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(By Public Information Office)

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Highlights

UN/ Agencies

Eliasson calls for creating environment conducive for peace talks

(*Sudan National Radio, Sudan Tribune, Alsaahafa, AP, Reuter*) UN Representative to Sudan, Jan Eliasson has said it was necessary for preparing the ground for the talks between the government and Darfur rebels rejecting Abuja Peace Agreement scheduled for 27 October in Tripoli.

After holding talks with Foreign Minister Dr Lam Akol, he said a meeting will be held in Addis Ababa between AU mediators and UN in the coming days to discuss the required preparations for the Tripoli talks.

No security in Darfur without peace - UNHCR

(*SudanTribune.com – 6 Oct. GENEVA*) The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, warns that thousands of African Union and UN peacekeepers will be unable to guarantee security in Sudan's conflict-ridden province of Darfur without a comprehensive peace agreement.

He says the international community must pressure Sudan's government and the rebel movements in Darfur to negotiate in good faith when peace talks open later this month.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, says he is pleased that Sudan has signed on to a UN Security Council decision to send thousands of peacekeepers to the region. A 26,000 strong hybrid force composed of African Union and United Nations soldiers is to go to Darfur early next year.

But, Guterres says Darfur has many complex problems. He says it will be difficult for the peacekeepers to fully deliver security in Darfur if there is no peace agreement.

"That is why we are, I would say, desperately willing that these peace negotiations come to a positive result, outcome," he said. "Because without a meaningful, comprehensive peace agreement between the government of Khartoum and the

relevant groups acting in the region, rebel groups acting in the region, it will be very difficult even for a peace force to be able to guarantee the security of the people."

Guterres says he understands the complications, but that everything must be done to bring the warring factions together around the negotiating table.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

SPLM establishes committee for managing crisis with NCP

(*AlRai AlAam, Alwan, AlWatan*) the meeting of the SPLM Politburo in Juba has yesterday resolved to set up three committees for SPLM-NCP crisis management, population census and elections. Speaking to the press yesterday the SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum said the meeting has agreed on a number of important decisions on the SPLM-NCP partnership, population census, and democratic transformation. The SPLM has the view that the relationship between SPLM and NCP is deteriorating, a situation which may result in a national crisis that threatens peace, democratic transformation and national unity. According to Amum, the SPLM will hold its general conference on February 2008.

The SPLM Secretary General said that the Government of National Unity (GoNU) has not met its commitment to provide funding for the population census. THE population census centre, he explained, has received less than 60% of the required budget. This has forced the GOSS, despite its limited resources, to allocate some money for the centre in order to continue preparations for the population census.

The FVP and President of the GoSS, Salva Kiir, issued a decree naming fifteen additional members in SPLM Politburo.

According to unconfirmed reports Dr. Lam Akol may loose his membership in SPLM, Pagan Amum, who may be replaced by Tilar Deng, will be appointed in an executive position.

Reports on SAF attack on Jabal Karro area

(*AlAyam*) SLM/A Abdel Wahid said that it has defeated SAF after it suffered heavy losses in fighting between the two parties at Jabal Karro area (70 km west El Fasher).

Shemeila: arming Arab tribes in Southern Kordofan continues

(*AlAyam*) The SPLM Chairman of the National Assembly (NA) committee on tourism and environment, Ramadan Shemeila, told AlAyam that he has received confirmed reports on distribution of ammunition and arms in the area which has witnessed the recent bloody clashes between the Miseriya and Nuba tribes. Shemeila warn of danger of arming the Arab tribes in the State.

Preparations for Tripoli meeting

(*AlRai AlAam*) Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismael will leave today to Tripoli on a two day visit to deliver message from Al Bashir to Gadaffi. Ismael said his visit will give him a good opportunity to discuss preparations for the peace talks.

Meanwhile the envoy of the UN Secretary General for Darfur Jan Eliasson , said during the next few days Tripoli will host a preparatory meeting which would continue for a couple of days.

In Cairo, The DPA non- signatory rebel groups will hold a big meeting on Monday. The meeting will be attended by some Egyptians officials. According to Jammali Hassan Jalal El Din of Justice and Equality Movement the meeting will discuss preparations for Tripoli meeting and agreeing on a joint team representing the rebel movements for the peace talks.

