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(By Public Information Office)

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HIGHLIGHTS:

UN/ Agencies

Army attack against Darfur civilians was unprovoked - UN

(AP – 24th Nov. **Geneva**) An assault on the Darfur town of Sirba was apparently "a deliberate and unprovoked attack" by Sudanese government forces against innocent civilians, a United Nations human rights official said Friday.

The military claimed 13 rebels were killed and that eight weapons were recovered, said Praveen Randhana, a spokeswoman for UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour.

Randhawa said government officials in West Darfur confirmed that the military used force, but that it was in response to a rebel ambush on a military convoy.

Randhawa added that "extensive and wanton destruction and looting of civilian property" took place during the attack.

The government denied militia were involved, but witnesses described the attackers as members of the Sudan Armed Forces and the Janjaweed, she said.

Her comments support what appears to be a new strategy by the U.N.'s Geneva-based human rights department to quickly report details of atrocities as they occur, perhaps in response to Khartoum's expulsion last month of chief U.N. envoy Jan Pronk.

Earlier this month, Arbour's office released a report that said hundreds of men identified by residents as Janjaweed had killed about 50 civilians in attacks on western Darfur villages.

Government says no to a possible appointment of a UN envoy for Darfur

(*AlSahafa*) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejects the idea of appointing a special UN envoy for Darfur.

Ministry spokesperson Ambassador Ali el-Sadiq said that the government will accept a replacement for Mr. Pronk who has been expelled on the grounds that he is not cooperating with the government. The government, he adds, will however reject any overtures for the appointment of a special envoy for Darfur.

United Nations and the Transition Debate

UN agrees to provide support package to African Union*

(*SudanTribune.com* – 25th Nov. **Addis Ababa**) The United Nations and the African Union today signed a Memorandum of Understanding under which the UN will provide light support package (LSP) to the AU Mission in the Sudan (AMIS).

AU Peace and Security Commissioner Said Djinnit signed on behalf of the African Union and UNMIS Officer-in-Charge Taye-Brook Zerihoun for the United Nations, a joint UN-AU press release said.

This agreement, along with the tripartite mechanism between the AU, UN, and the Government of Sudan, will help ensure a more transparent, systematic, and efficient provision of UN support to AMIS.

In a separate story and quoting state-run SUNA, www.sudantribune.com also reports that African Union top mediator for the Darfur peace talks, Salim Ahmed Salim, is due in Khartoum tomorrow in the latest bid to re-launch peace efforts in Darfur in a bid to convince the parties that did not sign Abuja peace agreement to join the peace process.

Salim will meet a number of government officials and representatives of the movements and the international partners. Salim is to be accompanied by the chairman of the preparatory committee of Darfur-Darfur Dialogue Conference (DDDC), Abdul Mohamed.

The visit also aims to consult and coordinate efforts for the summit of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on Darfur, which is scheduled to be held in Abuja on November 29.

** Also see text of joint AU-UN MoU on the LSP attached separately*

Ireland urges Chinas to press Sudan on Darfur force

(*Irish Times* – 25th Nov. **Dublin**) Ireland's foreign minister has appealed to China for help to persuade Sudan to accept the need for United Nations peacekeepers in the conflict-ridden Darfur region in western Sudan, reports the *Irish Times* [sourced from www.sudantribune.com].

Addressing a conference at the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin on "The Rise of Asia in International Affairs", Ahern said Asian leaders would be obliged by changing circumstances to "review their traditional approach of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states".

In a separate story, www.sudantribune.com also reports that Germany's Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development says Germany should participate in any UN peacekeeping mission should it deploy in Darfur because a genocide is taking place there.

Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Heidemarie Wiecek-Zeul told the weekly "Bild am Sonntag" that Germany could hardly refuse such a request should the United Nations decide to step into the crisis.

There are presently around 78 German military monitors and soldiers based in Sudan as part of the UN mission (UNMIS).

- *The Citizen* daily and other local newspapers carry notices of a press conference by President Bashir at the Friendship Hall this evening. The President will be briefing the press on developments in Sudan focusing on the political developments and UNSCR 1706. Sharjah Hall in Khartoum also hosts today and a few hours before the president's press conference a symposium organised by the International University of Africa which will revolve around similar issues.

