

**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN****UNMIS****Media Monitoring Report, 28 November 07**

(By Public Information Office)

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UN/ Agencies

Sudanese obstacles threaten Darfur peacekeeping mission, say UN officials (UN News)

27 November 2007 – The full and rapid deployment of the hybrid United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID) is in jeopardy because of a series of objections and obstacles raised by the Sudanese Government and the lack of offers for crucial force units, senior United Nations officials warned the Security Council today.

Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guéhenno told an open debate on the war-torn region of western Sudan that with five weeks remaining before UNAMID is due to accept the transfer of authority from the existing AU peace operation, critical gaps in mobility capabilities remain.

The mission is short of one heavy and one medium transport unit, three military utility aviation units and one light helicopter unit, while an earlier pledge for one reconnaissance company has been withdrawn, he said.

“If no appropriate offers for these missing units are identified by early 2008, it may become necessary to revert to the Council to consider options to mitigate the lack of air mobility. This may require an increase in troops. But more troops will not 'replace' military aviation and they would also require more logistic support, more land, more

water, and would likely not appear in Darfur until late 2008. Another sub-optimal last-resort measure would be to 'borrow' these capabilities from other missions.”

He said that despite sincere efforts by the UN to address Sudanese concerns about the composition of the force, which is supposed to be predominantly African, the Government is yet to approve units from Thailand, Nepal and Scandinavia.

The Government has also not facilitated the acquisition of land and flight operations rights for UN aircraft, impeding the ability of UNAMID to carry out its mandate, while some of its proposals for the status of forces agreement with the UN “would make it impossible for the mission to operate.”

Mr. Guéhenno said that unless these sorts of problems are resolved, the international community ? which agreed at the end of July to authorize the deployment of UNAMID to quell four years of fighting and suffering that has killed more than 200,000 people and displaced at least 2.2 million others ? may soon face a hard choice.

“Do we move ahead with the deployment of a force that will not make a difference, that will not have the capability to defend itself, and that carries the risk of humiliation of the Security Council and the United Nations, and tragic failure for the people of Darfur?”

Speaking to reporters later, he said: “If there is a humiliation, it will reverberate beyond Darfur to the whole idea of UN peacekeeping,” noting that during a recent trip to China many countries in that region made clear that they have an increased confidence in UN missions after problems in the 1990s in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

While in Beijing, Mr. Guéhenno called the conflict in Darfur is “a human tragedy, a political tragedy, and an economic tragedy.”

In an address to an ASEAN seminar on 19 November, he welcomed China's contribution of an engineering unit to the region, adding: “But may I say that it needs more? I believe that East Asia's response there will be a key indicator of the region's commitment to global security.”

In his comments to the press today, the Under-Secretary-General said one major setback would shatter confidence. "And then all the other countries in which peacekeeping has made a huge difference ? I think of Liberia, I think of Sierra Leone, I think of Haiti today ? would be at risk of not having this option of a UN peacekeeping operation when needed because the credibility of peacekeeping would have been once again challenged.

“And so avoiding such a tragedy, making sure that in Darfur, we meet the expectations, even if we do not meet all the expectations, that we make a real difference, that is really vital for the United Nations, for UN peacekeeping and for the people of Darfur.”

Meanwhile, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Darfur Jan Eliasson told the Council that Darfur's many splintering rebel groups are showing signs they are prepared to coalesce around two or three common alliances, but also warned that these unification efforts remain fragile.

In addition, Mr. Eliasson said he and his AU counterpart Salim Ahmed Salim believe that both the rebels and the Government will need "reasonable time" to finalize their preparations for peace talks scheduled for next month.

"We should not risk the credibility of this process by rushing to convene the substantive talks if we do not have a critical mass of participants ready for them. At the same time, we must maintain the momentum through continuous engagement with the [rebel] movements and with the Government of Sudan and remind them of their commitments to the AU and UN and of their obligations to the people of Darfur."