Sudan urges US to press Darfur rebels to last chance talks

(*SudanTribune.com* – 6 Oct. KHARTOUM) Sudan has requested the US Administration to send a clear message to rebel groups that Tripoli talks represent the last time to discuss the end of the four year-crisis in western Sudan region of Darfur.

Sudanese Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail delivered the demand to the U.S. side as receiving the US president envoy for Sudan, Andrew Natsios.

Ismail said he "asked the U.S. administration to send a clear message to the Darfur rebel movements that the coming round of peace talks would be the last chance for returning Darfur to its normal status." The official SUNA reported.

He added that the internal, regional and international atmosphere was ready and encouraging for the success of the upcoming negotiations despite the fact that "some elements were trying to obstruct the peace efforts and foil the negotiations."

The Sudanese official said he also asked the American envoy to make more contacts with the Darfur rebels to ensure that the largest possible number of rebel factions would take part in the negotiations.

US says troubled by deterioration of North-South Sudan relations

(*SudanTribune.com* – *AlAyam, AlSudani, AlSahafa*) A U.S. envoy warned Saturday that Sudan could fall back into civil war if it does not live up to a peace deal in the south. Many say the region must remain stable if the country hopes to resolve a separate conflict in western Darfur.

Andrew Natsios, the White House's special envoy to Sudan, said he was "deeply concerned with the health" of the 2005 peace agreement that ended two decades of civil war between the Arab-dominated, Muslim central government and Christian and animist black southerners.

"We are deeply concerned with the health of the comprehensive peace agreement (CPA)," Natsios told reporters after a 10-day trip to Sudan.

"The current political atmosphere is poisonous ... this war of words has to stop," he added. He was referring to southern and northern officials using the media to accuse each other of failing to implement key clauses.

Last month South Sudan President Salva Kiir warned of a possible return to war if the deal was not implemented.

He cited the failure to set the border between north and south, share the oil wealth and pass key laws. The most serious danger, he said, is the militarization of the contested areas around Sudan's oil fields, where neither the government nor southerners have followed their pledges to pull out troops.

"Tensions are rising, this is dangerous," Natsios told reporters in the capital, Khartoum, ending a 10-day visit to Sudan that brought him both to the south and Darfur. "The risk of a clash is high."

Natsios added key protocols on demarcating the borders of the oil-rich contested Abyei region and mapping the north-south border needed to be resolved and offered U.S. help if needed.

But he said the partners needed to engage with one another to overcome the final obstacles to the deal.

"I've talked to both sides and urged them to step back from this spiralling public rhetoric," he said. "In private it's very acrimonious, poisonous is the word."

"The people who are supposed to carry out the peace agreement are going to be likely opponents in the elections that are to be held in early 2009," he said.

International observers have warned in recent months that the problems in the south have been overshadowed by the crisis in Darfur.

If war with the south breaks out again, some fear the government could free up its regular troops by granting more leeway to Arab janjaweed militias blamed for many of the atrocities in Darfur. The government denies backing the militias.

The renewed concern comes amid international hopes for a turning point in Darfur. Negotiations between the government and Darfur rebels are to be held in Libya later this month, though some rebels leaders are refusing to attend. The U.N. and African Union, meanwhile, are preparing to send a joint force of 26,000 peacekeepers to replace a smaller, beleaguered AU mission in Darfur.

In the south, fighting broke out last year in the contested town of Malakal, killing more than 150 people over two days before the U.N. intervened. The world body has a 10,000-strong peacekeeping mission in southern Sudan.

Another contested town, Abyei, which lies close to important oil reserves, is considered a powder keg since Khartoum rejected the borders drawn up by an international commission.

"It appears that there is a stalemate," said Natsios, who visited Abyei during his trip.

The peace pact is a complex, multistage agreement and many key deadlines have not been met, Natsios said. He said the north and south have ceased cooperating to solve problems.

A key difficulty, he said, is that while the ruling party in Khartoum and the southerners should be partners in the peace deal, they are also set to face off in the country's general elections scheduled for early 2009.