GoNU

Security Concerns

Sudanese intelligence chief was in London for treatment - report

(*The Independent* – 26th Nov. **London**) Britain has twice allowed a Sudanese intelligence chief named by the United Nations panel investigating war crimes in Darfur to visit London for medical treatment and secret talks about al-Qa'ida.

Salah Abdallah "Gosh" has been accused of failing to stop the mass murder of 300,000 people and making a further two million homeless in Sudan.

A UN panel of experts recommended Sudan's chief of security and military intelligence face international sanctions two years ago. But Salah Abdallah, a former associate of Osama bin Laden, is being protected by US, British and French intelligence service, according to former US officials.

The full extent of his special treatment was laid bare last week when the Foreign Office admitted it had granted him two visas to visit Britain in the past nine months.

Although ministers insisted the visits were for "urgent medical treatment" they admit that he met "UK officials" during his time in London.

Salah Abdallah was flown by the CIA to the agency's headquarters in Langley, Virginia, in 2005. But the visit of the head of Sudan's secret police to Washington caused such an outcry that he was banned from revisiting the US.

Britain has proved to be more accommodating. In March, Salah Abdallah visited the private Cromwell Hospital in central London. It is believed he consulted a cardiologist. The nature of his second "urgent medical treatment" in August is not known.

On both occasions the man who was Bin Laden's main contact in Khartoum in the early 1990s spoke to US and UK officials.

Lord Triesman, the Foreign Office Minister for Africa, described him as "an influential member of the Sudanese government", and said it was right that the Government raised its concerns over Darfur with him.

Just how influential is detailed in a Human Rights Watch report on Sudan. "Security controls this country," it says. "The power is in Salah Gosh. He can overrule the army and military intelligence."

The UN panel ranked him number two in a list of "identified individuals" who should be held accountable for the Darfur killings. It accused him of "failure to identify, neutralise and disarm non-state militia groups in Darfur".

Andrew Mitchell, the shadow International Development spokesman, is now pressing the Foreign Office to reveal who, exactly, Salah Abdallah met on his visits. "We need to understand why he wasn't immediately arrested and sent to the International Criminal Court in The Hague."

Dr James Smith of the Aegis Trust, which campaigns to prevent genocide worldwide, said: "I am staggered that the British government, with full knowledge of his role, arranged for him to have medical treatment in British hospitals."

"Perhaps he is offering titbits of information, but our policy should be to stop terror wherever it happens. History will cast a shadow of disgrace over the British for turning a blind eye to this mass murderer."

Gillian Lusk, a former deputy editor of *Africa Confidential*, has followed Salah Abdallah's career from his days as a violent Islamist student in Khartoum University.

She said: "It seems unlikely that Britain and the US's 'intelligence co-operation' with Sudan's Islamist regime will bring much of great use in counter-terrorism: Khartoum is expert at running rings around the international community, and the 300,000 to 500,000 people who have died in Darfur have paid the price of this co-operation."

Security in and around Khartoum

Following a recent spate of insecurity in and around Khartoum, parliament, the Minister of Interior, the GoSS Minister for Police and Security and the Director for Police held a meeting here yesterday and have all subscribed to the need to urgently resolve the issue of militia groups and illegal arms in the capital and prevent a repeat.

The parties to the meeting agree to use the mechanisms stipulated in the CPA to resolve the issues

The SPLM has been facing much accusation over these attacks but GoSS Vice-President and prominent SPLM figure, Dr. Riek Machar, accuses the National Congress Party of launching a campaign to distract the public from ongoing SPLM activities to reorganise its ranks in the north.

And indeed, the SPLM seeks to sue *AlIntibaha* daily for "promoting religious and racial hatred against the party", according to the *Juba Post* quoting a party official.

SPLM commander member of the parliamentary Security and Defence Committee, Yassir Jaffar, said that *AlIntibaha* is trying to create a media war between the SPLM and the NCP to sabotage both the CPA and the Darfur Peace Agreement.

