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Highlights

30 people killed in tribal clashes in southern Sudan

Local dailies report at least 30 people have been killed and 15 women and children abducted in tribal clashes in Warrap state, according to Paul Dhel Gum, from the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission.

Sudan Tribune 11/8/09 reported the clashes between two clans of the Dinka ethnic group, the Luach and the Awan, broke out over cattle and grazing rights on Saturday August 8, said Gum who added that the fighting continued until yesterday morning.

Juba dispatched a unit of southern Sudan army, SPLA, to the area to end the clashes.

In a related development, **Khartoum Monitor** reports that GoSS Peace and Reconciliation Advisor, Maj. Gen. Ismail Konye, has called on the UN to release its final report on the recent incidents in the Murle region. Konye mentioned shortage of food as one of the main reasons for the tribal conflict in the area.

Presidency to take decisions on Abyei

Al-Ahdath reports FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit as saying that the dispute between the NCP and the SPLM over Abyei has been resolved, adding the Presidency would issue decrees during the next few days on the PCA ruling and boundary demarcation.

NCP rejects SPLM Pagan's threat for independence

NCP leading figure and Youth & Sports State Minister Amin Hassan Omar has rejected the SPLM SG Pagan Amum's threat for unilateral declaration of independence from within the Parliament, **Al-Ahdath** reports. He said his party would not change its stand on the referendum law despite Pagan's threats which he described as "irresponsible". "SPLM separatists' attempts through threats and blackmailing to have a law tailored in such a manner that secession becomes easy will not work," Omar said.

SPLM does not support lifting Sudan from US terrorism list

Sudan Tribune website 11/8/09 – the SPLM does not support lifting Sudan from the US terrorism blacklist, said SPLM leading figure in an interview yesterday, just over a week after the US Special Envoy to Sudan said "there is no evidence in our intelligence community that supports (Sudan) being on the state sponsors of terrorism list."

Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth, who is the Government of Southern Sudan Head of Mission to the United States and a member of the SPLM leadership, said that SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum had questioned US envoy Scott Gration about his position during a recent visit.

"For us, we want the sanctions to be lifted, we want Sudan to be removed from the State sponsors of terrorism list, but we really want the NCP to meet some benchmarks first," he said, citing democratization, peace in Darfur, and implementation of the CPA as important benchmarks.

He also noted that regardless of the sanctions, Southern Sudan holds a special exempt status in the US sanctions regulations: "There is nothing harming Southern Sudan as it is exempted."

Mr. Gatkuoth has not been alone in the SPLM in this view with regard to easing the sanctions. Similar hesitation came from Yasser Arman, SPLM Deputy Secretary General for Northern Sector, in an interview in Washington in June. He urged US policymakers to consider why Sudan was initially placed on the terrorism list. "We see in the policy of the Administration of President Obama of engagement, a window of opportunity for Sudan. But we must go to the drawing board and see how the relations between Sudan and the outside world had gotten spoiled — how Sudan disengaged from the outside world." He cited as causes several issues related to rule of law and civil war.

Mr. Gatkuoth's statements come at a tense moment in the relationship between NCP and SPLM. In Khartoum, the Public Order Police has reportedly filed a complaint against Mr. Arman and moved to lift his legal immunity as a member of parliament. According to SPLM figures, the move is politically-motivated. "These public police should not be there in the first place after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement," Mr. Gatkuoth said. "The SPLM leadership is fully, fully behind Yasser,"

Tensions high, food short in Akobo

IRIN 11/8/09 - Tensions have remained high in Akobo County of Jonglei State, Southern Sudan, a week after inter-ethnic clashes left at least 185 people, mainly women and children, dead.

"The Murle have attacked us, and the Jikany [Nuer] are stopping the boats from getting to us," John Tut, a Lou Nuer in Akobo said.

"We have to act as men to protect our people and fight back or they will continue to crush us."

Amid warnings of possible retaliatory raids, aid workers are also pointing to rising levels of malnutrition following significant displacement of people and the blocking of river access routes.

