



UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

UNMIS

UNMIS Media Monitoring Report, 28th February, 2006
(By Public Information Office)

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HIGHLIGHTS:

AMIS-UN transition

AU Peace and Security Council meeting postponed to 10th March

(*AlAyaam/SUNA* – 28th Feb. **Addis Ababa**) The AU Peace and Security Council meeting scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa on 3rd March this year has been deferred to the 10th of the same month.

This follows requests from the Sudan that the meeting slated to discuss a possible AMIS-UN transition or an extension of the AMIS mandate in Sudan be postponed to allow for more consultations between member states on the issue.

The deputy head of the Sudan delegation to the AU, el-Tayeb Ali Ahmed, says the delegation has formally been notified by the AU on the postponement.

UN peacekeepers could be at risk if deployed to Darfur - minister

(*AP/ST*– 27th Feb. **Khartoum**) Sudan warned Monday that United Nations peacekeepers could be at risk if they deployed to its conflict-wracked Darfur region.

According to the official SUNA news agency, Justice Minister Mohamed Ali Al Mardhi told Sima Samar, the United Nations' special rapporteur for human rights in Sudan, that it would be difficult to provide protection for such forces.

"The minister has warned the U.N. official about the danger of sending foreign forces to Sudan," SUNA said.

It added that Al Mardi said implementing a proposal to send "international forces to Darfur would pave the way for infiltration of elements in Sudan across the borders with neighboring countries a matter which will complicate the protection and safety of the international forces."

The United States has been pushing for quick approval of a U.N. peacekeeping force in Darfur region and wants the Security Council to approve a resolution establishing a force by the end of February.

Britain and several other council members said last week there was support for a U.N. force, but wanted to wait for the African Union — which has about 7,000 troops deployed there — to make a final decision at a meeting on March 3.

Some regional nations also want approval from the Sudanese government, which opposes the deployment of non-African troops.

Peaceful demonstrations in el-Fasher protesting transition

(*Akhbar Alyaum* – 28th Feb. **el-Fasher**) Civil society, popular, political, legislative, and women's and children's groups and the local authorities in North Darfur staged a peaceful demonstration yesterday protesting an AMIS-UN transition.

The protestors presented letters to the UNMIS and AMIS representatives in el-Fasher. Both representatives praised the peaceful manner the people expressed themselves in and promised to forward their message to the respective relevant parties.

UN

UN Security Council meets on Darfur sanctions

(*UN News Centre/ST* – 27th Feb. **United Nations**) As violence continues in Sudan's North Darfur region, the United Nations Security Council met today to consider sanctioning individuals deemed to be a threat to the peace or to human rights in the area, where fighting involving rebels, the Government and militias have already taken a great toll on civilians.

After receiving a briefing by the Chair of the Council Sanctions Committee, Adamantios Vassilakis of Greece, the Council “expressed its desire to move forward expeditiously on targeted sanctions, which I expect we’ll do shortly,” John Bolton of the United States, the current Council President, told the press this morning.

“The purpose of the targeted sanctions mechanism of resolution 1591 is to apply pressure — and I don’t think we should be ashamed to say that — to people who are violating the arms embargo, not contributing to our effort to establish an effective peace process in Darfur and restore the deteriorating security situation there,” Bolton said.

Since fighting flared a week ago in North Darfur, a large number of villages have been attacked and burned, markets have been looted and people displaced, the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) said today, with clashes between the Sudan Armed Forces and rebel Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) continuing.

Meanwhile, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative (SRSG) for Sudan, Jan Pronk, travelled to South Darfur over the weekend, urging the parties there to exercise restraint and protect civilians, according to a UN Spokesman.

On 3 March, SRSG Pronk is expected to attend a ministerial meeting of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council on the shift to a proposed Darfur peacekeeping force supervised by the UN.

UNICEF may suspend programs in Darfur

(*Khartoum Monitor* – 28th Feb. **Khartoum**) UNICEF’s Sudan representative Ted Chaiban told the press on Monday that the organisation may suspend some programs in Darfur due to lack of funding.

He pointed out that they appealed for \$89 million and only received \$9 million which, according to him, will take them until early May.

Failure to receive additional contributions within this period may force them to make drastic cuts to the organisation’s programs, he added.

He said hopes for a substantial peace agreement and the return of around 1.8 million IDPs in 2005 appear to have been premature.

CPA

Sudan to adopt new method on sharing of oil revenue

(ST- 27th Feb. **Khartoum**) The Federal Minister of Finance, al-Zubair Ahmed al-Hassan said that a new method would be adopted for the sharing of oil revenue between north and south.

The method involves the preparation of a monthly unclassified report showing the revenues and the share of each, al-Zubair said. He further said that these revenues will be checked by International Institutions.