He stated that a movement opposed to the Government of National Unity was behind the paper.

According to Jaffar, the paper is calling for southerners to be deported from the north: "Such calls will jeopardize national security ", he warned.

Recent weeks have seen a number of threats to security in the capital. The latest of these came yesterday when students at a girls' school in Salama [*near Soba Aradhi*] were asked to evacuate following a bomb threat. The threat turned out to be a fake.

In another development, a policeman was killed and three wounded when armed men "from southern Sudan" attacked their station south of the capital Khartoum, police said Saturday [*sourced from the AP via SudanTribune.com*].

A police statement said the armed men set off handmade explosives at the Azhari police station [*not far from the Salama area mentioned above*] on Friday with the aim of freeing detainees who had been held by police following a street fight.

The statement did not indicate if the detainees were freed during the clashes.

The latest attack highlights tensions between authorities and southern Sudanese who fled to Khartoum from a decades-long civil war between north and south.

The local press reports that the Governor of Khartoum State may be summoned before the Khartoum State Legislative Assembly to brief legislators on the issue but quote sources as saying that this depends on the outcome of ongoing investigations on a number of incidents.

GoSS/Southern Sudan

11 join the SPLM Party in Unity State

(*Khartoum Monitor*) The Sudan People's Liberation Movement Co-ordinator for Unity state in Khartoum, Mr. James Hoth Lor, told the Khartoum Monitor that, eleven people have joined the SPLM Party in Unity State on 10th October 2006.

Hoth described the decision taken by the new Sudan People's Liberation Movement members as a crucial one, because they are the people who can contribute towards peace, development and unity in the whole of Sudan.

Dr John Garang de Mabior Political Science Institute to soon open in Khartoum

(*The Citizen*) The director of the SPLM political school, Mohammed Ahmed Shegaeli, in a statement to the Citizen Newspaper yesterday, disclosed that classes at the institution would open in the coming weeks.

Shegalia noted that the school will be re-named after the late Dr. Garang De Mabior and its objectives would be to build political consciousness within SPLM cadres. The school, he adds, will offer courses to executive and other constitutional post holders including members of parliament as well as to other SPLM members from different sectors.

South Sudanese lawmakers visit Ethiopian parliament

(*SudanTribune.com* – 24th Nov. **Addis Ababa**) A delegation of southern Sudanese lawmakers paid a visit to the Ethiopian chamber of representatives to study parliamentary experiences here, the state-run ENA reported.

Deputy Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) received a delegation from the Legislative Assembly of the Government of South Sudan in the Republic of the Sudan.

Leader of the four member Legislative assembly, Gatkuoth Duop Kuich said the delegation came to share Ethiopian experiences on parliamentary structure so as to strengthen the South Sudanese Government Legislative Assembly.

Gatkuoth said South Sudan is desirous to share experiences and work in close cooperation with Ethiopia in the fields of education, trade, infrastructure, peace and stability, among others.

The delegation also requested Ethiopian parliamentarians to pay a visit to South Sudanese Legislative Assembly.

Salva Kiir praises Egypt's support to South Sudan development

(*SudanTribune.com* – 25th Nov. **Khrt.**) Sudanese First vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit has hailed the Egyptian stance supporting Sudan's peace implementation and its efforts for development and construction of the southern Sudan.

Mayardit who returned to Sudan after a three-day official visit to Egypt, on Sunday briefed the Sudanese Omar al-Bashir on the outcome of his visit to Egypt.

Speaking to the press after this meeting, Salva Kiir expressed his gratitude towards Egypt's stance boosting the peace process in Sudan as well as its efforts in developing and reconstructing the south.

Mayardit said that during his visit he held talks with the Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, as well as the prime minister, the foreign minister and the head of religious authorities.

He went on to say that his successful meetings led to the signing of a number of memorandums of understandings between the two countries in a number of fields.

During his recent visit to Cairo, Kiir signed a number of agreements in the fields of agriculture, health, education and irrigation to support development programmes in the south.

