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(By Public Information Office)

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United Nations

SRSG Pronk says some Sudanese soldiers have no interest in fighting in Darfur; SAF describes his statements as hostile*

(*AlAyaam; AlRai AlAam et al*) The latest report on SRSG Pronk's weblog (www.janpronk.nl) has drawn strong criticism from the SAF.

The SAF has described as "hostile" Mr. Pronk's report that some Sudanese soldiers have lost interest in fighting in Darfur following the recent defeat they suffered at the hands of the NRF in Kariyari and Oum Sidir and the reports of hundreds of SAF soldiers killed.

In his report, Mr. Pronk said that Janjaweed militias moved in to reinforce the SAF (a violation of United Nations resolutions) and that the SAF responded to these defeats by sending in more forces and equipment to the region.

Pronk also said Chad is now playing a bigger role in the conflict with Chadian rebels fighting alongside the SAF while the Chadian government supports the Sudanese rebel forces.

A SAF spokesman has described Mr. Pronk's report as "hostile" and accuses Pronk of trying to sow sedition within a united SAF.

The SAF points out that Mr. Pronk is not responsible for evaluating the performance of the SAF.

The spokesman did agree that the Chadian government is backing Sudanese rebels and cites Kariyari as an example. He says the SAF will respond to such acts.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the SLA-Unity faction says that they had talks with Mr. Pronk yesterday and expressed commitment to the ceasefire agreement signed but reserve the right to self-defence.

He pointed out that the SAF still occupies el-Sayah and Kulkul in North Darfur and there are reports it is preparing to launch an attack on Kutum.

The spokesperson called for a withdrawal of the SAF from these areas.

** Full text of the report from www.janpronk.nl in a separate attachment*

UNHCR and NPA hand over Yei Civil Hospital to Bahr-el-Jebel government

(*Khartoum Monitor*) Authorities in Bahr-el-Jebel State have expressed their thanks and appreciation to the UNHCR and the Norwegian Peoples' Aid in Yei for their support of development programs in the country.

The GoSS health minister and the physical infrastructure engineer in the state were officiating at a handing over ceremony of the Yei Civil Hospital last Friday.

The hospital was being run by the UNHCR and the NPA.

FAO declares support to the “Green Campaign” in Sudan

(*Sudan Vision*) The Food and Agriculture Organisation has announced it would provide technical aid to support the programmes of the Green Campaign in Sudan as per the request of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Addressing Sudan celebrations of the World Food Day last Monday, the FAO Resident Representative referred to efforts being exerted to mobilize donor support for food security in Sudan and cited an EU contribution of 100 million euros for financing food security in the northern and southern states of Sudan in collaboration with the FAO.

United Nations and the Transition Debate

New Secretary-General of the UN calls for speedy deployment of UN forces to Darfur

Quoting “Agencies”, *AlIntibaha* daily says that the Secretary-General designate of the United Nations told United Nations radio yesterday that the Sudan government must allow a United Nations force into Darfur as soon as possible as stipulated by the UNSCR.

He expressed regret over the “negative measures” that the Sudan government is carrying out on the issue and said he would follow this issue closely with the members of the Security Council when he officially assumes his duties as Secretary-General and added that he would also hold direct talks with Sudan government officials should that be necessary. The new United Nations chief further said that should the need arise, he would appoint someone who is well-versed and experienced in African affairs as a special envoy for peacekeeping operations or African affairs.

Asked on why some UNSC resolutions on the Middle-East have not been implemented fully while all efforts are being made to implement other resolutions, the new chief said that it is a sorry state of affairs that he will do everything possible to alter once he takes over as Secretary-General.

President Bashir receives UK Benn, repeats UN forces rejection

(*Xinhua* – 17th Oct. **Khrt.**) Sudanese President Omer al-Bashir has reiterated his country's rejection of UN Security Council Resolution 1706 on the deployment of UN forces in Darfur, SUNA reported on Tuesday.

Al-Bashir reiterated the position during a meeting Monday evening with Hilary Benn, the British Secretary of State for International Development and the special envoy of the British for the peace in Sudan, the report said.

Sudanese Foreign Minister Lam Akol told reporters following the meeting that his country welcomes a UN role in supporting the AU peacekeeping forces in Darfur, referring to the government's cooperation with the international society to facilitate humanitarian operations in the region.

Akol noted Sudanese government was exerting efforts to implement the Darfur Peace Agreement it signed with a main rebel group in May, and to persuade the rebel groups which still refuse to accept the peace accord to join the peace process.

Before meeting with al-Bashir, Hilary Benn paid a short visit to Darfur in order to get acquainted with the security and humanitarian situation in the region.

European Union urges more diplomacy on Darfur

(Reuters – 17th Oct. **Luxembourg**) The European Union on Tuesday urged Sudan to stop the growing violence in Darfur but stopped short of threatening sanctions to force Khartoum to allow United Nations peacekeepers into the troubled region.

The Brussels-based International Crisis Group think tank said last week that diplomacy over Darfur had failed and the international community must now consider sanctions against Sudan to pressure it into accepting U.N. peacekeepers.

But on Tuesday the EU supported further diplomatic efforts to try to persuade Khartoum to accept U.N. peacekeepers.

"The (EU) Council emphasised that a U.N. operation is the only realistic option for a sustainable, long-term peacekeeping operation in Darfur," foreign ministers said in a statement adopted at their regular monthly meeting.

Ministers "called for an immediate end to the ongoing violation of human rights and international humanitarian law."