In his 28 January press conference, Salva Kiir said his northern partners had not given the south half of Sudan's oil revenues as the deal requires. "We still have not got the real share of the oil revenues," he told reporters in Khartoum, adding there were differences over the amount of oil produced in Sudan. The northern oil minister puts oil production at around 330,000 barrels per day (bpd), but the SPLM says it could be as high as 450,000 bpd.

The peace agreement signed Jan. 9, 2005 promised an equal share of oil wealth to an autonomous southern government, but southern leaders say the north has given only a fraction. Northern officials blame delays on bureaucracy.

According to the Finance Minister, South Sudan share from oil revenue, which was transferred to GoSS, totalled \$800 million.

The Minister reviewed a balance sheet detailing that share, and adding that \$197 million were spent on South Sudan before the formation of GoSS and putting into effect the Peace Agreement.

Replying to an accusation made by the Deputy Governor of the Bank of Sudan Aleja Malok saying that minister of energy and oil is hiding the real figures of oil revenues, the Minister denied that, stating that NCP and SPLM have set up an eight-member committee to audit oil revenues.

The Minister said they asked SPLM to name its four members on the committee but it has submitted only the names of two representatives who have participated in auditing the accounts and are in complete harmony with the Ministry.

Controversy surrounds oil concessions, some issued by both northern and southern officials. Britain's White Nile Company, for example, last year bought a concession from southerners that French Total has had on-hold since the 1980s.

Presidency to meet next Saturday to discuss petroleum revenues

(*Akhbar Alyaum/SMC* – 28th Feb. **Khartoum**) Vice-president Salva Kiir Mayardit travelled to Nairobi on private business but is expected in Juba on Wednesday to chair a meeting of the GoSS cabinet.

Tilara Deng, state minister at the Presidency of the Republic, said that the First Vice-president is due back to Khartoum next Saturday to participate in a meeting with President Bashir and Vice-president Taha and the GoS Minister of Finance and Governor and Deputy Governor of the central bank and their GoSS counterparts.

The meeting to be held next week will mainly focus on the oil revenue.

Presidential aide says GoSS has received over 700 million dollars in revenue

(*Akhbar Alyaum* – 28th Feb. **Khartoum**) Dr. Ghazi Salahuldeen, the Advisor to the President of the Republic, says more than 700 million dollars have been transferred to the GoSS account from the oil revenue.

Speaking to Cairo-based *AlIhram* newspaper, the aide pointed out that this amount was more than the annual budgets of some independent African states.

He expressed the belief that southern Sudan now has a good opportunity to improve the situation and build infrastructure if these funds are used properly.

He pointed out that the recent speculations surrounding the south's share of the oil money is no problem at all as there is a Petroleum Commission and a committee has been formed to follow these funds and it is easy to trace it.

GoNU

Archbishop urges Sudan to return Church lands

(*Reuters/ST*– 27th Feb. **Khartoum**)Feb Rowan Williams, spiritual leader of more than 70 million Anglicans worldwide, urged Sudan to be more tolerant towards religious minorities in the mainly Muslim country and return confiscated Church property.

On his first visit to Sudan, the Archbishop of Canterbury will travel to both sides of a bitter north-south civil war to encourage progress in implementing a peace deal signed last year to end the bloodshed which claimed some 2 million lives.

"In the tragic years that have gone by Sudan has been known for conflict and for poverty," he told reporters at a news conference in Khartoum, where Islamic sharia law is in force.

"The question is how will the government ... of this country in the years ahead make sure that Sudan is known for creative, democratic, tolerant policies that will work for the good of an entire population," he added.

Religion and the imposition of sharia on the mainly Christian and animist south was a major catalyst for the outbreak of the civil war which forced more than 4 million people to flee their homes.

Many of them sought refuge in slum camps around Khartoum, the base of the Islamist government which pursued a policy of Islamisation of the population.

Despite the peace deal, sharia is still in force in the national capital, where Sudanese of many religions live.

A commission to protect the rights of non-Muslims in Khartoum, as specified by the peace deal, has yet to be formed more than year after it was signed.

"The official position of the government is that non-Muslims are welcome in the new Sudan and that the hope is that they will be full citizens," Williams said.

"Now the detail of that needs to be worked out and I think it is imperative that it should be."

Williams added the northern-dominated government could do more to encourage goodwill following the deal, starting with the return of property confiscated from the Church in the capital.

"The Episcopal church guest house was ... irregularly sold off a few years ago," he said citing one example. "If one wants to look for signs of goodwill towards a minority these are crucial signals."

Church officials said lots of Christian buildings and land have been seized over the past few decades often with little or no compensation. Most notably was the Cathedral in the grounds of the Presidential Palace which is now a museum.

Many of those cases are in the Sudanese court system.

Williams said during his meetings, both non-Muslims and Muslims had told him there was a more positive atmosphere of tolerance since the peace deal was signed.

"For many people in Sudan the policy of intensive Islamisation has not worked in their interests," Williams said. "It's a very foolish government that is not responsive to these shifts."