He added that he also met with Khalil Ibrahim leader of Darfur rebel Justice and Equality Movement and that they discussed the Darfur crisis and the efforts to resolve it peacefully.

Infighting within SPLM over leadership of its Northern Sector

(*AllIntibaha*) *AllIntibaha* reports that Malik Aggar (Federal Minister for Investment may replace Yassir Erman as the head of the SPLM office for northern Sudan following protests from various groups that the Communist factor is dominating the SPLM's northern sector

Quoting anonymous sources privy to the SPLM leadership, the paper says that the party is in heavy discussions with some saying that the SPLM's Northern Sector has almost turned into a body that has nothing to do with the SPLM and reflects behaviour that is unacceptable to the SPLM.

The sources also say that the structure of the SPLM may soon be revamped.

Sudan's Rumbek celebrates State constitution introduction

(*SRS*- 24th Nov. **Rumbek**) The Lakes State legislative assembly on Wednesday 23 November introduced the state interim constitution in a ceremony attended by more than 2,000 citizens of the state.

Speaking to Sudan Radio Service (SRS) yesterday, the deputy speaker of the state assembly, Marik Nanga, said the constitution is a legal document that will guarantee the rights of citizens in the state.

"We are going to benefit because the violations of citizen rights will not be there. The armies will be shown what to do and what they are not supposed to which was not actually very clear. The armies were not actually very much aware that the war was over and the rule of law was supposed to take place. The constitution is going to guide everybody in the state - executive,

legislature and judiciary, and even the armed groups, the police and prisons. Their rights are enshrined in this constitution;" Marik Nanga said

The deputy speaker said the passing of the interim constitution marks an end to "past incidents of human rights violations in the state." The ceremony was attended by officials from the Government of Southern Sudan, the state's traditional leaders, as well as church leaders.

Darfur/Darfur Peace Agreement

Government to hold talks with Darfur Peace Agreement non-signatories next month

(*AlSahafa*) Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail says the first round of renewed talks with Darfur Peace Agreement non-signatories will kick off in Asmara early next month.

The presidential advisor was briefing President Bashir on the outcome of his tour of Egypt, France and the UK.

Mustafa says that while in Cairo, he exchanged ideas with USG Guehenno, Secretary-General Advisor Lakhdar Brahimi and US Special Envoy Andrew Natsios mainly over the developments between Sudan and the UN.

Also covered widely in the press today is the report that African Union chief mediator on Darfur, Salim Ahmed Salim, is expected in Khartoum today to prepare for the renewed talks with Darfur Peace Agreement non-signatories.

Sudanese army denies responsibility for attacks in Darfur

(*AP*- 25th Nov. **Khrt.**) The Sudanese army denied on Saturday carrying any attacks in Darfur and blamed some of the latest bloodshed on Janjaweed fighters it accused of being outlaws.

"Reports that the army has hit in the area of Um Dhai in (South) Darfur are all but void of any truth," military spokesman Brig-Gen. Osman Mohamed al-Aghbash said in an army newspaper.

"The army's duty is to safeguard security and stability, not to engage in killings and looting operations," he said.

The spokesman's comment was the latest of a string of remarks by the army that appear to dissociate the military from the ongoing onslaught in Darfur _ a possible sign of rift among ruling circles in Khartoum on how to handle the spiralling Darfur crisis.

The Sudanese military spokesman responded to the U.N. bulletin saying that the Janjaweed militias would be pursued.

Al-Aghbash also said that though the army was not conducting attacks in Darfur, it remained ready to counter any breach to a cease-fire signed by the government and one rebel group last May.

He accused the National Redemption Front, a coalition of rebels who refused the Darfur Peace Agreement, of being backed by neighbouring Chad. The NRF is receiving "direct assistance from influential quarters inside the Chadian government," al-Aghbash said, stating that some NRF offensives "have been launched from inside Chadian territory."

ICC prosecutor close to launching Darfur prosecutions

(AP – 23rd Nov. **The Hague**) The International Criminal Court is close to launching prosecutions against suspects believed responsible for atrocities including murder, rape and torture in Darfur, the court's chief prosecutor announced Thursday.