"I urged them to end the spiraling public rhetoric," Natsios said in an apparent reference to Vice President Salva Kiir, the head of south Sudan's government, who recently warned in a speech that war would resume.

"In private, it's even more acrimonious," said Natsios, who met with both leaderships during his trip.

Natsios said many aspects of the 2005 agreement have nonetheless been successful, and the southerners were enjoying improvements they had not seen for decades. "The terrible bloodshed — even worse than Darfur — has stopped," he said, stating the U.S. and the international community were willing to "help in any way" to prevent it from resuming.

Sudan is responsible for the "crime against humanity" - US Carter

(*SudanTribune.com* – 4 Oct. KHARTOUM) Foreign visitors usually speak cautiously about Darfur's misery while on Sudanese territory to avoid irking the government.

But the group of prominent personalities including former statesmen and international officials was sharp and direct in closing comments after a two-day tour of Darfur. Their visit was the debut mission of a group of "Elders" chaired by former South African president Nelson Mandela who are trying to use their influence to bring peace to conflict zones. Mandela was too frail to join the trip.

In an AP interview, Carter said the Sudanese government was responsible for the "crime against humanity" in Darfur, accusing government-backed Arab militias known as the janjaweed of "ethnic cleansing" in black villages.

Carter, 83, got in a fight with the head of national security in the town of Kabkabiya on Wednesday because he was being blocked from meeting any of the ethnic African refugees, and his security entourage urged him to let the feared state police have their way. His delegation struck a sharp tone at a news conference with Sudanese journalists in Khartoum early Thursday. Carter urged the government to cease air raids on Darfur civilians.

Sudan: Peace partners resorting to cold war tactics - opposition leader

(BBC Monitoring) The chairman of the [opposition] Umma National Party, Al Sadiq Al Mahdi, has urged the signatories of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to rely on sound judgment in their relations in order to avoid dangers and foreign dependency.

Al Mahdi told Akhir Lahzah that both the [ruling] National Congress Party and the SPLM realized that what was needed was neither short-lived solutions nor dependence from foreign views.

He stressed that the two parties should rely on a national consensus and hold an all-inclusive conference, where all Sudanese people would participate. This, he said, was the only guarantee for Sudan's peace and stability. He added that the two parties were standing at opposite ends and were resorting to cold war tactics, pointing out that the Naivasha accord had been extremely superficial and relied on partnership and foreign blessing.

He explained that all attempts to compensate for the weakness [of the agreement] through short-lived solutions had failed and the only way out was to hold an all-inclusive Sudan-Sudan conference.

Source: Akhir Lahzah, Khartoum, in Arabic 6 Oct 07

GoSS

Shilluk Congress wants Amum Replaced

(Sudan Vision) The Shilluk community appeal to members of SPLM leadership council to nominate a secretary general who would contribute positively to the implementation of the peace agreement prompted President Kiir to allow SPLM leaders to contest for the post of secretary general, a press release issued by the Shilluk International Congress (SIC) said.

The press release maintained that since his nomination as SPLM Secretary General, Pagan Amum has demonstrated administrative weakness, political blunders and erratic behavior. It contended that his leadership is marked by unethical and emotional outbursts which caused a lot of damage to the SPLM in the North where he is known in the Arabic media as an inconsistent politician who breathes out racial insults against the Arab minority in Sudan, accusing Amum of being both a drunkard and a womanizer.

Amum was further accused of being unprofessional in his dealings with the NCP, giving the impression that the SPLM is a racist party.

The Secretariat of the Shilluk International Congress (SIC) urged the SPLM leadership council to nominate a candidate irrespective to tribal interests and loyalties, arguing that " it is better for SPLM to have a secretary general who is a Dinka than a Shilluk who scares Northerners away", stressing that the SPLM will need northern votes to win the 2009 elections because " any individual who chases northern Sudanese away is more dangerous than the SPLM's adversaries.

Meanwhile, the Union of Nuer Community in North America (UNCONA), declared their support of Telar Reng Deng's contest for the post of SPLM Secretary General for various reasons, namely because he is a liberal person who believes in Western-style democracy, an easy-going and open-minded fellow who can promote the South-South dialogue.