On Tuesday Williams will travel to the south to open a new Cathedral and visit some of the areas impoverished by war.

Darfur/ Abuja talks

African Union Mediation regrets Slovenian initiative on Darfur

(ST – 27th Feb. **Abuja**) African Union regretted that the Slovenian president launched a peace initiative on Darfur without any consultations with the AU mediation; the ambassador Sam Ibok said yesterday when he received the personal envoy of the Slovenian president.

The Personal Envoy and Diplomatic Adviser to the President of the Republic of Slovenia Ambassador Ivo Vajgl, was yesterday, Sunday 26 February 2006, received in audience by the AU Mediation Team led by Sam Ibok.

Vajgl briefed the AU Mediation on the different actions undertaken by President, Janez Drnovšek to mobilize national and international humanitarian assistance and solidarity for Darfur, adding that Slovenia was also looking forward, through this initiative, to contributing to the political process.

The Head of the AU Mediation Team pointing out that the African Union had so far not received any official information regarding the contents of the Slovenian initiative, said the AMIS spokesperson Nouredine Mezni in a press statement.

He emphasized that any political initiative outside the ongoing Abuja Process would, "at this point in time, only serve the purpose of distracting the Parties and diverting their attention away from the critical issues that are the subject of substantive negotiations in this final phase of the Peace Talks, when the AU is striving to build bridges and forge consensus between the Parties".

Ibok further stressed that the Abuja Talks represent a genuine international partnership with the full and unhindered involvement of international partners, including the UN, EU, the League of Arab States, the US, UK, Canada and others.

He appealed to the Government of Slovenia and other international partners to refrain from encouraging the Parties in Abuja to engage in “Forum Shopping”, and stressed the need to avoid sending mixed and often confusing signals to the Sudanese Parties negotiating in Abuja.

The meeting did not discuss the contents of the initiative and the proposed Peace Agreement by the Slovenian President. On the contrary, the Mediation welcomed any initiative to enhance the flow of humanitarian assistance to those in need in Darfur, as indicated by the Envoy.

The Slovenian Envoy recognized the leading role of the African Union in the Darfur Peace Talks and took note of the progress so far achieved.

The Slovenian initiative, outlined by Drnovsek in early February, includes a political solution similar to the one used to resolve southern Sudan conflict one years ago.

The plan also includes provisions for ensuring security and special provisions that deal with the involvement of the international community in the peace process.

Southern Sudan

GoSS requests National Electricity Corporation to manage electricity

(*AlSahafa* – 28th Feb. **Juba**) The states of southern Sudan have suffered from infrequent power supply since January this year.

Members of the electricity union of Eastern and Western Equatoria, Bahr-el-Ghazal and Upper Nile complain that the National Electricity Corporation suddenly closed offices in the southern states and have told authorities in these states late last January that responsibility for the electricity services for these states now rests with the southern Sudanese government as thus is it stipulated in the CPA.

The southern Sudanese states then dispatched officials to Khartoum to discuss the issue with the head of the National Electricity Corporation who told revealed that the original plan was to gradually hand over but then politicians decided that the processes be hurried up. The head of the NEC said however that the National Electricity Corporation will pay workers’ salaries for the months of January and February alone.

Sources say an agreement has been reached that the National Electricity Corporation continues to oversee the operations in southern Sudan but will be funded through GoSS finances.

Human rights

Special Rapporteur for human rights in Sudan requests to be allowed visit to detainees

(*AlAyaam* – 28th Feb. **Khartoum**) The Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Sudan, Dr. Sima Samar, has requested the Sudan government to allow her to visit detainees held in the country's prisons.

She also called for amendments to the relevant laws to streamline these laws with the Interim Constitution of the Sudan.

State minister for justice Mr. William Ajak said that the Rapporteur discussed in a meeting with the justice minister yesterday the reasons for the delay in formation of the Human Rights Commission, the special courts in Darfur and the general human rights situation.

Other developments

Turabi calls for political overthrow of the government

(*Akhbar Alyaum/AlHayat* – 28th Feb. **Khartoum**) Speaking to London-based *AlHayat* newspaper, the leader of the opposition Popular Congress Party Dr. Turabi has called for a political overthrow of the government and its replacement with a national government in which all political forces participate and where the share of southern Sudan, as stipulated in the CPA, are maintained.

Turabi warned that the CPA may not hold for long because it “was imposed” on the parties.

On the issue of introducing non-African forces in Darfur, Dr. Turabi said that there is no keeping these forces from coming to Sudan. He pointed out that the Sudan has become a theatre for independent militia forces, African soldiers and soldiers from the world over.

“The UN is in the Sudan with its army, police and police dogs to protect the south, is in the east and is in Khartoum and a number of other marginalised cities so why the fuss about Darfur?” he wondered.

The only problem, he says, is if these forces become a tool for the implementation of the ICC process on Sudan.