Mr. Eliasson noted that the atmosphere around the peace process "is now less positive than it was last [northern] summer," when the Council authorized the deployment of UNAMID and successful pre-negotiation consultations were held in Arusha, Tanzania, with many of the rebel groups.

He told reporters that the situation on the ground, particularly inside the increasingly unstable camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs), remained worrying, adding more people are now dying from inter-tribal clashes than from Government clashes with rebels.

Although peace talks last month in Sirte, Libya, were "positive and constructive," many rebel movements ? which have fragmented into up to 16 separate factions ? boycotted.

But he said consultations in the last few weeks in Juba, southern Sudan, conducted with the help of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the former rebel group from the separate long-running north-south civil war, have led to some hopeful signs.

As a result the Darfur rebel factions are looking to form two or three key groups: the Sudan Liberation Movement Army (SLM-A), the United Resistance Front (URF) and SLM-Unity.

But he warned that AU and UN mediators may need to do more work to ensure the rebels consolidate their talks about possible reunification into something more substantive.

"Unification efforts remain fragile. Loose coalitions and alliances have, in the past, failed due to competition over leadership."

Next Tuesday in Egypt Mr. Eliasson and Dr. Salim will meet regional partners to discuss the course ahead and whether to hold another meeting with rebels in the vein of this year's Arusha consultations.

Senior UN envoy to Sudan holds talks on problems in north-south peace deal (UN News)

27 November 2007 – The senior United Nations envoy in Sudan held talks today with one of the country's Vice-Presidents on how to resolve the remaining obstacles to implementing the January 2005 comprehensive peace agreement (CPA) that ended the long-running civil war between north and south.

Ashraf Qazi, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Sudan, met with Ali Osman Taha in Khartoum, according to the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).

Their discussions focused on the efforts of the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the parties to the CPA, to resolve the pending issues from the agreement and revive their partnership in a Government of National Unity.

Mr. Qazi then headed to Juba, southern Sudan, for a two-day visit during which he is scheduled to hold talks with Salva Kiir Mayardit, the First Vice-President of Sudan and the President of the Government of Southern Sudan, and other senior officials in the region. He is also expected to meet SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amoum.

UNMIS said these talks will also focus on resolving the pending issues between the two parties so that the integrity of the CPA can be resolved and the current crisis between the NCP and the SPLM can come to a swift end. Last month the SPLM had withdrawn from the Government of National Unity.

Thousands of jobs created through UN development scheme in Sudan (UN News)

27 November 2007 – More than 7,000 jobs in agriculture, construction and the small business sector have been created across Sudan under a scheme managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to try to alleviate poverty and hunger in the African country.

UNDP said today that its €54 million Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme (RRP), funded by the European Union, is running projects in Abyei Area and nine Sudanese states: River Nile, Red Sea, Blue Nile, South Kordofan, Upper Nile, Warrap, Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria and Northern Bahr al Ghazal.

The RRP was set up to help local communities rebuild their infrastructure and economies after the January 2005 signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ended the long-running north-south civil war in Sudan.

It is also designed to help Sudan work to achieve one of the eight ambitious socio-economic targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): halving extreme poverty and hunger by 2015.

At least 4,500 of the new jobs have been created through microcredit loan schemes in which members of rural communities submit a business proposal to a committee comprising local leaders and, if they are approved, agree to pay back the amount of

credit borrowed and 10 per cent of profits made. The money returned is then used to extend a loan to the next entrepreneur.

Most of the other jobs are in the fields of agriculture or construction, according to UNDP.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Sudan's president, first deputy to meet Thursday (ST)

November 27, 2007 (KHARTOUM) — Sudanese president and his first deputy are expected to meet on Thursday to discuss the current political crisis between the two partners of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

President Omer al-Bashir and First Vice-President Salva Kiir Mayardit will discuss on Thursday a report prepared by the six-member committee on the points of convergence and divergence on the implementation of the CPA.