"Based on a careful and thorough source evaluation of all the evidence collected, we were able to identify the gravest incidents and some of those who could be considered to be the most criminally responsible," prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo told a meeting of states that have ratified the Hague-based court.

Moreno-Ocampo did not name any suspects being targeted by prosecutors or identify atrocities they are alleged to have taken part in but said investigators have proof of crimes against humanity and war crimes including murder, rape, torture, deliberate attacks on civilians, persecution and forcible expulsions.

Human Rights Watch has welcomed the announcement and says it came in "the context of ongoing horrific crimes being carried out both by the Sudanese armed forces and Janjaweed militia against innocent civilians who remain at risk of the kinds of arbitrary killings, rape, torture and mutilations that have characterized the conflict in Darfur since 2003-2004."

Dicker also dismissed Sudan's move to set up a court for Darfur, saying it did little beyond "pay lip service" to prosecuting atrocities in the region.

Moreno-Ocampo said Sudanese authorities had provided investigators with a government-ordered report that found that "from 2003 to 2004 grave human rights breaches were committed by all parties to the conflict and that in Darfur murder and crimes against humanity had been committed by all parties to the conflict."

The Sudanese report also "established that many allegations concerning incidents of murder have been attributed to ... Janjaweed, either acting alone or together with elements of the Sudanese security forces," Moreno-Ocampo said.

Meanwhile local papers (*AlAyaam et al*) report that Presidential Advisor and prominent National Congress Party figure, Dr. Nafei Ali Nafei, has described Ocampo's statements as coming in the context of pressures on the Sudanese government.

He points out that this is a political statement with an unacceptable political agenda.

Six policemen killed in rebel attack on Darfur camp

(AFP – 24th Nov. **Khrt.**) Six policemen have been killed and seven wounded in an attack by unknown rebels on a police camp in Sudan's war-torn South Darfur state, a press report said Friday.

The attack on Wednesday night on Manwashy police camp, about 75km north of the state capital Nyala, was carried out by gunmen from an unidentified rebel group who arrived in 23 vehicles, South Darfur police commander Major General was quoted by the Al-Sudani daily as saying.

No official source could be reached to confirm the report in which the independent daily, reporting from Nyala, mentioned the names of the victims.

Aid group alarmed by older people vulnerability in Darfur

(*SudanTribune.com* – 24th Nov. **London**) A new report highlights gaps in emergency responses which have left 55,000 internally displaced older people isolated and without access to basic services in Sudan's troubled region of Darfur.

With no peaceful resolution in sight for Darfur crisis, a new report by HelpAge International highlights the effects of prolonged displacement on older people and the need for programmes which go beyond immediate basic needs.

Richard Blewitt, HelpAge International's Chief Executive Officer says: "Older people are probably the least visible demographic group in the Darfur conflict. Addressing older people's needs is often not seen as a priority by humanitarian agencies."

HelpAge International estimates that 160,000 older people live in relief camps and of these around 30 per cent, the 'invisible vulnerable,' are sidelined by most programmes and invisible to the majority of humanitarian organizations.

The text of HelpAge's report (**Rebuilding lives in longer-term emergencies**) is available at http://www.helpage.org/Resources/Researchreports/main_content/oT8a/RebuildingLives.pdf

Chad rebels attack key town, army withdraws

(*Reuters* – 25th Nov. **N'Djamena**) Chadian rebels attacked the eastern regional capital of Abeche on Saturday in their latest strike against President Idriss Deby's rule, wresting control from government forces who withdrew and surrounded the town.

Rebels of the Union of Forces for Democracy and Development (UFDD) took control of Abeche. Aid workers and diplomats reported looting as government troops fled.

A second rebel group, the Rally of Democratic Forces (RAFD), said it had seized the town of Biltine, some 60 km to the north, just a few hours later after light clashes with government troops. It was not immediately possible to confirm this.

Chad's army said it had pulled back from Abeche to prevent civilian casualties after the early morning attack by several armed convoys.

Abeche lies on the main road to Chad's capital, some 600 km to the west, and is 160 km (100 miles) from the border with Sudan.