In a similar press release they issued, UNCONA advocated Telar as the best candidate who could approach problems of the South through the lenses of human rights and disarmament in the South. Telar was described as the most competent candidate to formulate policies which shall bring lasting peace in the South as compared to other candidates who are inferior with respect to experience of the South-South dialogue.

SPLM is prepared for election and will be mobilizing its grass roots, Pagan Amum said

(The Citizen) The upcoming population census in the Sudan will include ethnicity and religion to reflect the diversity of the Sudanese society, stated Secretary General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement Pagan Amum yesterday.

The announcement comes just a week after Government of Southern Sudan President Salva Kiir warned that South Sudan could be cheated of its population borders remain unmarked. Last Friday Amum accused the National Congress Party –led government of delaying the process of funding census institutions.

Speaking to journalists Friday after the last session of the two-day SPLM Political Bureau meeting, Amum said electoral committees would be established at national, Southern Sudan and state levels by the SPLM to grip its stand to win the upcoming 2009 general elections. "SPLM is prepared for elections and will be mobilizing its grass roots" he said.

Southern Sudan state prepares for census

(BBC Monitoring) "The Ministry of Education is concerned with the census education and advocacy so that people become aware of it earlier, before census could start," Ms Mapur said, adding that this will enable people "to know the importance of the census so that they contribute and support the census process." "They also have some traditional cultural concepts that people should not be counted, they don't feel good because they think when children are counted some of them may die."

Other erroneous popular beliefs are "related to taxation," the Lakes State Minister of Information said. "When people are counted the government wants to tax them." In Lakes State, the mapping exercise is at the finishing though it was badly affected by the recent floods that hit the state.

Source: Miraya FM website, Juba, in English - 5 Oct 07

Kiir Adds 15 members to SPLM politburo

(AlSudani, Sudan Tribune) Chairman of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, Let. Gen. Salva Kiir yesterday in exercise of powers conferred upon him under article 19 of the

SPLM Interim Basic Rules and Regulations, 2006 and based on resolutions of Interim National Council in Yei and Juba and upon the recommendations of the SPLM Secretary General, issued a decree appointing 15 members by to the SPLM Interim Political Bureau with effect from 1st October 2007.

New South Sudan front denounces CPA, wants talks with Khartoum

(*SudanTribune.com* – 6 Oct. WASHINGTON) A newly formed political front denounced the "tribalisation colonization" of the government of southern Sudan, saying it would hold talks with Khartoum to realize a "real" peace between northern and southern Sudan.

The Southern Sudan Liberation Front in a press statement denounced the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed between the National Congress Party and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in January 2007.

The SSLF described the CPA as "dead" because it led to the "marginalization of many Sudanese tribes and also exclusion of many political and multi-armed forces from the signing of the (CPA)."

The chairman of the front, Yien Lam Tot who was the former Secretary for Foreign Affairs of South Sudan United Democratic Alliance (SSUDA), added that the armed wing of the SSLF will not redeploy to northern Sudan as it is stipulated in the CPA..

The "United Armed Forces for the Liberation of Southern Sudan (UAFLSS), will not be redeployed into Northern Sudan because the liberation of Southern Sudan and its people from (SPLA/SPLM) is still going on." He said.

The deployment of the Sudan Armed Forces from the oil rich Upper Nile is one of the pending issues in the implementation of the CPA. While the SPLA says local militias are part of the SAF, Khartoum denies their affiliation to the SAF indicating that all the Khartoum backed militia are disbanded or redeployed into northern Sudan.

This move shows more fragmentation among the former armed groups in southern Sudan since the disbanding of the main faction of South Sudan Defence Force (SSDF) of Paulino Matip and its integration in the SPLA in January 2006.

Arab league Musa, GoSS's Permena discuss South Sudan development

(*SudanTribune.com* – 6 Oct. CAIRO) The Arab League Secretary General and GoSS Head of Mission discussed in a meeting today the role of Arab League and Arab investors in the post-war construction, development and training of the southern Sudan diplomats and cadres in the various fields that south Sudan needs badly.

Amr Musa, Secretary General of Arab League met on Thursday October 4, at his office Permena Makueta, GoSS Head of Mission. The two sides discussed Naivasha peace implementation process and the obstacles which require genuine approach and commitment of the peace partners to resolve the outstanding issues amicably.