Akobo County Commissioner Goi Jooyul Yol said the 2 August dawn attack by the Murle occurred at Geni River in Mareng, 40km southwest of Akobo town. The women and children had camped in the area for three weeks trying to catch fish.

The leader of the Murle community, Chief Ismail Konyi, was quoted by the Sudan Tribune as calling for peace-building between the communities in Jonglei.

"If you ask who recently attacked the other in the area, you will only hear the name of [a community] because nobody is determined to go further and find out who was behind the raid and what actually caused that attack," he reportedly said in Juba.

"For any incident, there must be a cause and this cause, if not addressed, results into losing either lives of innocent people or properties."

Following the latest clash, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) warned that its ability to deliver much-needed supplies was being hampered by the violence.

"WFP and its partners have called on the government to put an end to inter-tribal fighting, which is endangering the delivery of humanitarian aid," UN spokeswoman Marie Okabe said.

Extra helicopter and airplane flights are bringing in food, but the supplies cannot meet the needs of the community. At least 19,000 people were displaced in April after earlier Murle attacks, while more are reported to have fled the recent attack.

"Food assistance is the number-one humanitarian need in Akobo, besides protection," said

Michelle Iseminger, head of WFP in Southern Sudan.

The roads to Akobo are closed most of the year due to rains, while the main river route has been blocked at Nassir by the Jikany Nuer upstream from Akobo, who have also clashed with the Lou Nuer.

"There is a massive need, there are many people who are hungry and need to be fed," Yol said.

An extra outpatient feeding programme targeting children has been opened by aid agency Medair, which had been providing inpatient paediatric care in Akobo County hospital since June.

"Many children are suffering from malnutrition," said Eunice Kavoi, team leader for Medair in the area.

The aid agency is also setting up a water treatment centre but it is currently forced to fly in basic materials such as fuel and cement at high cost due to the difficulties of bringing supplies into Akobo by river or road.

"We fear the situation in terms of nutrition will get worse if nothing is done to fly in more food for the community," Kavoi added.

Southern Sudanese officials have promised security will be boosted and the river opened to ship in more supplies. "I am optimistic the river will be opened in the coming days," said Yol. "I have had fruitful talks and have been assured that the boats will be able to pass along the river soon."

Some boats with supplies were seen in Akobo on 7 August, coming from Ethiopia on separate river channels from the main route via Nassir.

However, despite official assurances, no boats have been reported to have moved past Nassir. Aid workers stress that more must be done to ensure supplies get through.

Ex-combatants' demobilization first phase wraps up in Sudan – UN

UN News 11/8/09 - Thousands of former fighters have taken part in the first phase of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme, marking a key milestone for the 2005 agreement that ended Sudan's north-south civil war, the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the country reported today.

The last of over 5,600 ex-combatants earmarked for demobilization were processed yesterday in the first phase of the DDR scheme in Blue Nile state, in Sudan's east, according to the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), which celebrated the achievement in a brief ceremony.

It is hoped that eventually as many as 180,000 ex-combatants across Sudan will be demobilized under the DDR scheme.

The joint North and South Sudan DDR commissions, along with UNMIS, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO), are assisting with the process in Blue Nile.

The DDR initiative seeks to ensure that demobilized combatants are properly reintegrated into civilian life, receiving packages including livestock and vocational training. Monitoring is also a crucial component to prevent former fighters from sliding back into violence.

The DDR commissions have agreed to jointly process caseloads in Blue Nile, Southern

Kordofan and Abyei, before expanding to other areas under the 2005 pact, known as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

Other key benchmarks of the treaty include border demarcation and preparations for national elections in 2010 and a referendum on the final status of areas of southern Sudan in 2011.

One-third of ex-combatants demobilized in Blue Nile have already started receiving counseling as a first step to reintegrate into civilian life.

Up to 180,000 former fighters from the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), Popular Defence Forces and Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) will be demobilized, and the first stages will target mostly those with special needs, including the old and infirm, as well as women and children associated with armed forces or groups.