"In order to spare civilian lives, the Chadian armed forces have deployed all around the town of Abeche," read a statement signed by General Adoum Gabgalia, deputy head of the chiefs of staff.

Chad repeated its accusations that Khartoum supports the rebels, who have carried out a number of attacks in the east in recent months. Sudan denies aiding the rebels.

Eastern Chad, where UNHCR runs camps for thousands of refugees from Sudan's Darfur and for displaced Chadians, has descended into lawlessness, with frequent rebel attacks and incursions by Janjaweed militia from across the border.

Other Developments

Sudanese authorities hold a journalist without charges

(*SudanTribune.com* – 24th Nov. **Khrt.**) A Sudanese journalist is held incommunicado since two days without charge, a newspaper said on Friday. Security services arrested the journalist without informing journalists union as provided for by law.

“Our colleague, journalist Al-Tahir Satti was arrested by police last Wednesday 22 November and remains in detention in an unknown location. Satti was arrested with neither the knowledge of his family, Al-Sahafa’s administration, where he works, nor the journalist’s union where he is a member of the executive office.” Al-Sahafa newspaper reported.

Satti was absent from his workplace at the newspaper on Wednesday. His family informed Al-Sahafa yesterday that he had not returned home Wednesday evening which had caused them extreme anguish.

The newspaper received several calls yesterday asking about him and following intense contacts it was confirmed that he is being detained by the police. However, no one was allowed to visit him.

Head of the Sudanese journalist’s union Mehy-al-Din Titawi reaffirmed that all day yesterday the union had been contacting the concerned authorities regarding Satti’s detention.

In a press statement, Titawi said the union would continue to follow the issue and called for Satti’s prompt release. The union had held a meeting yesterday during which a number of issues were discussed. During the meeting the importance of freedoms, abiding by the rule of law in matters of publication and the necessity of it being informed of any journalist arrests were stressed.

The newspaper and publications law stipulates that the journalists’ union must be notified if any journalists are summoned for questioning by the prosecution.

Editorials/ Commentaries

Is it the resources!

(*Khartoum Monitor editorial*) The paper’s editorial today points out that successive governments in the country used to push the north-south borders southwards without anybody knowing why at the time. It points out that now it is clear that the secret lies in the country’s vast underground resources and then did it become clear that the members of those governments knew exactly what no one understood at the time.

It goes on to point out that monies accrued from the country’s oil wealth was the property of the ruling party and close affiliates and that despite the 50-50 provision in the CPA for the oil revenues, no one can confirm that what the south gets really is as provided in the CPA.

The paper further deplores the situation for eastern Sudan where the peace agreement for that region states that a fund, with 600 million dollars for development in eastern Sudan be set up. It points out that that money is not enough for the east.

What is wrong with our defence minister?

(*Khartoum Monitor*) In this piece, Alfred Taban wonders whether defence minister AbdelRaheem Mohamed Hussein takes the people of southern Sudan and of Darfur for children.

He points out that the minister accompanied President Bashir to Juba recently where he blamed the Lord's Resistance Army for the recent attacks near and in Juba – something most southerners found hard to swallow.

From there to Khartoum, the writer goes on, the minister addressed the National Assembly at a closed session and declared the situation in Darfur as stable thus infuriating MPs from Darfur who angrily told the minister that wanton killings by the Janjaweed continue unabated and with government forces playing a role in the chaos.

Taban says that the defence minister should not take the people of southern Sudan and Darfur for children. The GoSS and the SPLA, he says, are aware of who is violating the CPA and had accused the Lord's Resistance Army when it was spreading death and destruction in Equatoria. Now these two institutions are saying it is forces in Khartoum who are behind these unprovoked attacks and that the SPLA has 15 suspects associated with the SAF in custody in Juba.

He goes on to point out that the SAF is not for the National Congress Party but for the defence of the country and should be at the borders with Chad and the CAR to deter armies of those countries from crossing into Sudan. He also points out that the JIUs were also supposed to have been involved in reconstruction work in the country and wonders whether these units are doing just that.