



## UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

### UNMIS

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(By Public Information Office)

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# Highlights

## UN/Agencies

### **UN chief in Darfur urges political progress**

(Sudan Tribune) — U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited the Darfur region of western Sudan on Wednesday, promising to step up pressure for a political solution to the conflict.

Ban told journalists he would push for progress in peace talks between the Sudanese government and rebel groups, while laying the ground for deployment of a 26,000-strong "hybrid" force of U.N. and African Union peacekeepers.

"I am really going to step up this political negotiation process," Ban said just before arriving in El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur state.

"The hybrid troop process should be accompanied by a political process. Otherwise our peacekeepers or police or civilian workers will have a lot of difficulty in carrying out their roles," he said.

He added there had been some progress in organizing peace talks with Darfur's splintered rebel groups. "As far as the political negotiation process and coordination, we are coming close to agreeing on a venue and a date."

Ban met officials from the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), the force that will be replaced by the hybrid troops when they arrive. They said they briefed him on serious under-funding of the mission, adding that while the official strength of the African force in Darfur was 7,000, there were currently 5,915 troops on the ground.

Moon was handed a petition by a small group claiming to represent people displaced by the conflict, calling for Ban to support a government-backed policy to encourage displaced Darfuris to return to their villages.

Most displaced groups in Darfur have opposed this policy, saying continued hostilities would make returning too hazardous.

Ban was greeted at the airport by officials and a small group of women carrying banners urging rebel groups who refuse to sign up to last year's Darfur Peace Agreement to attend the coming negotiations.

Mohammed Elmi, Oxfam's regional programme manager, said: "One month after a UN Resolution called for an immediate cessation of hostilities, its demands are falling on deaf ears.

"If his visit is to be a success, the secretary-general must send an unequivocal message to those responsible that the violence and lawlessness in Darfur must end immediately."

Last week, Ban sketched out a three-point approach to Darfur: deployment of the 26,000 U.N. and African Union troops and police, approved by the Security Council in July, peace talks tentatively scheduled for October, and aid.

But these came against a background of reports of renewed conflict in the region.

### **UNMIS organizes training workshop on culture of peace**

*(AlWatan)* UNMIS organized this week a two-day awareness-raising workshop to a group of students representing various universities on the CPA and means of disseminating the culture of peace.

Chief of Special Media Campaigns at UNMIS Jordan Dakamseh said that the workshop was aimed at sensitizing the students with tactics of advocating for the objectives of disseminating the culture of peace in the whole country.

He resolved to continue convening similar workshops to strengthen the capacity-building of youth to play vital role in introducing the goals of the CPA and therefore the culture of peace to the grass-roots.

On their part, the students participating in the workshop highly commended the role being played by UNMIS in enlightening the population on the CPA.

### **UN Rapporteur on human rights calls on government to protect citizens affected by the construction of dams**

*(Alwan)* UN Rapporteur for Habitable Human Rights has expressed concern over the situation of the population affected by the construction of Merawi and Kajbar dams demanding the government to protect them.

He said that he received reports on the possibility of occurrence of compulsory and mass migration adding that increase of water level behind Merawi dam would have destroyed tens of houses.

He underlined that according to the international human rights conventions any implementation of projects should not be carried out without prior consultation with the would affected population

Thus, he noted, the international community considers the arbitrary migration as a violation to the human rights saying that the mass migration would be made in exceptional circumstances and in the context of the international conventions.

He appealed to the government to abide by the international rights conventions and pay due concern to agreed upon regulations to alleviate effects of such projects on human rights.

He called on Harbin, Chinese Company, Lahmeyer, a German Company and the Alstom French Company to halt operation pending conducting of fair evaluation on the effects of these projects on habitable human rights.

## **GoNU**

### **Minister of interior criticizes SPLM practices**

(*AlSahafa*) Interior Minister Prof. AL-Zabair Bashir Taha criticized practices of SPLM in the South displayed in arresting cadres of NCP.

Taha, who was addressing the 7th Consultative Forum of the NCP's Secretariat of Information and Technology, expressed the government's commitment to the signed agreements with previous rebel movements.

