he recently briefed the VP Kiir on efforts of the committee on the Darfur issue.

We have not received note from Eliasson, says AbdulShafei

(*AlKhartoum*) The AbdulShafei faction of the SLM says it has not received note from United Nations envoy Jan Eliasson but, in principle, has no objection to negotiations.

AbdelShafei told the *AlKhartoum* daily that dialogue is one of the major mechanisms the movement adopts to achieve its goals and added that they are ready for talks should the government side express readiness.

AbdelShafei also disclosed of a recent meeting with the SPLM committee on Darfur. He said he has given his consent in principle to the talks in Juba that the committee has called for as long as contact is made with the other factions and SPLM arrangements are concluded.

Darfur faction receives logistical equipment from government

(*Sudan Radio via BBC Monitoring, 21 May*) The Security Committee for implementing the Darfur Peace Agreement received yesterday [20 May] the logistical support [agreed upon] for Darfur's three provinces, which is to be handed over today Monday [21 May] to the representatives of the armed movements in Darfur.

Sayf al-Din-Salih, spokesman for the Sudan Liberation Movement, Minawi's Wing, says, “this agreement is in fact an important step and a qualitative shift from theoretical to procedural matters. This confirms that the two sides have now transcended the phase of mistrust and psychological barriers and gone into the practical issues. It gives the green light for the actual beginning of the [Darfur] Transitional Authority, especially concerning the all-important security arrangements, something that is very sensitive for us because it proves the credibility.

“This creates trust among the parties, and consequently they can all join together in security-related matters and in being decisive about them. It helps on other issues, namely ensuring safe roads, disengagement, and many issues related to security arrangements, and helps in turn in the return of the displaced, which is a step in bolstering peace on the ground.”

European Workers' Union declares solidarity with Sudanese counterpart

(*Sudan Tribune*) The European Workers' Union has declared solidarity with their Sudanese counterpart in order to expose the plots being weaved against Sudan targeting its resources and unity.

This came about during a conference by the International Workers' Union held in Athens.

The conference unanimously agreed on a comprehensive plan of action that includes presentation of a memorandum to representatives of the United Nations, the US and the UK and to disclose the facts on Darfur through public and union-run media in Europe.

Rebel leader accuses Sudan of attacks in North Darfur

(*SudanTribune.com*) A Darfur rebel group has accused the government backed militia of killing five civilians, one in an air raid, in the country's troubled Darfur region, a Khartoum newspaper reported Monday.

Commander Jar al-Naby Abdelkarim, the Secretary General of the Sudan Liberation Movement-Abdelwahid al-Nur, was quoted by the Al Sahafa newspaper as saying government forces had carried out an aerial attack on the Malam al-Hosh area in north Darfur on 19 May killing one person and injuring another. He further added, another attack carried out by militias backed by the government in the same day in the Jabal Moon and Abu Siruj areas in north Darfur had resulted in the death of four people.

However, an army spokesman denied the armed forces were involved in any incidents in these areas.

Meanwhile a spokesman for the AU peacekeeping force in Darfur reaffirmed that he is investigating the report.

A spokesman for the army denied reports that attacks had been launched near the Jabal Moon area saying the army had carried out routine patrols and that no clashes had occurred. He pointed out that the incidents could have been the result of tribal clashes and that the rebels were wrongly blaming the government for them. He further denied that the government had bombarded an area with a water pump.

Other Developments

Red Sea Chapter of the Eastern Front calls for suspension of the power-sharing deal

(*AlHayat*) The Red Sea Chapter of the Eastern Front has called on government to disregard the nominations presented by the Eastern Front leadership for GoNU positions.

The protestors took to the streets of Port Sudan yesterday and handed a memo to the regional government requesting that it be forwarded to the Presidency. In the memo, the protestors requested the Presidency not to accept the nominations on the grounds that if accepted it may cause unrest in the region. The protestors also accuse Eritrean intelligence of being behind the nominations and pointed out that the nominations gives the Beja that represents over 80% of the population in the region only 18% share in power.