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IN THE NEWS TODAY:

➤ **United Nations and the Transitional Debate**

- UN Annan calls for high-level meeting on Darfur
- Sudan proposes solutions with limited UN role in Darfur - Senegal
- Sudan rejects effort to defuse peacekeeping row - Egypt

➤ **CPA**

- Salva Kiir fears war return to S. Sudan if Darfur crisis continues*
- SPLM brands PDF anniversary celebrations as a violation of the peace agreement
- SPLA, SSDF clash in South Kordofan, four killed
- Controversy over S. Kordofan State Constitution
- DDR commission targets 1 million by 2007
- SPLM requests IDPs to return home

➤ **GoNU**

- Residents worried in Erkowit following gunshots
- States' Council calls on the government to revisit the issue of Sudanese territories
- NRF ambushes SAF convoy in Sirba
- Prosecutor cancels charges against a number of suspects in editor's murder case

➤ **Darfur/Darfur Peace Agreement**

- Salva Kiir to organise talks in Juba with Abuja holdouts
- AbdulWahid accuses government of using chemical weapons in Darfur
- Dozens killed in attack on Darfur village - AU
- CAR rebels make fresh call for talks after advance
- Chad declares state of emergency after clashes
- France wants UN troops on Sudan-CAR-Chad borders

HIGHLIGHTS:

United Nations and the Transitional Debate

UN Annan calls for high-level meeting on Darfur

(AP/Reuters – 13th Nov. UN) U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has called for a high-level meeting in Ethiopia this weekend involving the U.S., the European Union, Russia and China to discuss the deteriorating situation in the Darfur region of western Sudan, his spokesman said Monday.

The announcement came as the U.N. reported nearly 40 civilian deaths in the last few days in attacks in Darfur by Arab militiamen - some of whom were backed by Sudanese military vehicles.

Annan and the African Union invited representatives from the five permanent members of the Security Council to attend the meeting Saturday in Ethiopia's capital, said U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric. Several African countries, the League of Arab States and the E.U. were also asked to take part.

Dujarric said Annan would attend, as would representatives from Sudan's government.

"It's a crucial moment in the discussion of what to do in Darfur, mainly because the African Union mandate is coming to an end and the situation in Darfur is clearly not improving. The time has come to decide how to move the peace process forward," said Yves Sorokobi, associate spokesman for the secretary-general.

He said the goal of the meeting was to develop a comprehensive package of initiatives that can be taken to an A.U. summit later this month in the Republic of Congo.

At the meeting, the U.N.'s assistant secretary general for peacekeeping operations, Hedi Annabi, pledged a package of personnel and equipment worth \$22 million to the cash-strapped and understaffed AU force.

The package, which will be given to the African Union as soon as possible, includes military and police advisers, as well as equipment such as night-vision goggles, Annabi said. He said talks were being held on a second, larger support package.

In a paper ahead of the meeting, Annan called for a phased approach to a strengthening of the existing AU force, including economic support for Sudan, *Reuters* adds.

Hedi Annabi, an assistant secretary-general for peace-keeping operations, now in Addis, said Sudan had agreed to initial support for the Darfur operation, including several hundred U.N. military, police and civilian personnel, worth some \$77 million.

But this enhancement is to strengthen the Africa Union without any U.N. command. Sudan still has to agree to a much larger AU-UN operation reporting to both bodies.

Such a hybrid force would have a "predominantly African character" but be adequately funded and equipped to better protect Darfur's civilian population and refugee camps, according to the paper.

In his monthly report, released on Monday, Annan said he was "gravely concerned" about the Sudan government attempt to find a military solution to the crisis by sending thousands of soldiers to Darfur in violation of a faltering May peace agreement between the government and one rebel group.

"I particularly deplore the use of aerial bombardment by government forces, which fails to distinguish civilians from combatants," Annan wrote about developments in September.