He asserted that all conspiracy and false allegations against Sudan were foiled.

## **GoSS**

### **Speaker of Unity State Legislative Assembly threatens to close down oil wells**

(*AlWatan*) Speaker of the Legislative Assembly at Unity State John Tab Malwal has threaten to close down oil fields in case the oil operating companies working in the State fail to provide the population in the state with basic services and specially in the roads field.

He disclosed that the State would enact a law committing the companies to construct a road linking Adok area with Deling, South Kordofan, stressing the wide spread of water pollution in the area.

## **Darfur**

### **SLM's Nur reiterates rejections to join peace process**

(*Alwan*) SLM Leader Abdulwahid Nur reiterated his rejection to join the peace negotiation between the government and other non-signatories movements, scheduled to take place mid next month.

Nur confirmed that he might change his mind if the situations were improved following the deployment of the hybrid forces by the end of this year.

Meanwhile, UN Special Envoy to Darfur Eliason described the situation as" so serious" and specially, he added, if we get acquainted with the conditions of the villages abandoned by their population.

### **Prominent women plead for action on Sudan's Darfur**

(*SudanTribune.com*) a group of prominent women urged the international community Wednesday to act quickly to deploy international peacekeepers to Sudan's troubled Darfur region.

They also called for an immediate cease-fire to end the violence that has killed an estimated 200,000 people and displaced another 2.5 million since 2003.

"In Darfur, we have seen a real human catastrophe," Somali lawmaker Asha Hagi Elmi Amin told journalists at a news conference in Paris. "It is high time for positive intervention to end that unacceptable situation."

The eight women, who included the former head of the United Nations' human rights agency, African officials and the singer Angelique Kidjo, visited two refugee camps in neighboring Chad earlier this week.

Under a recent U.N. Security Council resolution, a 26,000-strong joint peacekeeping force from the African Union and the United Nations is to be deployed to the region by the end of the year to replace the beleaguered 7,000-strong African Union mission now in Darfur.

The former U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, also a former president of Ireland, pressed for better logistical support of African Union troops currently on the ground in Darfur, saying it was "regrettable that the African Union force has been under-supported."

Bineta Diop, who heads the humanitarian aid group Femmes Africa Solidarite, said she was aware that the deployment of the hybrid force would take time and that an immediate cease-fire would be the best stopgap solution.

The violence in Darfur began after rebels took up arms against the Arab-speaking central government in 2003, accusing it of discrimination. The government is accused of having retaliated by unleashing Arab militias known as the janjaweed, who have been responsible for much of the violence.

The women spent three days at two refugee camps in neighboring Chad, one sheltering refugees from Darfur and the other Chadians displaced by the conflict. Members of the group said they had seen evidence supporting reports of widespread rape of Darfur women. "The rapes we hear about, it's true," said Diop.

Kidjo, an internationally acclaimed singer from the west African nation of Benin, told reporters the story of a woman she met at one of the camps.

"The janjaweed arrived. The first thing they did was to cut off the head" of the woman's baby, Kidjo said. "When we are mothers ... we think only of how to protect our child and when we can't do it, it's worse than rape because we lose all confidence in ourselves."

Kidjo said she was tired of empty promises by the world's politicians. It is time they "show their human side, that they feel close to these women, who could be their wives, their daughters or their mothers," she said.

## **Israel to grant citizenship to 300 Darfur Refugees – minister**

*(SudanTribune.com)* Israel will grant citizenship to some of the estimated 300 refugees from Sudan's blighted Darfur region who have already arrived here, Interior Minister Meir Sheerit said Wednesday.

Sheerit said he would work with the U.N. to set a quota of refugees who would be naturalized. While he estimates the number of Darfur refugees at 300, other government officials and refugee advocates have put the number at between 400 and 500.

Fighting between pro-government militias and rebels in the Western Sudanese region of Darfur has killed more than 200,000 people and displaced 2.5 million since February 2003.

The arrival in Israel of these displaced Darfurians has touched off hot debate over whether the Jewish state, founded after the Nazi genocide, has a duty to take in people fleeing persecution.