The deputy chairman of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Malik Agar, said that the meeting comes on the basis of the letter of the Chairman of the SPLM, Salva Kiir, which was handed to president al-Bashir two days ago to end the stalemate between the two partners of the CPA implementation.

Agar added that the six-member committee would start its work following the meeting between the President of the Republic and his first deputy on Thursday in Khartoum.

(ST)

SPLM senior member sees NCP, SPLM standoff as normal difference, refutes crisis claims (Sudan Vision)

In an interview he made with Sudan Vision yesterday, SPLM leading member Ghazi Suliman said he deems any call for an inclusive conference as an attempt to undermine the CPA, remarking that he will be reserved towards any political forces that show reservations on the peace agreement. "The CPA includes mechanisms that are capable of solving disputed issues, particularly Abyei", Suliman said. He held the NCP-SPLM present standoff as a minor difference than can be surmounted through dialogue.

Government to assess donors' commitment pledges to hold conference in 2008 (Sudan Vision)

The Sudanese government has stated that donors are lagging in the funding and implementation of projects, disclosing that it is contemplating holding a new conference for donors in 2008 to cover the period 2008-2011.

The Minister of International Cooperation, Dr. Altijani Salih Fidail, told Sudan Vision that the government is presently assessing donors' performance from the aspects of funding and implementation, letting on that there has been marked delay in both aspects.

Khartoum Monitor organizes a workshop and course on CPA (Khartoum Monitor)

Khartoum Monitor in collaboration with the British Embassy yesterday started a three-day workshop and course on the implementation of the CPA. The opening session and training was launched at the Coptic club in Khartoum under the theme "The Full Implementation of the CPA is the Duty of the Sudanese".

Missing SPLM officials now found under arrest (The Citizen)

A SPLM official who went missing has been found days later under arrest by the Khartoum Police. SPLM's Khartoum State Information Secretary Emad Najm Aldin went missing without a clue last week. He suddenly turned up on the legal books with two cases against him, a source told the Citizen. The source said the national security picked Emad three days ago from Khartoum Airport.

EU representative hopes for NCP, SPLM dialogue (The Citizen)

The EU representative in Sudan, Mr. Kent Dever Kate in a press briefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told reporters that he is leaving Sudan after the end of his mission. He said "I met Ali Karti today and we discussed the problems of Sudan including CPA and Darfur. It was very useful because we agreed that there is no way to solve Sudan problems only through negotiations and dialogue". He said he hoped that the SPLM and NCP would sit down and discuss the issues.

Bashir and Kiir meet tomorrow (AIRai AIAam)

The GoSS Minister of Presidential Affairs, Dr. Luka Biong, said President al Bashir and the FVP and GoSS President will hold tomorrow a decisive meeting to resolve on pending issues.

Minister of Interior: We put hands on 17 barrels of explosives in Alsalama (AlSahafa)

The Minister of Interior, Al Zubeir Bashir Taha, said yesterday the police authorities have put hands on seven barrels of explosives during the past few days in Alsalama area in Khartoum South. The barrels were ready to be used in attacking targets in Khartoum.

Ethiopia will push for Sudan peace implementation - PM (ST)

November 27, 2007 (ADDIS ABABA) – Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, said his country will scale up its contribution for the full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the Sudan and the former rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

During a meeting on Tuesday with the former Kenyan president and Kenya's special peace envoy to Sudan, Daniel Arap Moi, Zenawi said Ethiopia has been playing its role for the CPA implementation signed between the Sudanese government and the SPLM in 2005.

Ethiopia is closely following the implementation of the peace agreement, Meles said, adding that it will pursue in providing positive contributions along with other neighbors.

He said Ethiopia provides all assistance for the efforts being made to ensure durable peace and stability in neighboring Sudan.

Moi for his part said Ethiopia has been providing assistance for the implementation of the CPA, the official ENA reported.

