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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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- *Insecurity in South Sudan is a curse on self-determination*
By Jacob K. Lupai
<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article30881>

Commentary

- Politics overshadows humanitarian work in Darfur (**Al-Sahafa**)
By Mohamed Abu-Al-Fadhil

Interview

- Sudan Ambassador to UN (Part II)

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Highlights

Local Arabic and English Language Press

Police disperse riots by relatives of journalist murderers

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports police yesterday contained riots triggered by the execution of nine persons convicted of a journalist murder. Deputy Director of Police Gen. Adil Al-Agib said the riots were started by the relatives of the executed convicts. Protesters burned down a police station and four persons were detained. 34 vehicles were also damaged and commercial shops looted.

AP, 14/4/09 reported police have used tear gas to disperse dozens of Sudanese protesting the execution of nine people from the Darfur region who were convicted in the killing of Al-Wifaq newspaper's Editor-in-Chief. The protesters hurled stones at vehicles in the capital Tuesday.

SLM says those executed were all from the Darfur region, where government forces have been battling rebels for six years.

Sudan Tribune website 14/4/09 reported nine people executed Monday by the Sudanese authorities had asserted their innocence before being hanged for the murder of a prominent Islamist journalist in 2006. Also, the Fur tribe protested the execution and considered it as directed against their ethnic group.

"The convicted told their families before being executed they were innocent and never killed the journalist," one of the relatives of the convicted people told **Sudan Tribune** today from Khartoum on condition of anonymity. The relative added that they said that to their families just hours before the execution.

"They said they should be considered as martyrs for the cause of Darfur and asked their families not to weep for them," the source added, before commenting "this is a political crime." He stressed that the convicted were tortured to confess to the crime.

"And you should know that even under torture only three confessed and retracted before the judge," he added.

"The execution of the nine men is outrageous. They were arbitrarily arrested, tortured and then subjected to an unfair trial," said Tawanda Hondora, Africa Deputy Director at Amnesty International.

The hanging also angered Darfuri who demonstrated in Khartoum to protest the hanging of the nine men. On Tuesday some 5000 demonstrators burned shops and cars in south Khartoum. They also chanted slogans supporting the Sudan Liberation Movement, a rebel group led by the exiled Abdel Wahid Al-Nur.

Further, in a statement released from the Darfuri Osman Tarleen, one of Fur traditional leaders called to investigate the execution of the nine Fur saying it came in line with the crimes committed by the government in the region since 2003.

All these crimes will not "cow the will of our tribe — instead such intimidations increases our determination" to struggle for the rights of our people, the tribal leader said.

The nine men executed in Khartoum-North yesterday were: Ishag Al-Sanusi Juma, aged 75 years; Abdel Hai Omer Abdel Majeed, 45 years; Mustafa Adam Mohamed Mohamed Khalifa, 72 years; Abdel Majeed Ali, 33 years; Sabir Zakariya Hassan, 28 years; Gamal Eldin Eisa Al Haj, 45 years; Adam Ibrahim Alhaj, 44 years; Mohamed Birgid, 65 years; and Hassan Adam Fadol, 55 years. The nine were buried in Sahafa East Cemetery.

Local Radio, citing witnesses and security sources, reported that relatives of the executed men had clashed with police in two places. Witnesses said a small number of demonstrators destroyed and damaged shops and cars on the way to the funerals.

The human rights group Amnesty International condemned the executions, saying the men were tortured to extract confessions. "The execution of the nine men is outrageous. They were arbitrarily arrested, tortured and then subjected to an unfair trial," said Tawanda Hondora, Amnesty's Africa Deputy Director.

The government, viewing the killing of the editor and the trial as sensitive matters, initially restricted reporting of the case to state media

Interior Ministry says ready to secure elections

The Ministry of Interior and the police headquarters have expressed their readiness to secure the upcoming elections which they have described as "critical and crucial", reports **Al-Wifaq**. The Interior Minister, Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid, addressing a graduation ceremony of batch (102) of the central reserve police yesterday, said the reserve police would be in forefront to secure elections and to protect relief convoys.

SPLM elections campaign to kick off today

Al-Sahafa reports SPLM's elections campaign will kick off today across the country. SPLM Deputy Chairman and head of the SPLM elections committee James Wani will present SPLM's elections strategy to the movement politburo meeting today in Juba.