Human rights groups and high-profile figures like Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel have urged the Israeli government to give Darfurians a home.

Others say the Darfur refugees who have arrived in Israel are economic migrants because they already found sanctuary from Sudan in Egypt. They fear that accepting some refugees will lead to a flood of new arrivals.

Sheerit offered a middle ground.

"Israel, with its history, must offer assistance," he said. "It can't stand by and shut its eyes. But a quota must be set." It wasn't clear what would happen to those who don't receive citizenship.

Israel isn't a common destination for refugees, but the late Prime Minister Menachem Begin set a precedent in 1977 when he offered asylum to nearly 400 Vietnamese boat people.

The Darfur refugees are part of a swelling flow of Africans who have crossed into Israel in recent months over its porous southern border with Egypt's Sinai desert.

Israel estimates 2,800 people, nearly all of them Africans, have entered the country illegally through Sinai in recent years, many after having spent months or years in Egypt first. The number shot up in recent months, apparently as word spread of job opportunities in Israel.

Israel began clamping down on the soaring numbers over the summer, announcing that all new infiltrators and some already in Israel would be returned to Egypt. Egypt said Israel sent back an unidentified number of Darfurians last month.

Egypt has denied any obligation to take back the border infiltrators.

Sigal Rozen of the Hotline for Migrant Workers welcomed the government's decision to grant citizenship to some Darfurians, but said that didn't absolve the state of its responsibility to other refugees.

"We hope that granting (citizenship) status to a limited number of refugees won't legitimize expulsion to Egypt." Rozen said.

### **Darfur war crimes suspect leads Sudan rights probe**

*(SudanTribune.com)* Rights activists on Wednesday criticised a move by Sudan's government and its main political partner to authorise a committee headed by a Darfur war crimes suspect to investigate human rights complaints.

The committee was initially set up by the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) of former southern rebels to monitor the security situation between the country's north and south.

Ann Itto, a co-chair of the committee, said Ahmed Haroun would help launch its new initiative to probe human rights violations in Darfur, a role approved by both parties at the weekend.

Haroun, a junior minister from the NCP, is one of two people accused by the International Criminal Court of committing war crimes in Sudan's Darfur region.

The committee, comprised of representatives from the ruling party and former southern rebels who in 2005 signed a peace deal with Khartoum to end over two decades of north-south civil war, will investigate rights infractions raised by either side.

Opposition politicians said they were outraged that Haroun was heading the committee.

"By allowing Haroun to co-chair this committee, Sudan wants to send the signal that it does not recognise the decision of the ICC," said Kamal Omar, a lawyer and human rights activist.

He said Haroun's presence on the committee means it will have "no credibility", and added that it further demonstrated the ruling party's disregard for human rights.

The Hague-based ICC issued a warrant for Haroun's arrest in March, and has accused him of conspiring with a pro-government militia commander who prosecutors said led attacks on towns and villages where dozens were killed.

The ICC has also accused Haroun, formerly a state interior minister who now holds a humanitarian affairs portfolio, of recruiting and arming local militias to combat Darfur rebels.

International experts estimate 200,000 people have been killed in Darfur and 2.5 million have been driven from their homes in the past 4-1/2 years of conflict. Khartoum puts the death toll at 9,000.

Sudan's government has refused to act on the warrants for Haroun and the commander, saying there was no evidence and that Sudan, like the United States, was not an ICC signatory.

A spokesman for the SPLM said it was "unfortunate" that Haroun was sharing leadership of the committee with them.

"This is a mockery of justice. It would have been better not to form this commission," SPLM spokesman Samson Kwaje said. "They are making a joke out of it. They are not serious."

Itto, Haroun's SPLM co-chair on the committee, said her party had no right to reject Haroun's role on the committee.

Mostly non-Arab rebels took up arms in Darfur in early 2003 accusing the central government of marginalising the arid region. Observers say Khartoum mobilised militia to quell the revolt, but then failed to disarm them.

### **ICC prosecutor insists on arrest of Haroun and Kosheib**

(*AlAyam*) International Criminal Court Prosecutor Moreno Okambo has emphasized that the UN and countries signatory to the court agreement should exercise pressure to arrest Haroun and Kosheib suspected of committing war crimes in Darfur States.

