

14 June 2011

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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

Post-Referendum Monitor

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Post-Referendum Monitor

North, south Sudan agree to demilitarise Abyei-AU

Reuters/ dailies Addis Ababa, 13/06/11 - North and south Sudan have agreed in principle to demilitarise the Abyei region and to deploy Ethiopian peacekeeping troops in the area, an African Union official said on Monday.

The announcement came after Presidents Omar Hassan al-Bashir and Salva Kiir met in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa to discuss the status of Abyei and other issues in the build-up to the split.

"In principle, the parties have agreed to the demilitarisation of the area and the deployment of Ethiopian forces," Barney Afako, spokesman for the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel on Sudan, told reporters.

"The question of the administration of Abyei is still on the agenda," Afako added.

Afako said the mandate and size of the Ethiopian force were still being discussed, and that the peacekeepers would be deployed as soon as there was an agreement, adding it could be "a matter of days, or hours".

"It will be at least two battalions," he added.

Sayed Al-Khatib, the spokesperson for the Sudan delegation to the talks, admitted in a statement to *SUNA* that the AUHIP and Ethiopian proposals for Ethiopian peacekeepers to provide security in Abyei was accepted by both sides. The two sides also agreed to deploy their forces to the respective sides of the 1.1.56 borders, he said. He further noted that the parties to the agreement are the Sudan government, the GoSS and the Ethiopian government and that this agreement could not be amended without prior approval of the parties involved.

He further said that the parties also agreed to the formation of a civilian administration in Abyei that would have no hand at all on security issues.

Abyei deal reported but Sudan talks drag on

AFP Addis Ababa, 13/06/11 - Khartoum has agreed to withdraw its troops from the disputed Abyei region, a southern minister said on Monday, as northern and southern Sudanese leaders continued to thrash out sticking points into the night.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton cut short a visit to the Ethiopian capital for fear of being stranded by a cloud of ash from a volcano in neighbouring Eritrea after briefly meeting south Sudan leader Salva Kiir.

"We have information that they have accepted to withdraw from Abyei as long as they agree on the specific arrangement with regards to the Abyei administration," south Sudan's Information Minister Barnaba Marial Benjamin told the independent Sudan Radio Service.

"What troops ... will replace the Sudanese Armed forces (SAF -- the northern army) when they withdraw, they will discuss the details of that security arrangement," Benjamin said.

"I think they have accepted the principle that they have to withdraw," Benjamin added.

Prior to arriving in the Ethiopian capital Clinton endorsed the idea of a peacekeeping force in Abyei and encouraged both sides to take up an Ethiopian offer of troops.

"The government of Sudan should urgently facilitate a viable security arrangement starting with the withdrawal of Sudanese Armed Forces," Clinton said, referring to the northern army.

"We would welcome both parties (north and south Sudan) agreeing to ask Ethiopia, which has volunteered to send peacekeepers, to do so as part of the UN mission," she said.

US says Sudan must end battles with south

AFP United Nations, 13/06/11 - The United States on Monday called on the Khartoum government to end fighting with the rival south and to unconditionally withdraw from the flashpoint Abyei region.

The call came from US ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice as leaders from the north and south held talks on easing tensions between their armies. The UN Security Council had been scheduled to discuss the Sudan conflict but postponed its talks because a summit between the Sudan leaders in Addis Ababa had not ended.

Rice said the north Sudan army "must immediately end fighting and abuses in Kadugli and withdraw unconditionally from Abyei."

The United Nations said Monday that the fighting has spread from Kordofan into the south's Unity State and that tens of thousands of people have been displaced.

SAF denies accusations of bombardment inside southern Sudan

Al-Rai Al-Aam Khartoum, 14/06/11 - SAF Spokesperson Al-Suwarni Khaled has denied accusations of a SAF bombardment inside southern Sudanese territory. Khaled pointed out that SAF aircraft did bombard areas close to the borders with southern Sudan's Unity State as it pursued remnants of the rebel forces in Southern Kordofan but maintains they did not cross the borders to the south.

The SAF spokesperson noted however that parts of Upper Nile State are within the northern side of the 1.1.56 line. These are the areas in which the SAF has been in pursuit of the rebels using heavy artillery and bombardment "in accordance to the rules of engagement", Khaled said.