Presidency defers meeting to next week

Al-Ahdath reports that a meeting of the Presidency has been postponed to next week because FVP Salva Kiir had to remain in Juba to attend the SPLM Politburo meeting. Sources say that the Presidency was due to discuss preparations for the elections, the census results as well as other key issues such as the ICC and constitutional amendments.

We'll pay SPLA troops, says SPLM Political Commissar

The Citizen reports that Will Tuil Lim, the Political Commissar at SPLA Headquarters, has called on the disgruntled SPLA troops who have not received their salaries several months to be patient until the SPLA finds solutions to their problems. Tuil said he met the SPLA Chief of Staff on Sunday before appealing to troops in Mundri, Owinyi Ki-bul and Mangala.

MPs say tribal arming in Southern Kordofan must be investigated

Al-Sahafa reports an MP, during the Parliament debate yesterday on President Al-Bashir's speech, has called for an urgent investigation in reports of arms being provided to tribes in Southern Kordofan. SPLM MP (Southern Kordofan) Ramadan Ibrahim Shimilla painted a grim picture of the situation in Southern Kordofan. He said tribes are receiving arms, armed militias are spreading and daily incidents of death are on the rise. He pointed out that a popular consultation can not take place under the present circumstance. SPLM official Yassir Arman told the session that President Al-Bashir's speech lost sight of important issues such as the

CPA implementation and environment and economic crisis. According to Arman, four issues are crucial which would decide Sudan's destiny, these are: the ICC, dealing with the Security Council, Darfur and the endorsement of laws necessary for elections such as the press, national security and referendum bills. MP Zakaria Bashir Imam has complained of insecurity in Khartoum city and the spread of burglary and rising unemployment among graduates and youths.

South Sudan secession likely – Sadiq Al-Mahdi

Al-Wifaq reports Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi as saying while the Southern Sudan secession "is now more likely than ever", the western Sudan secession "is out of the question". However, he warned of further deterioration and internationalization of the situation in Darfur if the problem is not addressed.

Meanwhile, SPLM official Yassir Arman said only 20 months left to go for the self-determination, adding the referendum law would be the most crucial issue in the Sudanese political arena in the next coming days. He said the SPLM does not approve of the laws relating to freedoms and democratic transformation, citing the Press Bill which needs to be amended. He accused the NCP of dragging its feet on the bills pertaining to democratic transition.

ICC provides intelligence to Israel about Sudan

Al-Wifaq cites former ICC investigators for a claim that the Court had supplied Israel and other western countries with intelligence about Sudan. According to the said investigators, the ICC Prosecutor Ocampo also relied on the help of three groups to fabricate reports to use against the Government of the Sudan.

Abyei Assembly condemns killing of two Messeriya

Al-Ahdath reports the Abyei Area Council condemned the killing of two Messeriya and accused unnamed entities of an attempt to incite sedition between the Messeriya and the Dinka. A press release issued by the Assembly has demanded investigation of the incident.

Al-Sahafa publishes Government of Sudan's submission on Abyei

Al-Sahafa published a lengthy submission presented to the Abyei Arbitration Tribunal by the government representative Al-Dirdiri Mohamed Ahmed. The submission described the arbitration task as crucial and dangerous given the fact that the disputed area is bigger than the size of Luxemburg and as big as Lebanon and that the oil revenues generated from this area could exceed that of many Third World countries. The submission described the case as "Sudan's first and biggest issue". The argument said the ABC report was based on a grave mistake that Bahr el Arab was not known in 1905. The Tribunal will hear oral submissions from 18 to 29 of April.

Halaib Triangle awaits ICJ arbitration – Parliament

Al-Intibaha reports the National Assembly Security and Defence Committee Chairman Jalal Tawir as saying that the Sudanese Parliament is following up the issue of Halaib and that the dispute is currently being arbitrated by the International Court of Justice. Halaib Triangle is a disputed area between Sudan and Egypt.

Authorities flog girls on charge of wearing tight T-shirts and jeans

As part of public order campaigns being carried out by police to combat indecent dress in Khartoum north, Khartoum North Court yesterday sentenced six girls to flogging (40 lashes) and SDG 200 (fine) on charge of wearing tight T-shirt and jeans, reports *Al-Rai Al-Aam*. If the fine is not paid, they will serve a jail term of two months. Public Order Police source told the paper yesterday that campaigns would continue to minimize indecent appearance in the capital.