(ST)

Sudan says teacher in bear case may be freed soon (ST)

November 27, 2007 (KHARTOUM, Sudan) — A British teacher arrested for allowing her students to name a teddy bear Muhammad will probably be cleared and released soon, a spokesman for the Sudanese embassy in London said Tuesday.

Gillian Gibbons was arrested Sunday and faced possible charges of insulting religion - a crime punishable by up to 40 lashes. She was questioned by Sudanese authorities on Tuesday.

"The police is bound to investigate," embassy spokesman Khalid al Mubarak told British Broadcasting Corp. radio. "I am pretty certain that this minute incident will be clarified very quickly and this teacher who has been helping us with the teaching of children will be safe and will be cleared."

In the first official comment on the case, the Sudanese Foreign Ministry on Tuesday played down the significance of the case, calling it "isolated despite our condemnation and rejection of it."

Ministry spokesman Ali al-Sadeq said it was an incidence of a "teacher's misconduct against the Islamic faith" but noted the school's apology.

The school's director, Robert Boulos, told the British Broadcasting Corp. that the incident was "a completely innocent mistake. Miss Gibbons would have never wanted to insult Islam."

"This is a very unfortunate incident and Ms. Gibbons should never have been arrested in the first place. It is obvious that no malice was intended," said Muhammad Abdul Bari, the council's secretary-general.

Omar Daair, spokesman for the British Embassy in Sudan, said embassy officials were in touch with Sudanese authorities and had met with Gibbons. He said he expected authorities to decide whether to bring her to court, and on what charges, within a few days.

"Her lawyer is trying to get her released on bail in the meanwhile," he said.

(AP)

Student defends Briton jailed in Sudan for insulting Islam (ST)

November 27, 2007 (KHARTOUM) — A 7-year-old Sudanese student on Tuesday defended his British teacher accused of insulting Islam saying he had chosen to call a teddy bear Mohammad after his own name.

"The teacher asked me what I wanted to call the teddy," the boy said shyly, his voice barely rising above a whisper. "I said Mohammad. I named it after my name," he added.

He said he was not thinking of Islam's Prophet when asked to suggest a name, adding most of the class agreed with his choice.

Mohammad said Gibbons was "very nice" and he would be upset if she never came back to teach. He added Gibbons had not discussed religion nor did she mention the Prophet.

"We studied maths and English and spelling," he said, rubbing his mop of short, curly hair.

(Reuters)

Authorities in North Bahr Al Ghazal State Prevent Al Rizeigat from Entering (Sudan Vision)

By: Nasereldeen Altahir, Authorities of North Bahr Al Ghazal State have prevented Al Rizeigat from grazing in the state in order to prevent smuggling of arms. The weapons taken by Al Rizeigat are usually for personal and herd safety; as a result a 22 person delegation from the tribe with the aim of carrying talks with the state government and convinces it to retreat from this decision.

Likewise the authorities have prevented Al Messeria from grazing in the bordering area between South of Darfur and Almeiram.

GoSS

Salva Kiir rejects US request on separation between two positions (FVP and GoSS Presidency) (AIRai AIAam)

High level diplomatic sources revealed that the FVP and GoSS President Salva Kiir has rejected a US proposal on separating the positions of the First Vice President and GoSS, i.e. to be occupied by two persons instead of one. The US Envoy Andrew Natsios said Washington has informed Kiir, during his recent visit to the US, that the US will support the SPLA only in the processes of training and transforming it into a professional army.

Government of Bahr Al Ghazal stops transmission of Sudan TV (AlIntibaha)

The Minister of Information and Communications of the Bahr Al Ghazal State has issued a decree by which he stopped the national TV service in the State. The decree allows only for broadcasting the political news.

Census in danger as people stay away from fear of mines (The Citizen)

Two months to the census, people are staying away from some areas of southern Sudan, putting the census of the national population count in danger.

“We were having a lot of people here,” Alesto Gore, the chief in Juba said Wednesday. “The people here – they run away, and we don’t know where they went.”

Gore spoke at the South Sudan Mine Action Services announced that it had been accredited by the UN Mine Action Office, making it the first and only indigenous organization to get the UN stamp.