JEM rebels attack airport used by oil firms in Southern Kordofan's Heglieg

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 13/06/11 - The JEM carried out an attack on the airport of the oil rich area of Heglieg saying it wanted to warn petroleum companies to stop facilities to the SAF.

In a statement released on Monday signed by Fidail Mohamed Rahama, a member of JEM Military High Command, the rebel groups said "a small military contingent belonging to the JEM Kordofan branch made a successful attack at Heglieg Airport on Thursday 9 June.

JEM further said the "attack and brief occupation of the airport were meant to send a clear message to oil companies that use of their airports and other facilities by the government of Sudan, its army and militia will not go unpunished by the Movement".

Sudanese officials were not available to confirm the attack; also the rebel group did not mention any human and material casualties.

NCP accuses the UN of supporting the rebellion in Southern Kordofan

Akhir Lahza Khartoum, 14/06/11 - Samia Ahmed Mohamed, a Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and a member of the NCP leadership office, has accused the UN of supporting rebellion in Southern Kordofan and trying to blow the issue out of proportion by sending negative messages

on the situation to the international community. Speaking to parliament over reports the UNMIS was evacuating staff from Kadugli, Samia said that the evacuation of UN staff from the area would make government stronger while their presence is detrimental to authorities. Calm and security has been restored in Kadugli and citizens enjoy access to essential commodities, she said.

Police describes Al-Hilu as suspect on the loose

Al-Sahafa Khartoum/ Kadugli, 14/06/11 – The police has filed charges against SPLM's Abdulaziz Al-Hilu whom it described as a suspect at large. The eight charges include incitement to war against the state and may carry the death penalty.

According to *Al-Khartoum*, Ahmed Al-Tuhami, a senior police officer, told the press yesterday that they are in possession of documented evidence and witnesses to back those charges.

Ethnic cleansing of Nuba people in Sudan: report

AFP Khartoum, 14/06/11 - The SAF, with the support of a government-backed militia, is pursuing a genocidal campaign in Southern Kordofan, targeting the indigenous Nuba peoples, a Sudan rights group charged on Monday.

In a six-page report, the Sudan Democracy First Group (SDGP) accused government forces of "a raft of crimes and human rights violations committed against the civilian population in Southern Kordofan."

"Last week, the SAF supported by the Popular Defence Forces (PDF) committed atrocities, including summary executions, wanton killings, arbitrary arrests, torture, arson and disappearances in addition to destruction of physical infrastructure and burning of churches particularly in Kadugli and Deleng towns," SDGP said.

Government officials were not immediately available to comment on the allegations.

Other activists in Sudan have warned that the killings taking place in Southern Kordofan are of a similar nature to the attacks carried out by the Sudanese army in the early 1990s, which they say indiscriminately targeted Nuba civilians, including women and children.

President Omar al-Bashir said last week that the army was clearing South Kordofan of rebels.

The SDGP report alleges that many of the latest atrocities were committed during house-to-house searches for people suspected of sympathizing with southern-aligned troops.

"Further increase in the scale and magnitude of these atrocities may upgrade their classification to crimes against humanity and genocide," the report added, naming 20 civilians, including teachers, medical workers and a priest, who were killed.

Another 66 people were killed in air strikes carried out by Antonov bombers in different locations across South Kordofan, including Talodi, Deleng and Buram, it said.

Six corpses were found in El-Faid Um Abdalla, the village of former deputy governor and senior SPLA commander Abdelaziz al-Hilu.

The report also alleged that about 100,000 people had fled their homes in South Kordofan, significantly more than current UN estimates. It warned of the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation caused by this "massive displacement."

The rights group describes itself as a coalition of democrats, activists and academics representing different cultural and ethnic backgrounds in Sudan. It did not say how it gathered the information for the report.

SDFG said the government had heavily restricted access to the region, making it very difficult for the media to accurately report on the situation there.

But the report accused the UN peacekeeping mission in Sudan (UNMIS) of appearing "unable to provide information on the humanitarian situation and the scale of the crimes that are being committed."

UNMIS had also failed "to provide the civilian protection required and ensure delivery of urgent humanitarian aid", it added.

South Sudan to invite Bashir for independence ceremony

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 13/06/11 - The SPLM announced that it will invite President Omer Al-Bashir to attend the ceremony marking the independence of South Sudan from the North.