Sudan proposes solutions with limited UN role in Darfur - Senegal

(*Reuters* – 13th Nov. **Dakar**) Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir is proposing solutions on Darfur that do not completely reject the idea of United Nations involvement, but seek to limit U.N. intervention, Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade said on Monday.

"He's proposing solutions. Now he's not saying no to the United Nations, but he's limiting the intervention of the United Nations," Wade told a news conference in Dakar, saying he had received a letter from Bashir.

Wade, one of several African presidents who has been involved in trying to persuade Bashir to accept a strong U.N.-led peacekeeping force in the conflict-torn Darfur region of Sudan, did not give further details of the letter.

But his reply to a question suggested possible room for a compromise in what had up to now appeared to be Sudan's adamant opposition to a U.N. force for Darfur.

Sudan rejects effort to defuse peacekeeping row - Egypt

(*AP* - 13th Nov. **Cairo**) The Sudanese government has been rejecting Egyptian efforts to defuse the international crisis over sending U.N. peacekeepers to Darfur, Egypt's foreign minister said Monday.

But Ahmed Aboul Gheit said the world community also should show some flexibility, according to published reports.

"The Sudanese government has turned down everything while the international community, backed by the Western powers is insisting on everything," Aboul Gheit told the state-owned Rose El Youssef newspaper.

Cairo is trying to break a diplomacy deadlock on how to bring peace to the troubled region of western Sudan and has been floating the idea of sending extra troops from Arab and Muslim countries to bolster the AU peacekeepers now in Darfur.

Aboul Gheit said that among options being considered are putting the African troops under the U.N. command and changing their uniforms to have a U.N. emblem.

CPA

Salva Kiir fears war return to S. Sudan if Darfur crisis continues*

(*SudanTribune.com* – 13th Nov. **London**) The Sudanese First Vice President and President of southern Sudan Government, Salva Kiir Mayradit told a pan-Arab newspaper that he fears war will return to southern Sudan if peace in Darfur is not achieved.

In a long interview with London based Asharq Alawsat during his visit to England this month, the First Vice President admitted that Darfur crisis is hindering the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed with Khartoum in January 2005.

He said “the international community’s whole attention has shifted to Darfur and all the cards have been mixed up”.

Salva Kiir reiterated his position in favour of the deployment of UN forces in Darfur; because the government has failed to protect civilians in the region. But he explained he does not want international forces in Darfur without the Sudanese government approval.

** Text of V-P Kiir’s interview with AlSharq Al-Awsat attached*

SPLM brands PDF anniversary celebrations as a violation of the peace agreement

(AlAyaam)The SPLM rejects celebrations the National Congress Party is determined to conduct on the 17th November 2006 marking the anniversary of the Public Defence Forces (PDF).

The SPLM said that the celebration contradicts, and violates the constitution and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on the grounds that the PDF has to be demobilized in accordance to the CPA.

SPLA, SSDF clash in South Kordofan, four killed

(Khartoum Monitor – 12th Nov. Khrt.) The Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and the anti-SPLA South Sudan Defence Forces (SSDF), supported by Baggara militias, clashed on Thursday November 9 in the Meram town in Southern Kordofan State where three SPLA soldiers were shot dead and one wounded.

Lt-Col Lual Tong told the Khartoum Monitor yesterday by phone from Meram town that the SSDF’s General Hasan Deng Malaw was among those shot dead.

Lt-Col Tong disclosed that the SSDF and Baggara militias were the first to attack SPLA soldiers who were on their way to Meram town. The reasons for the attack remain unknown.

According to Lt-Col Tong the SPLA soldiers who died included First Lt Thiik Akot, William Nyon and Agaany Malek. Agaany Abdel Bagi Ayei also suffered severe injuries.

On the other hand, the SSDF suffered one casualty, Gen Hassan Deng.

[It is not clear from the paper whether this is a separate incident from that reported in the press yesterday]

Controversy over S. Kordofan State Constitution

(The Citizen) The Deputy Speaker of the South Kordofan Legislative Assembly said in a statement yesterday that the regional constitution was endorsed on instructions from the Presidency despite it not meeting the aspirations of the SPLM in the Nuba Mountains.