Darfur

US official meets Darfur rebel leader in Paris (ST)

November 27, 2007 (PARIS) — The US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, on Tuesday discussed here with the Chairman of the Sudan Liberation Movement, Abdelwahid Mohamed al-Nur, ways to end the ongoing conflict in the war-torn region of Darfur.

The influential rebel leader told Sudan Tribune that the two parties exchanged their views on the ongoing efforts to end the four year conflict in Darfur. He said that deployment of the peacekeeping for in Darfur and the security of civilians were on the top agenda of the meeting.

Al-Nur added he discussed the political process with the US diplomat. He underscored that there is a need for a political solution for Darfur crisis which a political problem.

He described the meeting as positive and constructive. He also hailed the serious efforts exerted by Bush Administration for peace in Darfur.

Following the unsuccessful meeting organised by the joint AU-UN mediation following its rejection by the main rebel movements, the US administration tries to explore new approach to bring together the parties to agree on lasting peace in the region.

The founder of the rebel SLM requests the deployment of the international peacekeeping force in Darfur and creation of conducive environment before the political process.

(ST)

US condemns Darfur rebel threats against Chinese peacekeepers (ST)

November 27, 2007 (WASHINGTON) — The U.S. government condemned on Tuesday recent threat of violence by some rebel leaders in Sudan against Chinese engineers who are serving as part of the United Nation (UN) - African Union (AU) Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

"We oppose any efforts to delay the rapid deployment of UNAMID," State Department Deputy Spokesman Tom Casey said in a statement.

He urged the Sudanese government to "approve without delay the full list of troop-contributing countries chosen by the U.N. and the AU to deploy to Darfur."

"The Sudanese government must meet its commitment to accept UNAMID peacekeepers and provide them with access to land and water, flight clearances and visas necessary to carry out their mission," he added.

The 140-strong Chinese peacekeepers arrived in South Darfur State capital Niyala last week with missions including building camps, roads and airports, and digging wells in addition to some other projects in preparations for the deployment of peacekeepers from other countries.

The Chinese government has exerted a lot of efforts to help resolve the Darfur problem since armed conflicts erupted in the region in 2003, including appointing a special envoy for the Darfur issues and providing a large amount of relief materials to the region.

However, Darfur rebels have charged that as "allies" of the government in Khartoum, the Chinese peacekeepers are not immune from attack.

(Xinhua)

Chad accuses Sudan of arming rebels (ST)

November 27, 2007 (ABOU GOULEM, Chad) — Chad's intelligence chief Tuesday accused Sudan of arming rebels who clashed with the army as troops showed off the battleground with bodies still laid among smoldering military vehicles.

"Sudan violated the peace agreement," General Ismael Chaibo, director general of the National Security Agency, or ANS told journalists.

"It (Sudan) made promises related to the deal about the containment and disarmament of the rebels. Unfortunately it didn't want to respect its promises," Chaibo said.

"It armed them (the rebels), it drove them out" of its territory, he added, speaking in Abeche, the main town in eastern Chad.

In Abeche, the intelligence chief said the rebels had fled the battlefield and headed for the border with Sudan, 60 kilometers to the east.

Government soldiers were still searching the area and meeting "small pockets of resistance", he added.

UFDD secretary general Abakar Tollimi told AFP by satellite phone from the Gabonese capital Libreville that his forces were at Am-Zoer, 70 kilometers further north.

(AFP)

China deeply concerned over threats in Darfur (ST)

Source: Agence France-Presse English Wire, by Jennie Matthew, KHARTOUM, Nov 27, 2007 (AFP) - China on Tuesday voiced deep concern about the safety of its peacekeepers in Sudan's war-torn Darfur region after rebel groups boycotting the peace process declared they were not immune from attack.

"Up to now there has been no incident, but we are deeply concerned about the matter," the Chinese ambassador to Khartoum, Li Cheng Wen, told AFP.