The League of Arab Nations offered to train in Egypt Southern Sudanese diplomats, clerks, artisans and other various vocational training opportunities to equip the South Sudanese people to participate positively in the development of their country.

The Arab League Secretary General said there is going to convene in Southern Sudan capital Juba, investment conference between December 2007 and February 2008, which will accommodate all the Arab investors to explore by themselves investment opportunities in south. And on the other he expressed his desire of acquiring piece of land in Juba to be the headquarters of the League of Arab Nations in southern Sudan.

South Sudan to open first Game Park next year

(*SudanTribune.com* – 6 Oct. JUBA, Sudan) South Sudan will invite bidders to run its first game park hotel set in the elephant-rich area of Nimule on the border with Uganda, the Wildlife Ministry's director-general for tourism said.

Joseph Oroti said they had almost completed the renovation of a 42-bed lodge set on a hill with views over the White Nile's sweeping entrance from Uganda to Sudan where some 50 herds of elephants drink.

"We will invite bidders from the private sector to run it," said Oroti about the lodge set in the 410 sq km Nimule Park, which was established in colonial Sudan in 1939 because of its rolling landscape and exceptional fauna. "Phase one, the renovation, is almost completed," Oroti said. "We should see the first clients by next April."

Decades of civil conflict that ended with a 2005 peace deal meant that while tourism in neighboring Kenya and Uganda has boomed, south Sudan has been a no-go area.

South Sudan hires British firm to probe corruption

(*SudanTribune.com* – 4 Oct. JUBA, Sudan) South Sudan has signed up a British accounting firm to help it conduct its first ever audit, to shed light on possible corruption in the semi-autonomous region formed after a 2005 north-south peace deal.

The audit will investigate how \$500 million of reserve money was spent without parliamentary approval in 2006, south Sudan's Auditor General Barnabas Majok told Reuters. The government's total budget for that year was \$1.4 billion, he said.

"We will work with (accounting firm) PKF in coordination with the national audit chambers in the UK," Majok said on Wednesday. "They will provide technical support for three years for about \$9 million."

A June investigation by the government's Anti-Corruption Commission found "dramatic over-expenditure," Majok said. "The Ministry of Finance was operating without procedures," said Majok. "There were incidences of some ministries contracting more than was in their budget."

The Anti-Corruption Commission has been unable to act on the charges because a law has not been passed to govern it, its head Pauline Riak said. South Sudan pumps about 500,000 barrels per day of crude, which accounts for about 95 percent of its revenue.

Fuel crisis hits southern Sudan

(BBC Monitoring) Juba town [the capital of southern Sudan] is suffering from a critical petrol crisis. Price of one gallon of petrol is going at 40 Sudanese Pounds [20 US dollars]. Sources from Juba told AlSahafa that Ugandan traders were the only ones monopolizing and controlling petrol in the town which is enraging the citizens.

The sources attributed the crisis to the cessation of supplies from the north which left Juba at the mercy of petrol supplies imported from neighboring Uganda. They further confirmed that petrol is only available on the black market.

Source: AlSahafa, Khartoum, in Arabic 5 Oct 07

Ugandan opposition accused of damaging ties with southern Sudan

(BBC Monitoring) The President of the government of South Sudan has accused Ugandan opposition groups of attempting to mess up the relationship of South Sudan and Uganda.

Speaking during the opening of a fifth conference of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM) interim political bureau in Juba, President Salva Kiir said south Sudan is experiencing security problems along its borders with Uganda.

He said that oppositions groups in Uganda were using such incidences to ruin the relation between the two countries. Mr. Kiir said the situation was blown out of proportion by the media.

Salva Kiir also noted that the SPLM is experiencing unfriendly working relationships between chairpersons and secretaries of the movement in the States of the country.

He called upon the SPLM secretariat to find a mechanism of resolving the problem. He further called for an end to a continued demand within the movement for changing the states' governors. He said the SPLM secretariat should be the only body to assess whether changes at any stage government were necessary.

The two days meeting is expected to review the working relationship between the SPLM and the [ruling] National Congress Party and recommend resolution on how to handle the worsening relations between them.