INGO ouster crisis nearing end

Al-Ahdath reports Sudan Government and the International Community have reached understandings to overcome the INGO expulsion crisis. The paper has learned from an influential government source that an agreement was imminent between the government and international government source including the USA whereby new INGOs will be allowed to operate in the country. According to the paper's source, the government also agreed to American NGOs to operate as per specific conditions.

HAC notes three INGO irregularities

Al-Rai Al-Aam, quoting informed sources, reports that the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs has noted new "irregularities" by a UK, Dutch and Danish NGOs. Reportedly, the Ministry is considering taking measures against them. The source further added that the Ministry is in the process of drafting new laws to regulate humanitarian activities.

No insurgency in South Darfur - Governor

Akhir Lahza reports that South Darfur Governor Ali Mahmoud says there is no rebel presence in South Darfur. Speaking at the Chamber of Federal Government forum yesterday, he said that his government would hold some people accountable for inciting tribal conflict. He said however that there are some incidents of armed robbery confined to the areas east of the Jebel Marra but pointed out that the army is in control of the situation.

Websites/International News Coverage

Sudan condemns Darfur rebels to death

AFP 15/4/09 (Khartoum) – A Sudanese court today condemned 10 rebels from the Darfur rebel JEM to death for an attack on Khartoum in 2008 which killed more than 220 people. "I condemn you to death by hanging," Judge Mutasim Tajisir said in delivering the verdict.

The men were found guilty of terrorist activities, overthrowing the regime, destruction of public property and possession of illegal arms, he said. "God is Great! JEM is strong! Revolution, revolution until victory!" cried the defendants, dressed in traditional long robes, after hearing the verdict.

Tajisir, who ordered the release of three others accused in the case, gave the defendants one week to appeal the verdict -- which was swiftly branded illegal by JEM.

"This judgment is illegal, illegitimate and violates international law," JEM Spokesperson Ahmed Hussein told **AFP**. "This is yet another evidence that the judicial system of the regime is not independent."

The verdict is "a clear violation of Doha because the regime recognized there that these guys are war prisoners that have to be exchanged," Hussein said.

Last year, the United Nations expressed concern over the trials in the Sudanese courts especially created for the case and urged Khartoum to abolish capital punishment. Defence lawyers have argued that the special courts are unconstitutional and have not guaranteed their clients' legal rights.

SPLM's Al-Hilu sworn in as deputy governor of Southern Kordofan

Sudan Tribune website, 14/4/09 (KHARTOUM) – Abdel Aziz Adam Al-Hilu today was sworn in as the new deputy governor of South Darfur state before the Sudanese President Omer Al-Bashir.

Al-Hilu replaces Daniel Kodi, who had been removed by his party for failure to manage his political and executive duties. He also had been accused of violating the SPLM constitution.

The new deputy governor who is a member of the political bureau of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) vowed today to work in order to ensure security and to promote peaceful coexistence in the region. He also pledged to work for the CPA implementation and the economic development of Southern Kordofan.

Al Hilu, who is originally from the Massalit tribe in Darfur, faces huge challenges in the region. Some Nuba contest his representation for their region; but also he has to reconcile divided SPLM section in the state. Further he has to restore confidence between his party and the National Congress Party (NCP) there.

Kidnappers warn against armed rescue of aid workers

Sudan Tribune website, 15/4/09 (KHARTOUM) – The kidnappers of two abducted aid workers have threatened to kill the hostages if the authorities attempt to forcefully release them, despite government claims yesterday that hopes are high for the release of two.

Different sources report conflictingly that the kidnappers are either former janjaweed of the Abbala tribe, Fellata tribesmen or also a group calling itself "Falcons for the Liberation of Africa."

Speaking to UN radio network **Miraya FM** via satellite phone, one of the kidnappers said that the security authority in Western Darfur State gave them a 72 hour ultimatum to release the hostages otherwise force will be used against them.

The kidnapper reiterated the group's obscure demand that the French Government directly negotiate with them to fulfill their demand to re-try the French organization "Zoe's Ark," a group whose employees were convicted but then pardoned for child abductions in Chad.

Negotiations with the kidnappers are underway, affirmed the Governor of South Darfur State Ali Mahmoud at a press conference today in Khartoum.