More than 100 Chinese engineers deployed to Darfur last week to build roads and bridges and dig wells to prepare for a 26,000-strong African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force, but they were immediately rejected by rebels.

Darfur rebels have charged that as "allies" of the government in Khartoum, the Chinese are not immune from attack.

"China has played a continuing role in national reconciliation in Sudan. Joining the peacekeeping action in the Darfur region reflects China's constructive role in solving Darfur's problem properly," Li said.

China is also Sudan's biggest foreign trade partner and has invested more than 400 million dollars in the country's western and largely impoverished Darfur region alone, Li told AFP.

Beijing is also delivering 80 million Chinese yuan (11 million US dollars) worth of humanitarian assistance to Darfur, including more than 100 prefabricated primary schools, the ambassador said.

"This is good for Darfur peace and stability. It benefits reconstruction and improves people's life in Darfur.

"So it is very difficult for the Chinese side to understand and (we) cannot accept the criticism of joining the peacekeeping operation. Furthermore, we stand against the public threat to the Chinese peacekeepers' safety," said Li.

"The United Nations peacekeeping operation, including Chinese peacekeepers' security, must be guaranteed," said Li, vowing to "take all necessary measures to protect" the contingent from China.

In all, 315 Chinese engineers at the invitation of the United Nations will deploy by December to the region, where war has raged for nearly five years.

They carry small arms and are entitled to defend themselves if attacked, in line with UN resolutions.

"China hopes those military groups that have not signed the Darfur Peace Agreement will join the peace process as soon as possible and work so that peace and development can be realised," Li said.

He acknowledged China sells arms to the Khartoum government -- touted by the rebels as a major reason to reject the Chinese peacekeepers -- but said it was "policy" not to interfere in internal affairs and work to stabilise the region.

Darfur JEM vows to not attack Chinese peacekeepers

November 27, 2007 (LONDON) --- Darfur rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) said today they will not attack Chinese peacekeepers that arrived recently in war-torn region; and this despite their hostile position towards China's participation in the Hybrid Operation.

Last Sunday JEM leader, Khalil Ibrahim, told Reuters that Chinese are not welcome. He also said they would not allow them to come into areas under JEM control.

Ahmed Hussein Adam, the spokesperson of the JEM, on Tuesday reiterated to Sudan Tribune that despite the rejection of Darfur people to the presence of the Chinese troops in the region; his movement would not attack them.

"In spite of the fact that Darfur people do not welcome the Chinese troops who are the main ally of Khartoum government and its principle provider of weapons, we will not target the Chinese peacekeepers." JEM spokesperson said.

Ahmed underlined that these troops are there under UN mandate.

"We would not attempt by military means to prevent it from discharging its duties under the mandate of the Security Council and specifically resolution 1679 adopted on July 31." He pointed.

(ST)

Britain calls on UN Security Council to address Darfur ICC arrest warrants

By: Wasil Ali, November 27, 2007 (UNITED NATIONS) — A senior British official called on the UN Security Council (UNSC) to address the issue of the outstanding arrest warrants against two Sudanese accused of war crimes in war ravaged region of Darfur.

The UK envoy at the UNSC John Sawers, told the council members that "peace in Darfur also depends on ending the culture of impunity. We look on the government of

Sudan to respect its obligations under resolution 1593 and carry out the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrants.”

The UNSC listened yesterday to two reports from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guehenno as well as U.N. special envoy for Darfur Jan Eliasson.

“It is frankly an insult to the UNSC that one of the indictees charged with crimes against humanity in Darfur has been appointed a minister in the Sudanese government” Sawers said.

The UK diplomat suggested that it may be time for the UNSC to act on the issue.

“I am concerned that when the prosecutor of the ICC reports to the UNSC next month, he will have little positive to say and we will have to address that” he added.

The remarks by the British official signals the first time that a UNSC member calls for action on the ICC arrest warrants since the prosecutor addressed the council last June.

(ST)