Source: Miraya FM website, Juba, in English - 5 Oct 07

Problems within SPLM in Gadarif

(Alwan) reported that the SPLM in Gadarif is facing a conflict between the SPLM Minister of Health in the State Government and a number of leaders who criticize the Minister's performance.

Darfur

We want African troops out of Darfur SLM Spokesperson ElHaj says

(The Citizen) Speaking to The Citizen from Paris, the Chairman of SLM Abdul Wahid Nur refuted the news published on media yesterday that the French government is looking for a way to expel him from Paris.

He said “The Khartoum Regime, after it has been military, politically and diplomatically defeated, it lost self control. Therefore, it’s creating lies that the French Government is looking forward to expel me from France”

Meanwhile the spokesperson of the SLM non-signatory faction led by Issam Edin Alhaj in released statement said that his faction rejects compensation and demands the immediate removal of African Union troops from Darfur. The statement further said that the African Union lacks the capacity to protect anything on the ground in Darfur.

The statement rejected the idea of African Union asking help from Government troops which include Janjaweed and other militias accused of committing genocide and entering lands controlled by the faction, is considered a new alliance between the African Union and the Government of Sudan.

SLM Minawi ready to offer positions for the sake of peace

(*AlIntibaha*) SLA-Minnawi spokesperson Al Tayeb Khamis said his movement is prepared to offer many of its constitutional and executive positions to other rebel groups for the sake of peace on Darfur. He said Tripoli talks could be a positive development for solving Darfur problem if attended by all DPA non-signatories.

JEM leader wants Darfur talks only with govt and united SLM

(*SudanTribune.com, AlRai AlAam*) A key Darfur rebel leader warned Saturday his movement will not attend peace talks this month in Libya unless the U.N. and the African Union can convince a rival group to unite its splinter factions.

Khalil Ibrahim, leader of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), had said he would attend talks set to begin Oct. 27 in Tripoli, Libya, to end four years of bloodshed between rebels and the Sudanese government.

But Ibrahim said he would stay away from the talks unless the rival Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) united its multiple factions ahead of the talks. "There must be only three sides in Tripoli: JEM, SLA, and the (Sudanese) government," Ibrahim told The Associated Press by satellite phone from Darfur.

Ibrahim said U.N. and African Union mediators were lagging behind schedule in organizing the talks and determining what groups should attend. Ibrahim said is movement would not negotiate with multiple factions that have limited support.

Nigeria buries troops killed in Darfur attack

(*SudanTribune.com – 5 Oct. ABUJA, Nigeria*) A small girl in a tulip-yellow dress, tears gathering along her quivering chin, sobbed before the newly filled grave of a Nigerian soldier killed in the deadliest attack on peacekeepers trying to calm Sudan’s Darfur region.

Mourners at Friday’s military funeral — colleagues and relatives of seven Nigerians killed in a weekend attack by Darfur rebels — vowed Nigeria would continue a long history of sending its sons and daughters to try to secure peace across the world’s poorest continent.

"This is the sacrifice Nigeria is making for the world. We must view it as a badge of honor," President Umaru Yar'Adua said in remarks delivered at the funeral by an aide. "There is no sacrifice Nigeria won't make for the African man, the black man," said Yar'Adua, who was traveling abroad Friday.

The Muslim soldiers were taken out of their caskets and placed into the ground by hand, following Islamic custom, while the coffins of the Christian troops were lowered by ropes.

Agwai Vows to Fish out Killers of AU Soldiers

(*All Africa Global Media Date*— 5 Oct. ABUJA, Nigeria) (This Day) -- Force Commander of the AU-UN hybrid force in Sudan, General Martin Luther Agwai, has vowed to fish out killers of the seven Nigerian soldiers killed in Darfur.

Agwai said this at a brief ceremony at the African (Union) Mission in Sudan (AMIS) Forward Headquarters, El Fasher, Northern Darfur, where officials of the continental peace-keeping body joined their counterparts from the United Nations to bid farewell to the dead. Agwai warned in his tribute "the perpetrators of this heinous crime must be brought to justice, knowing that the blood of the peacekeepers was not shed in vain.