Aid worker Claire Dubois was also permitted to speak with **Miraya FM**, assuring listeners that she and her colleague are both in good health. The hostages were able to speak with Agence France Presse on Sunday.

French hostage Stephanie Jodoin called for a resolution to the situation in order to enable her return to her country.

Sudan SPLM SG says he may vote against South secession

Sudan Tribune website, 14/4/09 (KHARTOUM) – SPLM SG Pagan Amum said he was prepared to vote for unity in the 2011 referendum provide certain conditions are met.

"My choice is based on the SPLM agenda which is to build a new Sudan where all citizens are equal as partners in one nation" Amum said in an interview with the Kuwaiti based **Al-Raay** newspaper. "We are never with the separation principle but we support it if the conditions for unity, justice and equality among the people of the same country are not available as well as a democratic society" he added.

The SPLM official said that the right of self determination for Southerners "is an

acknowledgement for the rights of the citizen and not a suppression of it”.

Amum denied that the desire to separate among Southerners is due to difference in religion with the North being predominantly Muslim adding that this perception was created by “tyrants who ruled Sudan and wanted to distance us from Arabs and Muslims”

He revealed that ex-Southern rebel group promised the US administration that it will support “the new national Sudan project” through revitalizing the CPA, bringing peace on the ground to Darfur and improving the humanitarian situation there.

Responding to criticism that the South lacks democracy, he said that the SPLM is working to “create a radical change in the political, social and economic structure in the Sudanese society”.

“The authority should not be in the hand of a few people in society at the top and those who control the wealth which belongs to all Sudanese people” Amum said.

Jonglei County changes name

Sudan Tribune website, 14/4/09 (BOR) – A peace and reconciliation conference between Atar and Khorfulus communities of Jonglei State has resolved to adopt the Canal County as the new name.

The former name, Khorfulus, has now been abandoned for the sake of unity, an official said. County headquarters relocation to Wun-aruop [in Atar area], equitable distribution of power at all levels of governments and non-compensation for losses incurred when the situation was tense were also agreed, Hon. Peter Chol Wal told the Sudan Tribune here on Tuesday. Both communities had demanded disintergration of the county into Atar and Khorfulus but the conference turned down the request.

"But at last we agreed and signed [the documents] and I even went to Atar for the first time," Hon. Chol Wal said. Mr. Wal is a State member of parliament (MP) from Khorfulus. Efforts made to reach a MP from Atar area were futile.

Khorfulus and Atar communities have been in hot contest over County name, headquarters location and distribution of positions in the governments for last four years of the comprehensive Peace Agreement. Lives and properties have been lost then. The communities, however, don't have a history of cattle raiding or child abduction. Hon. Chol Wal says the major challenge to Canal County security now will be external attacks.

Oxfam GB appeals against expulsion from northern Sudan

Source: Oxfam GB - UK

Reuters, 15/4/09, International aid agency Oxfam GB said today that it has formally submitted its appeal against the Sudanese government's decision to expel it from northern Sudan, and expressed serious concern at the false allegations that continue to be made against it and other expelled agencies. The agency warned the humanitarian situation in Darfur is worsening following the expulsion, with people facing shortages of water and other aid.

Penny Lawrence, Oxfam GB's International Programmes Director, said: "We have already been told that water pumps in some Darfur camps have stopped pumping, and there are growing fears about the potential for outbreaks of disease in the coming rainy season. The expulsion is already affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of the very poorest and most vulnerable Sudanese people."

Oxfam GB has been assisting 600,000 people across northern Sudan - not only in Darfur, but in the east of the country and the poorest areas of the capital Khartoum, which have also been affected. Programmes providing clean water, sanitation, education and microfinance have all been shut down.

Lawrence said: "We strongly refute the government's accusations that we have acted outside our humanitarian mandate. We are an independent, impartial organization, and we have not provided any information to the International Criminal Court's investigation. For the past 25 years, our predominantly Sudanese staff has worked tirelessly to help improve the lives of the poorest people in Sudan. We have provided emergency aid during conflicts, floods and droughts, and long term development support in some of the most remote and marginalized areas of the country. We remain committed to ensuring people get the support they need."

The agency said it has still not been given an official reason why its registration has been revoked, or been given evidence of any of the allegations against it. Its appeal has been submitted in the timeframe given under Sudanese law, after lengthy legal consultations.