The former federal cabinet affairs minister and the leading SPLM figure Luka Byong told the UAE-based *Al-Itihad* newspaper that Al-Bashir will receive an invitation but it is up to him whether to accept or reject it.

Byong said that preparations for July 9th are in an "advanced stage" but acknowledged that there is a shortage in hotels and accommodations for those who will attend the ceremony. He said that the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) is seeking to find quick solutions for that.

The Southern official further said that guests who were invited are well aware of the situation in the soon to secede region in terms of development and reconstruction. So far leaders of Zambia and Liberia have confirmed attendance. The former governor of the US state of Alaska and the 2008 Republican Party candidate for Vice President Sarah Palin is also reported to be present.

The presence of Bashir might prove awkward for some attendees given his status as the first sitting head of state wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Bank of Sudan says South has six months to replace currency

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 13/06/11 - The Bank of Sudan announced on Monday that the soon to secede South will be given six months to replace its currency from the date it becomes officially a new state on July 9th.

In an address before the country's National Assembly the Central Bank Governor Mohamed Khair Al-Zubair said that the highest financial authority in the country crafted policies and procedures for the replacement of the national currency in South Sudan.

All this is done in agreement with the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), Al-Zubair said.

It is estimated that 10% of the monetary supply is in the South.

UNMIS lays preliminary plans to withdraw its troops from Sudan

Al-Sahafa et al Khartoum, 14/06/11 - UNMIS has embarked on plans to withdraw its peacekeepers and civilian personnel pending a final decision on the termination of its mandate, the Foreign Ministry says.

Following a meeting of the national technical mechanism for peacekeeping operations in Sudan held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a ministry official said Sudan is committed to facilitating the mission's pullout besides providing possible support for troop evacuation, equipment, transport and logistics and administrative support to end the UNMIS mission in accordance with a mutually agreed plan.

Other Highlights

UNICEF calls for unhindered access to aid in border areas

Akhir Lahza Khartoum, 14/06/11 – UNICEF has called upon the government in the north and south of the country to allow for the free flow of humanitarian assistance to IDPs affected by recent conflicts around the north-south border areas. In a statement issued in Khartoum yesterday, the organisation noted that military confrontations in Abyei, Southern Kordofan and the border areas have led to the displacement of thousands of citizens who are in need of food and drinking water. In its statement, the UNICEF said that presidents Al-Bashir and Salva Kiir have an historic opportunity to send a clear message to all the relevant parties on the ground that hindering access to humanitarian aid constitutes a human rights violation and that hindering life-saving assistance is in contrast to humanitarian principles.

Misseriya grant the SPLA one week ultimatum to return looted cattle

Akhir Lahza Khartoum, 14/06/11 – Hammad Al-Sidig, a prominent Misseriya figure, says recent talks with the SPLA representatives over the return of looted Misseriya cattle have faltered. He said that the Misseriya have given the SPLA one week to return the 1,500 heads of cattle looted from Mairam about a week ago.

Hammad also warned the SPLA against coordinating military activities with the JEM to attack Misseriya areas. He warned that the Misseriya would “teach the SPLA and the JEM a lesson” should they target Abyei or any other parts of Misseriya land. The Misseriya figure called on the government to provide security along the stretch bordering the Bahr-el-Arab in order to secure the nomadic routes.

Over 50 people killed in fresh clashes in Warrap - S. Sudan official

Sudantribune.com Turalei, 13/06/11 - Over 50 people have been killed in fresh clashes between armed groups allegedly associated with rebel groups and local police in Tonj North County, Warrap state, said senior officials from South Sudan on Monday.

“Armed groups sighted as coming from Unity State, probably loyal to rebel groups, launched an attack in one of the villages in Tonj North County, Warrap state. The fighting took place in Akop locality”, said General Anthony Bol Madut, former governor of Warrap state and currently a senior security advisor in the ministry of internal affairs of the Government of South Sudan (GoSS).

Madut, who spoke to *Sudan Tribune* from Juba, the capital of South Sudan, said he has heard some people were killed and several others sustained injuries as cattle other properties were taken. “This is a fresh incident. There is no clear information of how many people have been killed. The reports which are still coming indicate that the fighting was in progress and that it is hard to get the details of the incident”, he further said.

Yel Mayar, a deputy governor of Warrap state government said 58 people were killed and several injured, including local police and home guards. "Yes it is true there was an attack on the area today but it was contained", said Mayar.

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