Sudanese army hunts down AU mission attackers

(*BBC Monitoring*) The Sudanese Armed Forces announced that they had recovered vehicles and other lost property and arrested a number of attackers involved in the recent raid on AU forces in Haskanita after a massive search operation conducted in the area. They denied allegations by the rebels that civilians had been targeted or killed in the process.

In a statement to Al-Sahafa yesterday, an official from the office of the Armed Forces' spokesman said all missing AU troops had been located. Eighteen AU mission vehicles as well as weapons and possessions stolen by the rebels had been reclaimed. He indicated that all the perpetrators were bandits and the search operation was still under way in order to seize the rest of them. He termed the rebel [movements'] talk of a campaign with Janjaweed support as exaggeration.

Source: AlSahafa, Khartoum, in Arabic 6 Oct 07

Nigerian peacekeepers to deploy in Darfur's Haskanita Monday

(*SudanTribune.com* – 6 Oct. ABUJA) Nigerian troops serving in an African Union (AU) force in Darfur will move back next week into the position where seven of their soldiers were killed in a rebel attack, a top general said Friday.

"To show our resolve, by Monday Nigeria will go back to occupy the position at Haskanita with strength, daring whomsoever to attack us again," Defence chief General Andrew Owoye Azazi said.

The seven Nigerians were among 10 AU soldiers killed last Saturday by rebel forces in the troubled region of western Sudan. "We promise that the circumstances of the death

of our colleagues will always give us more resolve. Wherever Nigeria sends us we will go," the general said, speaking at the state burial of the seven soldiers killed.

Rebel JEM says Sudan army and militia behind Darfur attack

(*SudanTribune.com* – 5 Oct.) Sudanese government forces and militia groups razed a town in central Darfur where African Union soldiers were attacked, rebel leaders said on Friday, adding the troops were also threatening to raid a nearby town.

Sudan's army and Darfur rebel movements blame each other for last week's assault on the AU base in Haskanita in which 10 African Union soldiers were killed — the worst attack on AU troops since they deployed in Sudan.

On Friday rebel leaders said at least 100 people have been killed and thousands displaced in Haskanita since Wednesday by the Sudanese army and pro-government Janjaweed militia forces.

The figures could not be verified and Sudanese military spokesmen could not be reached for comment. AU forces have evacuated the area.

"They have burned down the whole village, not leaving a single hut," Abdel Aziz el-Nur Ashr, commander of the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), told Reuters by telephone. "Not less than 100 have been killed." As of Friday morning, government forces were still burning and looting parts of Haskanita, said Bahr Idriss Abu Garda, leader of a breakaway faction of JEM.

About 800 government and Janjaweed militia soldiers were moving toward the town of Andrav, 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Haskanita, Ashr said. "They are on their way to attack Andrav and they could reach it by evening," he said.

Meanwhile Sudan says rebel JEM responsible for Haskanita attack

(*SudanTribune.com* – 4 Oct. ABUJA) Sudanese Deputy Head of Mission in Nigeria, Kamal Ismael, alleged on Thursday in Nigerian capital Abuja that the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) was responsible for Sunday's killing of seven Nigerian troops in Darfur, Sudan.

He noted that though JEM had denied responsibility, information at the Sudanese government's disposal indicated that it was fully involved in the "barbaric and condemnable act." Ismael described the killings as an act of terrorism and called on peace lovers all over the world to condemn it. The envoy expressed displeasure at the posture of the international community since the killings took place and accused it of bias.

AU refutes criticisms on Sudan's intervention to rescue peacekeepers

(*SudanTribune.com* – 5 Oct. KHARTOUM) African Mission in Sudan (AMIS) refuted criticisms following the intervention of the Sudanese army to rescue African peacekeepers. It recalled that such cooperation does not alter the neutrality of the African peacekeeping mission.

The spokesperson of the AMIS, Nouredine Mezni, stated today that the African mission is a "neutral peacekeeping Mission. As such, AMIS did call on the Government of the Sudan to secure the area around the AMIS Military Group Site in Haskanita immediately following the attack of 29 September, 2007."

