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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

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- We are committed to elections on schedule –Bashir (dailies)
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- President Mubarak directs power station installation in Abyei (Al-Rai Al-Aam)
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Highlights

Local Arabic and English Language Press

Former chairman of the “Council of Sovereignty” passed away

All local dailies carry the news of the death of the former chairman of the “Council of Sovereignty” and Deputy Chairman of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Khatmiya Sect Ahmed Al-Mirghani who passed away yesterday in the Egyptian coastal city of Alexandria. The body would be flown to Khartoum today for burial. **Al-Wifaq** newspaper stated the news of the demise of Al-Mirghani shocked the entire nation because the late was a patriotic, faithful and beloved leader and was not suffering from any ailment. President Bashir, VP Taha, Defence Minister and NCP officials upon receiving the news have rushed to Al-Sayed Ali Mosque in Khartoum North yesterday to express condolences.

We are committed to elections on schedule –Bashir

Local dailies report that President Bashir has ruled out renewal of war in the country, adding all initiatives and agreements to achieve peace in Darfur were progressing satisfactorily. President Bashir who was speaking to **Al-Sharq Al-Awsat** newspaper before departing Saudi Arabia said his country was committed to holding elections on schedule. Asked about possibility of victory of FVP Kiir in elections because of being supported by the opposition parties, he said “we are committed to hold elections on schedule and we are also committed to the results whatsoever”. He has also criticized donors for not honouring their pledges to support the peace process in the country.

Bar Association calls on government to review status of UN Mission in Sudan

Al-Khartoum carries a report stating that the Sudanese Lawyers Union has warned the employees of UN Mission and relief organizations not to tamper with national security of the country and urged the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs to review status of the UN Mission in order to reveal those who pose threat to security. This was stated by the chairman of the Sudanese Lawyers Union Fathi Khalil at a press conference yesterday. Khalil headed Sudan delegation to an international lawyers’ conference held in Bucharest recently. He has refuted the ICC application saying it is based on fabricated reports obtained from some foreign organizations operating in Sudan and from some UN Mission personnel. “We would like to say to those who threaten national security that the people will not keep silent even if the government has kept silent” he said.

Khalil said an expert conference would be held in Cairo by the end of the current month to counter ICC application and to send a message to the Security Council and relevant international bodies about the seriousness of the ICC Prosecutor’s step which contravene international norms and UN charters.

President Mubarak directs power station installation in Abyei

Al-Rai Al-Aam states Foreign Minister Deng Alor said after meetings with a number of Egyptian officials in Cairo yesterday that President Mubarak has directed the Egyptian Ministry of Electricity to set up an electricity station and a power supply network in Abyei area. He said President Mubarak had also directed the immediate establishment of an Alexandria University in Juba.

SAF celebrates integration of DPA-signatories' personnel

Sudan VT broadcast a function held yesterday at the Officers Club in Khartoum to celebrate integration of 48 personnel of DPA-signatory movements. The movements' personnel are integrated into SAF as officers.

IAEA agrees to Sudan obtaining nuclear reactor

Al-Rai Al-Aam carries a report stating that IAEA agreed to Sudan's request to obtain a nuclear facility for scientific research purposes. Minister of Sciences and Technology Prof. Ibrahim Ahmed Omer said the facility would be funded jointly with the IAEA.

SLM agrees to ceasefire

Akhir Lahza reports SLM (unity faction) agreed to an international mediation for ceasefire in Darfur for an atmosphere conducive to prospective talks between Darfur movements and government provided the ceasefire is monitored by UN, AU and neighbouring countries. That was announced by SLM spokesperson Mahgoub Hussain after meeting with UN-AU chief mediator Bassole in Libya yesterday.

No difference between Obama and McCain – MFA

Al-Sudani reports US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer is expected to arrive in Khartoum today from Juba for talks with Government officials including VP Taha and Presidential Assistant Nafie. MFA spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq said the US official's visit is part of ongoing contacts to remove obstacles hindering progress of bilateral relations.

"There is no difference between Obama and McCain. Sudan Government pins no hope on any contender," says MFA spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq, commenting on the American presidential race.

According to **SUNA**, talks will focus on bilateral relations, Darfur issue, progress of the CPA implementation and the American elections.

SPLM delegation in France to convince SLM of Arab initiative

Local dailies carry Foreign Minister Deng Alor's statement to the effect that an SPLM delegation will visit France shortly as part of the movement's ongoing contacts with Darfur armed movement with regard to the Qatari initiative. Alor said the delegation would conduct a direct contact with SLM leader Abdul Wahid Nur to convince him of the initiative, adding SPLM would also contact other Darfurian armed factions to bring them onboard.