CPA

Governor of South Kordofan calls for disarmament of the PDF and the militias in the State

South Kordofan Ismail Jalaab has called for the disarmament of the PDF, Popular Police and the militias in the state as stipulated in the CPA in order to defuse the tensions in the area, *AlAyaam* reports.

He said that the disarmament process in South Kordofan State is being carried out in collaboration between the Government of South Kordofan State and the Northern Sudan DDR Commission and pointed out that the commission is weak due to the absence of the SPLA in its membership.

Of the security situation in the area, the governor said that the situation is calm following the return of the Central Reserve Forces from Diling after authorities agreed to pay their dues. He said the Central Reserve Forces had withdrawn earlier due to shortage in food and fuel but is now back.

GoNU

The GoSS in parliament

AlIntibaha: Yesterday the SPLM rejects the presidential decision restricting movement of US diplomats in Khartoum, Deputy Speaker Atim Garang says.

Deputy Speaker Garang who is also a prominent member of the SPLM said that the SPLM sees the decision as a “a useless diplomatic war”.

The government of Khartoum has the right to do what it wants but we all in the south reject this decision and will allow the Americans to live and work with us in the south, he added.

In another development, the same paper notes that the parliamentary committee evaluating the school curriculum has called upon the GoSS to ban the use of “imported” curricula and teachers from Uganda and Kenya to some southern Sudanese states.

AlRai AlAam reports meanwhile that Yassir Arman wants to resign as head of the SPLM caucus in the National Assembly – a position he has held since February 2005.

Speaking to Blue Nile Television, Arman said he has requested the SPLM leadership to relieve him of that position because he wants to focus his efforts to consolidating the SPLM’s Northern Sudan Chapter of which he is the acting head.

GoSS/ Southern Sudan

Monitors probe alleged Ugandan attack on LRA rebels

(*Reuters* – 17th Oct. **Juba**) An independent monitoring team set off on Tuesday to investigate Ugandan rebel claims they were attacked by Ugandan troops in southern Sudan, breaking a fragile truce aimed at ending one of Africa’s longest conflicts.

Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) guerrillas accused the military on Monday of ambushing their fighters at Birinyang, southeast of southern Sudan’s capital Juba, risking a restart of a 20-year war that killed tens of thousands and uprooted 1.7 million more.

A Ugandan military spokesman denied the charge.

Major-General Wilson Deng Kuoirot who leads the monitoring team did not give any more details, but his team is expected to report to mediators by early next week.

On Monday, the LRA said Ugandan troops deployed at Birinyang — once LRA leader Joseph Kony’s headquarters until it was smashed by Uganda’s military in July 2004 — had attacked a rebel group walking back to Owiny-Ki-Bul, badly injuring two.

"For how long shall we sit and talk while our soldiers are under attack?" asked Godrey Ayoo, an LRA spokesman in Juba.

Elsewhere, aides to Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni would not confirm or deny a local report that Museveni was planning to fly to Juba this weekend to join the talks in person.

Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement

Sudan says ready for talks with Darfur non-signatories

(*SudanTribune.com* – 17th Oct. **Khrt.**) The Sudanese president has expressed the readiness of his government to engage dialogue with Abuja non-signatories saying demands can be included in peace agreement by talks not arms.

He made this statement before the member of the National Commission for the Unity of the National Rank (NCUNR*).

A delegation of the NCUNR left Tuesday for Asmara, to meet the Eritrean president and the Darfur holdout groups.

The Spokesman of the NCUNR, Maj. Gen. Osman Abdallah, told the official SUNA that the delegation, which is headed by Mohamed Eissa, would meet the Eritrean President, Assias Afwerki and acquaint him on the tasks of the commission.

He said that the talks, which the delegation will hold with the non-signatories, will be under the sponsorship of the Eritrea government.

** More on the commission's recent activities in separate attachment*

OIC backs Sudan's steps to solve Darfur issue

(*Xinhua* – 17th Oct. **Khrt.**) Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu stressed on Tuesday the organization's support for the steps taken by Sudanese government to solve the crisis in the western Darfur region.

Following his talks in Khartoum with Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha and other senior Sudanese officials, Ihsanoglu told reporters that he was briefed on the reality of the situation in Darfur and efforts being exerted by the Sudanese government to ease the tension as well as the rehabilitation and re-construction works in the affected areas.

Describing the meetings as constructive and useful, he said that he had felt the sincere desire of the Sudanese government to achieve peace and stability in Darfur.

He announced that the OIC and the Sudanese government had agreed to continue bilateral dialogue and consultations regarding the role OIC could play to contribute to the peace process there.

Spokesman of the Sudanese Foreign Ministry Ali Sadig, on his part, praised the OIC's support for Sudan's position regarding recent international decisions especially the UN Security Council resolution 1706 calling for the deployment of international peacekeeping forces in Darfur, which has been refused by the Sudanese government.

He said that the OIC had issued a statement in which it announced the organization's support for the stay of the African Union (AU) forces in Darfur and its opposition to the transfer of the AU mission in the region to the UN without the Sudanese government's agreement.

Other Developments

Authorities muzzle the press over ban on some sports newspapers

AlAyaam reports that authorities have barred newspaper from reporting anything on the issue of the recent ban of some sports newspapers pending a final court ruling on the issue.

It is worth noting that the National Press & Publications Council had on Saturday issues recommendations to the competitive courts calling for a ban of some sports papers and a repeal of licence. The issue is still in court.

In another development, *AlAyaam* also reports that authorities stormed yesterday at Umma House in Omdurman where the Umma Party was marking the annual anniversary of some 28 officers sentenced to death some years previous and who are regarded as martyrs by the Umma Party.