He pointed out that the MPs are however bound to abide by the resolution of the country’s leadership as the resolution, although unacceptable, is still a way out of the crisis the state is facing as a result of the constitutional vacuum.

Sidig Mansour said that there are some issues that have not been settled by the CPA but that the regional government will address through its legislative and executive organs.

DDR commission targets 1 million by 2007

(*AlHayat*) The DDR Commission for northern Sudan is targeting about 1 million combatants for its DDR programme by 2007.

Salafeldein Saleh who heads the commission said that the DDR commission will launch its programme targeting up to 30,000 SAF combatants and other militia groups by the end of the year.

SPLM requests IDPs to return home

The MP and the member of the Humanitarian affairs committee (IDPs sector) in the National Assembly and the representative of 247 electoral districts Mulwal North Bahr ALGhazal state Mr. Mel Wal Achein. Requested the Government of National Unity, GoSS, United Nations Organizations in Sudan and particularly those involved in repatriation program, to work persistently for providing basic services to IDPs who wish to join the repatriation program. ***The Citizen***

GoNU

Residents worried in Erkowit following gunshots

Local press reports agree there was gunfire in Erkowit, near the Afra shopping mall, yesterday but differ in who was involved, what exactly happened and what damage was caused. Below are some of the reports:

Erkowit was the scene of a fierce gun battle yesterday between the police and a JIU officer, reports *AlRai AlAam*.

The JIU soldier was shot dead as a result.

Sources say that the incident was sparked as a result of an argument between the JIU soldier and a "rickshaw" driver over a fare of SD.300. The JIU then brandished his Kalashnikov rifle, the police intervened and a gun battle ensued.

Nearby residents fled the area and the body of the dead JIU soldier was taken to the mortuary.

AlSudani, quoting the chairman of the Technical Committee of the JDB, Elias Waya, said that a JIU soldier assigned to guard the house of a Mjr. Gen. Yassir Jaafar (MP on an SPLM ticket) in Erkowit was shot dead yesterday by a policeman.

Dout Ngor, the JIU soldier who was shot, was shot dead while in his room at the MP's house. The MP was not available at the time.

AlSudani says that their reporter contacted the Office of the Spokesperson of the Police who denied knowledge of the incident.

But *AlSahafa*, quoting police sources, said that the incident happened when gunfire was heard from inside the house of an SPLA officer in Erkowit. The paper says that the police cordoned the area and brought the situation under control. The paper makes no mention of a JIU involvement, a gun battle or of a dead body.

States' Council calls on the government to revisit the issue of Sudanese territories

(*AlSahafa*) Legislators at the States' Council have called upon the government to revisit Sudanese territory ceded to neighbouring countries.

Of particular mention was the issue of the Halayeb Triangle in northern Sudan which MPs demand that the issue of that are be resolved in such a manner as to avert a confrontation with neighbouring Egypt.

NRF ambushes SAF convoy in Sirba

(*AlRai AlAam*) Three SAF soldiers were killed last Sunday in an NRF ambush near Sirba.

The ambush targeted a vehicle carrying the soldiers in a convoy moving around Sirba.

The governor said that the National Redemption Front was trying to use villages as human shields.

Prosecutor cancels charges against a number of suspects in editor's murder case

(*Alwan*) The public prosecutor in charge of the case of the murder of newspaper editor Mohamed Taha has dropped charges against a number of suspects and declared their release. He said in a press release yesterday that the suspects were set free on grounds of insufficient evidence to prove their involvement.

He pointed out however that evidence gathered in the course of the investigations is enough to uncover the plot and the people involved.

US states that Sudan must recognize the State of Israel in order for its internal and external problems to be resolved

AllIntibaha, Head of the NCP Foreign Relations Committee, Osman Khalid Modawi, has revealed that the US has offered to resolve all the internal and external problems of the Sudan on condition it recognises the State of Israel.