Websites/International News Coverage

Former Sudan president dies in Egypt

(**AP**) — Sudan's deposed former president Ahmed al-Mirghani has died at the age of 67 in Egypt. Al-Mirghani was removed from power 19 years ago by a military coup that brought the current regime to power.

Sudan's news agency said late Sunday that al-Mirghani died in Alexandria where he was recuperating following a stroke. It's not yet clear when his body will return to Sudan for burial.

Al-Mirghani headed the last democratically elected government between 1986 and 1989 before

a military coup led by current President Omar al-Bashir unseated him. Al-Mirghani was also the deputy head of a prominent Sufi religious sect.

Al-Bashir was among the first mourners at al-Mirghani's family mosque in Khartoum on Sunday.

JEM denies sending delegation to discuss Qatari initiative

(Miraya FM) Justice and Equality movement denied any intention to send a delegation to Doha to discuss the Qatari initiative to solve the Darfur problem.

The spokesperson of the movement Ahmed Hussein told Miraya FM that it is too early to speak about a delegation because we don't know any thing about the Qatari initiative. "There are no official talks between them and the Qataris" he added.

SLM's Nur urges Sudan political parties to condemn Darfur violence

(Sudan Tribune) – The leader of a Darfur rebel group called on Sudanese political forces to press the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) to end violence against civilians in the Western region of the country.

"I call on all political forces that are part of the Government of National Unity to push the NCP to stop the killing, disarm the Janjaweed militias and remove the newly resettled tribes" the Sudan Liberation Movement leader Abdel-Wahid Al-Nur told Sudan Tribune yesterday.

"This is the solution and anything short of that will only complicate matters" Al-Nur said.

The rebel leader who lives in Paris has yet to announce his stance from a Qatari initiative to host a round of talks between Darfur rebel groups and the Sudanese government.

It remains unclear what his position is on attending any future peace talks in Doha. In the past Al-Nur has been adamant about refusing to start a political process before Khartoum stops its military attacks in Darfur.

"As far as initiatives I urge all those who has a proposal to work with us and pressure Khartoum to stop the killing, rape and repatriating the displaced. After that they can proceed with their initiatives" he said.

Sudan opposition leaders to hold a summit

(Sudan Tribune) – Three of the major northern opposition parties have decided to hold a leadership summit to agree on common grounds with regards to issues facing the country, Sudanese media reported.

The meeting will include leaders of the Umma party Sadiq Al-Mahdi, Popular Congress Party (PCP) Hassan Al-Turabi and Secretary General of communist party Mohamed Ibrahim Nugud.

No date has been set for the summit but **Al-Sahafa** said that it is likely to be held in the coming days.

The report of the summit comes amidst a new national initiative launched by president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir to resolve the five year conflict in Darfur.

Darfur rebel groups and opposition parties excluding the Umma Party boycotted the forum.

China signals not to introduce resolution to defer Bashir indictment

(Sudan Tribune) A senior Chinese official suggested that his country has no plans to introduce a UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution suspending the indictment by the International Criminal Court (ICC) of president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir.

China's special envoy to Africa Liu Guijin told the pro-government daily *Al-Rai Al-Aam* in a rare interview that he toured Washington, Paris and London to discuss the ICC move without elaborating on the outcome of these talks.

"I want to point out that China undertook diligent efforts to overcome the ICC crisis and we maintained contacts with major Western capitals. All these initiatives are for the sake of avoiding any obstacles to the peace process in Darfur" Guijin said.

The Chinese official however denied reports that he had any specific proposals on the issue of the ICC.

But Guijin said that the UNSC has received no formal request for invoking Article 16 of the Rome Statute.

"There are some ideas to freeze the decision [ICC] from the AU and Arab League but as of yet no country or organization formally introduced a resolution at the UN" he said in response to a question on whether China will table a resolution.

The Chinese official was careful not to direct criticism at The Hague based court but said that indicting a sitting head of state is "dangerous precedent".

"This is not in the interest of the peace process in Darfur...This is like having a house on fire. The pressing need is to put out the fire and not look for the identity of the arsonist. We are focusing on extinguishing the fire first but that doesn't mean we are turning a blind eye to the arsonist" the envoy said.

Last week Guijin concluded a week long visit to Sudan where he discussed with officials conditions outlined by Western countries before they will lift their objections to suspending Bashir's indictment.

African panel visits Sudan to probe ties with Chad

(Sudan Tribune) An African Union fact finding committee to probe Sudan-Chad relations is expected on today in Khartoum where it will begin its mission.

Headed by the former president of Burundi Pierre Buyoya, the mission of the panel was decided by the African Union summit of Sharm Al-Sheikh last July.

The committee will discuss ways to avoid disputes between Sudan and Chad and realizing cordial relations between them.

The fact-finding committee's delegation includes three former Foreign Ministers of Nigeria, Mauritania and Burkina Faso.