Mezni made this clarification of the AMIS position following reports that criticized the African mission in Darfur for requesting the support of the Sudanese army to rescue its personnel when unidentified force attacked its position in Haskanita on September 29.

Norwegian-Swedish troop contribution to Darfur welcomed

(*SudanTribune.com* – 6 Oct. STOCKHOLM) The United Nations and the African Union (AU) have notified Norway that they gratefully accept the offer by Norway and Sweden to provide an engineer unit for the UN/AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), said reports reaching here from Oslo on Saturday.

The UN and the AU will also notify the Sudanese authorities of the decision, Norwegian Broadcasting (NRK) reported.

The Norwegian-Swedish unit will consist of up to 400 personnel. UNAMID will have a total staff of around 26,000, comprising 19,500 military personnel and 6,400 police officers. Norway will also be contributing police officers to UNAMID. The Norwegian-Swedish unit is expected to be deployed in Darfur for 12 months. Engineering resources will be provided to enable the unit to provide effective support to UNAMID.

Ethiopia pledges 5,000 peacekeepers to Darfur mission

(*SudanTribune.com* – 4 Oct. KHARTOUM) Ethiopia on Thursday said it will contribute 5,000 troops to the proposed 26,000 joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping force in Sudan's war torn Darfur region.

"Ethiopia is ready, the troops are equipped, and we are waiting for a request from the AU and the United Nations to disperse the troops to Darfur," Prime Minister Meles Zenawi told in a news conference with visiting German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The 26,000-strong joint mission is to replace a hard-pressed AU force that lacks experience, equipment and cash and has been unable to stop the conflict.

France mulls possible expulsion of Darfur rebel leader

(*BBC Monitoring*) France is wondering about a possible expulsion from its territory of a Darfur (western Sudan) rebel leader, Abd-al-Wahid Muhammad [Ahmad] Nur, who refuses to take part in peace talks, Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said on Thursday [4 October].

Last week the head of the Arab League, Amr Musa, described peace negotiations between the Sudanese government and Darfur rebels planned for 27 October in Tripoli as "decisive".

He explained that "10 presidents have gone to see Abd-al-Wahid Muhammad Nur" to try to convince him, including "all southern (Sudanese) leaders". "The most recent one

is (Senegalese) President (Abdoulaye) Wade. The UN has come, everybody is trying, but he doesn't want to," Mr. Kouchner continued.

At the beginning of August, France said it had made "numerous efforts" to persuade Abd-al-Wahid Muhammad Nur to take part in the talks, in response to severe criticism from Sudan. According to people close to him, the founder of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) has been living in France for the last nine months.

Source: AFP news agency, Paris, in French - 4 Oct 07

Eritrea: A refuge for Darfur rebels

(SudanTribune.com – 6 Oct. ASMARA, Eritrea) An alliance of rebel leaders from Darfur said Thursday that it needed more time to heal internal splits, and that unless something changed quickly, the much anticipated peace talks scheduled for later this month would probably fail. Khamis Abdullah Abakar, chairman of the United Front for Liberation and Development, an umbrella group of several Darfur rebel factions, said, "We are trying to consult with each other, but there are still serious divisions."

In the past few months, Eritrea has opened its doors to rebel commanders from its neighbors, especially Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia, which is part of the reason American officials are alarmed. The State Department says Eritrea has been shipping arms to Islamist fighters in Somalia, an allegation that the Eritrean government denies. At the same time, American diplomats have been quietly working with the Eritreans to push Darfur's ever expanding galaxy of rebel groups to peace talks scheduled for the end of October in Libya.

African Union officials said Eritrea wields even more influence in Darfur, because of its longstanding contacts with the rebel groups there. The Eritreans "have control over some of these movements," said Sam Ibok, a senior adviser of the African Union. "And the Eritreans have played a constructive role."

Foreign envoys to arrive in Sudan to push Darfur peace talks

(BBC Monitoring) Envoys from the neighboring countries and the international community will in the coming days arrive in Sudan as part of ongoing efforts to push the forthcoming Tripoli talks between the government and the Darfur holdout groups.

Meanwhile, the government, the Darfur people, the regional states and the international community are still trying to persuade all factions to attend the Libyan talks so as to make them a success.

Source: Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic - 6 Oct 07