The multi-year scheme is being led jointly by the DDR commissions, with financial and technical support from the UN.

But UNMIS pointed out that funding continues to be a major challenge. Some \$430 million is required over three years, but only \$88 million was pledged at the last donor conference held in Juba earlier this year.

In a related development, the UN today welcomed the donation of 22 vehicles by the European Commission, which will be used by the DDR commissions to help monitor participants transition into civilian life.

"The progress made in the past year on DDR has become one of the success stories of CPA implementation," UNDP Country Director Jorgen Lissner said at a ceremony in the capital, Khartoum.

The cars will be used to allow case workers to cover areas of reintegration and provide logistical support for the daily operations of the commissions.

In a related development, *Al-Ayyam* reports that the North and South DDR Commissions announced that 10571 combatants have been demobilized in Southern Kordofan, the Blue Nile and Equatoria. DRR National Council Chairman Gen. Bakri Hassan Saleh while addressing a function yesterday to mark the event affirmed the government's commitment to implement the DDR programmes.

Darfur insurgency "silenced" by 90% - Defence Minister

Defence Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein has affirmed the army's ability to impose peace all over the country, saying insurgency in Darfur has been incapacitated by 90%, *Al-Ahdath* reports.

8 Darfur movements to participate in talks by end of September

Eight Darfur movements who have signed a Tripoli Declaration have agreed to on a unified agenda and a joint delegation for talks scheduled to kick off by the end of September in Doha, *Al-Ahdath* reports. Spokesperson of the group Mahgoub Hussein told the paper yesterday that they had already informed AU-UN mediator D'jibril Bassole and Qatari State Minister about their decision to participate in the upcoming talks.

Gunmen kill UNAMID Sudanese worker in South Darfur

Sudan Tribune website 10/8/09 — Unknown gunmen killed a Sudanese contractor working with the hybrid peacekeeping mission in South Darfur state, the UNAMID said yesterday.

"The staff member was shot by unknown armed men about 4 kilometres from UNAMID base in

El Daein town in South Darfur."

The victim was taken to the hospital by a UNAMID patrol where he later died yesterday. UNAMID is investigating the incident. The mission did not disclose the identity of the Sudanese worker.

Mysterious disease kills 2 people and infects 37 in Southern Kordofan

Miraya FM 11/8/09 - An anonymous disease killed two people and infected thirty seven others in Katen village of Southern Kordofan State. The Health Administration in the area was unable to identify the disease which caused panic among the citizens following its spread in the village. The Director General at the Southern Kordofan State Ministry of Health, Dr. Al-Tijani Abdallah said that samples have been sent to the national laboratory in Khartoum for further analysis to determine the type of disease.

Opposition demands Elections Law amendment

Political parties in the opposition have called for amendments to the Elections Law that they described as undemocratic and favouring the NCP, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports. Speaking at a symposium yesterday in Khartoum Mr. Sidig Yusuf, the director for electoral affairs at the Sudan's Communist Party, said that the NCP was neither keen on the elections nor on the transition to democracy.

Meanwhile, Kamal Omar, a key member of the Turabi-led Popular Congress Party (PCP) revealed that the alliance of opposition parties would present a memorandum to the NEC and to the Registrar of Political Parties concerning the restrictive laws.

Parliament denounces Khartoum murders incidents

The National Assembly's Defence and Security Committee Chairman, Jalal Tauer has urged authorities to take necessary measures to counter what he described as a "serious phenomenon in Sudanese society", citing two incidents of murder – a businessman and a banker - that took place over the last few days, the **Citizen** reports.

Committee urges Presidency to set up Human Rights Commission

The head of the parliamentary committee on human rights said the committee has sent a memorandum to the Presidency requesting it to expedite the formation of the Human Rights Commission, reports **Al-Ayyam**. Committee chair, Priscilla Joseph pointed out that the formation of a Human Rights Commission would help rid the country of international special human rights rapporteurs and observers. She said that the commission, once in place, would replace international human rights bodies in monitoring violations of human rights in the country.