Oxfam GB submitted its appeal to the Sudanese Humanitarian Aid Commission, in accordance with Sudanese law under Article 14 of the Voluntary and Humanitarian Work Act 2006. The Act allows agencies one month to appeal.

[Any views expressed in this article are those of the writer and not of Reuters.]

Commentary

Politics overshadows humanitarian work in Darfur

Opinion piece by Mohamed Abu-Al-Fadhil, Al-Sahafa:

Humanitarian intervention has turned into a tool for political pressure in recent times. According to UN, the 13 expelled INGOs offered half of the total aid assistance provided by 257 aid agencies in Darfur. As such, the following question springs to the mind: what the other agencies that operate freely in Darfur are doing? The UN also said that the expulsion would leave 1.1 million people without food, 1.5 million people without healthcare and more than 2 million people without access to drinking water. This puts a heavy burden on the agencies still left operating in the region and on the Sudan government to meet its pledges to cover the humanitarian gap.

The expulsion of the NGOs has highlighted the divisions within the UNSC where Sudan is concerned as China and African members of the UNSC foiled a UK and French sponsored draft Presidential Statement calling on Sudan to revoke the expulsion decision. It has also brought to the fore the increasing importance of the aid agencies in the international sphere and the need for international protection for these agencies. The issue is not only an issue of expulsion of aid agencies – a number of agencies still operate in Darfur - but rather the principles on the basis of which they have come to Darfur. These agencies give interpretations and justifications for their interventions and keep blaming the government for the deterioration of the situation in Darfur while turning a blind eye to the violations by the armed groups. The UN did condemn violations by the armed groups and in March 2006, OCHA reported that the SLA carjacked three NGO vehicles to use in their raids. The former SRSG Jan Pronk threatened to suspend relief assistance to the region if armed groups continue to target aid groups. But the violations continued and the UN resorted to "bribing" the armed groups to allow passage for relief convoys.

In light of the afore-mentioned, the Sudan Government will continue to be weary of the aid agencies and instead of becoming part of a means to ease the crisis, would further aggravate the situation. Khartoum may not be able to stop the aid agencies from operating in the region because of the political consequences involved and may not be able to carry their duties because of the financial costs this entails. Consequently, the ways to solutions to the crisis become more complicated when the political agenda triumphs over the humanitarian.

INTERVIEW: Sudan Ambassador to the US (part II)

Below are excerpts from an interview with Sudan's Ambassador to the US, Ambassador John Akej Koj – **Akhir Lahza 14/04/09**

Sudan, US relations:

Special Envoy Scott Gration did mention a number of times that US may remove Sudan from its Terror List. After this come steps to improve bilateral relations between the two countries. This could take a short time if the two sides make progress on the issue of the NGOs expulsion, implementation of the CPA and solutions to the Darfur issue.

The Darfur crisis:

Darfur has been a priority issue for the Obama Administration that is now trying to implement its strategy on Darfur without resorting to military means. The Sudan Government is very keen to seek solutions to these problems and, together with the international community and the AU, tries to encourage the armed groups to sit for peace talks.

ICC arrest warrant for President Al-Bashir:

We received a lot of support from friendly countries and many rejected the ICC decision and called for a referral to the UNSC. We believe that the UNSC referral to the ICC in the first place enabled the ICC to issue arrest warrants for Ali Kosheib, Ahmed Haroun and now President Al-Bashir. I have full confidence that Sudanese diplomats would be able to succeed in defending the country in the event of a referral to the UNSC.

Efforts by the AU and the Arab League to push for a suspension of the warrant and all other efforts against the ICC decision are of importance even if these efforts contradict government's push for an outright revoke of the ICC warrant for President Al-Bashir. In my view, success towards a referral to the UNSC is in itself an important diplomatic step.

The Sudan Government has instructed all its diplomatic missions abroad not to receive the ICC arrest warrant so we do not have a copy of the warrant.

Expulsion of aid agencies:

Sudanese government officials believe there is no going back on the expulsion but the humanitarian gap, if any, should be filled by other agencies, even US agencies) provided they do not have secret agendas and were not involved in providing information to the ICC Prosecutor.

Southern Sudan and the US:

The US interest in southern Sudan and the implementation of the CPA emanates from the fact that it brokered the peace deal. The US therefore backs implementation of the CPA until elections and the referendum take place.