In The Hague, the seat of the Court, the prosecutor said this was the law and that the participating countries including Sudan should shoulder their responsibilities adding that within four years the court was capable to perform its duties.

He attributed the current humanitarian crisis to the war crimes holding Haroun responsible of the current displaced population in Darfur.

### **Negotiations between Chadian government and opposition in stalemate**

(*AlWihda*) The Chadian opposition, currently negotiating a peace deal with the Chadian government in Tripoli, Libya, said that is intended to brief in Libya with UN Chief Ki Moon on security obstacles confronting process of the talks.

Chairman of Chadian National Reconciliation Dr, Hassan Alginaidi said the Chadian government put pre-condition that the opposition troops should be disarmed confirming that progress in the political aspect has been made through pressure of the mediators to guarantee just distribution of power for the negotiating sides

He warned of proposing unrealistic conditions on the part of the government hailing the effort of the Sudanese and Libyan mediators in creating breakthrough in the political aspect.

## **Darfur lawyers: Ki-Moon's visit is propaganda for the NCP**

(*AlAyam*) Darfur Lawyers Association has described Moon's visit to Sudan as "propaganda for the NCP" serving the agenda of the NCP instead of realizing objectives of peace in Sudan in general and Darfur in particular.

The Association said the visit revealed that Moon has no ready plan to solve Darfur crisis as he did not follow the methodology of his predecessor and work out specific strategy dealing with the issue of Darfur.

It noted that Moon's lack of a plan based on accurate information led him to attribute the causes of Darfur crisis to drought and poverty, on one hand, and to political motives, on the other hand.

The Association accused Moon of failing to handle the demands of the movements for consultations and coordination in light of Arusha's recommendations saying that he would not specify basis and means of objectively dealing with SLM's Leader Abdulwahid Nur.

It added that the absence of Moon's plans prompted him to seek commitment from Kiir to convince Nur to join the peace talks. "If he has had clear-cut plan, he will not need the commitment of Kiir to persuade Nur to sit for negotiations", it stressed.

The association dismissed negligence of Moon to meet representatives of the Darfurian civil society organizations despite his announcement to meet the leaders of IDPs camps.

The Association was pessimistic over the outcome of the visit due to Moon's flexible dialogue with the government, a matter, which would encourage the government to beat around SC Resolution No. 1769.

It called for the immediate implementation of resolution 1769 apart of linking reaching peaceful settlement with the deployment of the hybrid forces in the region.

## **TDRA sets up liaisons committee for Abuja non-signatories**

(*AlSahafa*) Chaired by Mini Minawi, the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA) discussed in its meeting Wednesday the security situation in the three-state of Darfur, progress of peace process and decided to set up a committee to contact peace non-signatories factions.

TDRA Secretary-General Dr. Mohamed Suleiman Adam told (*AlSahafa* daily) that the TDRA set a sub-committee to follow contacts with non-signatories, started by the Authority during the past weeks.

He added that a workshop would be held next week to review the five-year strategy for the three states.

Adam noted that the meeting debated on the plan of Darfur rehabilitation fund, compensations and the works of the land commission stressing the TDRA readiness for the scheduled conference, which would discuss a number of projects proposals.

### **SLM's Minnawi welcomes Nafi's assignment; JEM expresses reserve**

*(AlSudani)* SLM's Minawi has warmly welcomed the assignment of President Assistant Dr. Nafi Ali Nafi of being responsible of Darfur dossier, while JEM held Nafi responsible of all dimensions of the faults committed in the region.

Spokesman of SLM's Minawi Mustafa Algameel described Nafi as influential figure within the government who could play a vital role in implementing the agreement.

JEM's Spokesperson Ahmed Hussein said that his faction had no intention to comment currently on Nafi's assignment, but he added would monitor his way to handle the dossier.

In the meantime, Political Advisor of SLM's Abdulshafei, Abdullatif Ismael lashed out at Nafi as one of the government's hardliners, who would not assist in reaching lasting solution to Darfur crisis.