Modawi said in a symposium organized by el-Nilien University Center of Dialogue between Cultures yesterday that Israel has its eyes on Darfur's oil and mineral wealth.

He added that Sudan's strong position on the Israeli-Arab conflict is the main reason behind the international aggravation of Darfur issue.

Darfur/Darfur Peace Agreement

Salva Kiir to organise talks in Juba with Abuja holdouts

(*AlHayat*) Within the framework of efforts to find radical solutions to the problems of the Abuja non-signatory groups, Vice-President Salva Kiir is proposing a meeting with these groups in Juba in the next few days.

State Minister for the Presidency, announced this development at a meeting yesterday with the UK ambassador to Khartoum.

AbdulWahid accuses government of using chemical weapons in Darfur

(*AlHayat, Alwan*) AbdulWahid Mohamed Nur has denied press reports yesterday that he was arrested at Asmara airport while boarding a plane to leave the country.

The SLM leader said that this was an attempt by the Sudan government to soil relations between him and Asmara because, he adds, his faction supports an Eritrean mediation with the Khartoum government.

Alwan meanwhile reports that the SLM leader has accused the Sudan government of using chemical weapons in its Saturday raid on helpless civilians in villages in North Darfur.

He says that the said raid on Ali el-Azrag village in N. Darfur resulted in the death of 6 civilians, 4 of them children.

Dozens killed in attack on Darfur village - AU

(*Reuters* – 13th Nov. **Khrt.**) Up to 30 villagers were killed and 40 wounded when armed men riding horses and camels attacked a village in the Darfur region of western Sudan, an African Union (AU) official said on Monday.

The attackers are suspected to be Janjaweed, militiamen who have killed and plundered across the arid region, helping to drive some 2 million people into camps, said the official, who asked not to be named.

The three-hour attack on Saturday was on Sirba, about 45 km (30 miles) north of El Geneina, capital of West Darfur state and close to the Sudan-Chad border, the AU official said.

"The attackers were on camels and horses. Reports indicate up to 30 villagers killed and 40 injured and half of the village was razed," the AU official said.

CAR rebels make fresh call for talks after advance

(*Reuters*- 13th Nov. **Bangui**) Rebels in Central African Republic said on Monday they had captured a diamond mining town in the northeast and renewed their call for political negotiations.

But the government questioned their intentions, saying it was far from clear what there was to discuss with a group of "adventurers".

Former colonial ruler France, responding to a request for military aid from President Francois Bozize's government, said it would provide logistical and intelligence support to "help the CAR armed forces regain control of their territory".

Fighters of an anti-Bozize rebel coalition, the UFDR, have been probing south since they seized the northeast Vakaga prefecture capital of Birao, more than 800 km (500 miles) northeast of the capital, Bangui, on Oct. 30.

Chad declares state of emergency after clashes

(*Reuters* – 13th Nov. **N'Djamena**) Chad's government declared a state of emergency on Monday in the capital N'Djamena and some eastern areas, where raiders on horseback have killed hundreds of villagers in ethnic attacks in recent weeks.

The measure included the appointment of special ministers with far-reaching powers for the affected regions and a tightening of media censorship.

President Idriss Deby's government already faces armed insurgency from the east, which has been caught up in spillover violence from neighbouring Sudan's conflict-torn Darfur region.

The government has accused Sudanese Arab militia of provoking clashes between Arab and non-Arab Chadians through frequent raids over Chad's eastern border with Darfur.

France wants UN troops on Sudan-CAR-Chad borders

(*AFP* – 13th Nov. **Khrt.**) France attempted this weekend in Cairo and Khartoum to convince Sudan to accept the deployment of an international force on the borders with Chad and the Central African Republic.

French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy first held talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in a bid to explore new solutions after the Sudanese government made it clear it would reject a UN force in war-ravaged Darfur.

But the Egyptians were as supportive of France's plan as they were apprehensive.