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**IN THE NEWS TODAY:**

➤ **UN/ Agencies/ Partners**

- WFP chief to visit Sudan to inspect aid operations
- WFP welcomes Russian shipment of wheat to Sudan
- UNHCR chief to hold press conference tomorrow

➤ **The Transition Debate**

- President Bashir says neither African Union Mission in Sudan nor United Nations forces can restore security in Darfur
- Deployment of Darfur peacekeeping force is premature – Sudan
- United Nations Secretary-General optimistic of cooperation with Sudan
- Peacekeepers alone can't help Darfur - UNHCR chief
- Government says US pressures aimed at forcing Sudan to normalize ties with Israel

➤ **CPA**

- VP Taha says elections will be held on schedule
- NCP, SPLM to discuss Abyei tomorrow
- National DDR Council to discuss its national strategy

➤ **GoNU**

- Authorities release NCP's Hassan Bargo
- Foreign minister says conflict with Chad is over
- Justice Minister brands southern constitutions as illegal

➤ **Southern Sudan**

- Southern Sudan security minister accuse northerners of "terrorising Ugandan traders"
- Eritrean government to establish information centre in Juba

➤ **Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement**

- African Union welcomes Darfur authority
- Minnawi travels to Darfur to launch TDRA
- African Union condemns aerial raid on villages in Anka, N. Darfur
- AbdulWahid says talks are impossible while people in Darfur are in camps
- Armed group raids el-Fasher market

➤ **Other Developments**

- Khartoum landlords fear renting former Darfur rebels

## **HIGHLIGHTS :**

### **UN/ Agencies/ Partners**

#### **WFP chief to visit Sudan to inspect aid operations**

(*SudanTribune.com*) Josette Sheeran, the new chief of the UN World Food Programme, will visit Darfur and southern Sudan this week to view food aid activities on her first international mission as head of the world's largest humanitarian relief organization, a WFP statement said Monday.

She is scheduled to arrive in Khartoum on Wednesday April 25, where she will meet with government officials and WFP staff before heading to North Darfur and southern Sudan.

While in North Darfur, Ms Sheeran will travel northwest to Kutum, where she will visit the Kassab camp for internally displaced people (IDP). There, she will meet women IDPs and distribute hand mills for grinding cereals. More than 22,000 IDPs receive WFP food aid at Kassab camp – about 80 percent of them women.

The next day, the WFP executive director will fly to Juba, southern Sudan, where she is scheduled to meet government representatives, including Madame Rebecca Garang, the Minister of Roads and Transport, and visit a WFP-supported school feeding programme.

The visit to Sudan is part of a three-country trip during which she will also visit Ethiopia and Chad, April 23 to April 28.

Up to April 4, Josette Sheeran, was the Under Secretary for Economic, Energy and Agricultural Affairs at the US State department. She was responsible for spearheading the Administration's economic diplomacy efforts and advancing the interests of American businesses, farmers and workers at home and abroad through global policies spanning trade, investment, finance, development, energy, telecommunications and transportation.

#### **WFP welcomes Russian shipment of wheat to Sudan**

(*Sudan Tribune*) The WFP has welcomed Russia's donation of \$2 million worth of wheat to Sudan to help the agency's recovery and development operations.

The shipment, it says, will help feed 284,500 school children in Kassala, Red Sea and North Kordofan as well as 6,000 adult participants in the food-for-work projects.

### **UNHCR chief to hold press conference tomorrow**

*Khartoum Monitor* reports that it has received note from UNHCR Public Information that the UNHCR chief, Antonio Guterres will be holding a press conference tomorrow Thursday evening at the UNHCR conference hall.

## **The Transition Debate**

### **President Bashir says neither African Union Mission in Sudan nor United Nations forces can restore security in Darfur**

(*AlAyaam*) President Bashir says neither the African Union Mission in Sudan nor United Nations forces can restore security for the people in Darfur. He said security can only be realized through peaceful coexistence between the people of Darfur.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony for the TDRA, the president called upon the newly-formed Transitional Darfur Regional Authority to work towards restoring trust between the people and the government and to guarantee security to the people.

The president said that the priority issues for the TDRA include the implementation of the security arrangements. He pointed out that if all exert concerted efforts with goodwill, then security can be realized in all parts of the country and the camps emptied of its residents so that the people of Sudan are no longer dependent on "dubious organizations".

The president also lashed out on humanitarian organization and described them as "inhuman".

### **Deployment of Darfur peacekeeping force is premature – Sudan**

(*SudanTribune.com*) Sudanese government believes that holding talks with the UN on deploying a joint UN-African Union peacekeeping contingent in the rebellious province of Darfur is premature, Sudan's envoy to the UN said Tuesday.

Sudan's UN ambassador, Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem, told the state-run Egyptian newspaper, al-Ahram, that the UN that has so far fulfilled 65% of its obligations for technical support to the AMIS should first fully carry out its obligations to render technical assistance to African peacekeepers, and said it is still possible to settle the Darfur conflict internally.

### **United Nations Secretary-General optimistic of cooperation with Sudan**

(*Sudan Vision*) United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that the diplomatic correspondence with Sudan on deployment of hybrid forces in Darfur have not yet ended but has expressed great optimism over cooperation on the HSP.

The Secretary-General is reported to having said in Qatar that he will concentrate his efforts on the implementation of the HSP and then resume discussions with the Sudan government using diplomatic channels until deployment of a hybrid force is reached in Darfur.

### **Peacekeepers alone can't help Darfur - UNHCR chief**

(*SudanTribune.com; AlIntibaha*) Even a force of 100,000 peacekeepers could not secure peace in the Darfur region of western Sudan, the head of the U.N refugee agency said on Tuesday.

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres said only a comprehensive political solution to the crisis would end the four-year-old conflict in Darfur, in which the United Nations say around 200,000 people have died and 2.5 million people displaced.

"Without peace, there is no miracle. No security force will be able to guarantee security in the whole of Darfur. Darfur is very big," he said during a meeting with the sheikhs of the displaced people at the Krinding Camp in El-Geneina, the capital of West Darfur state.

*AlIntibaha* daily only quotes Gueterres as saying that even 100,000 peacekeepers would not be enough to restore the peace in Darfur but the paper does not say in what context the statement was made.

The *AP* reports also that residents of the IDP camps visited by Mr. Gueterres have called for an international force for Darfur and hinted on possibilities of reopening of the DPA that they described as insufficient.

"A bad peace is better than a good war," Guterres told the refugees.

### **Government says US pressures aimed at forcing Sudan to normalize ties with Israel**

(*AlHayat; AlKhartoum et al*) A state minister for foreign affairs says the US intends to control Sudan through the pressures it exerts in the name of the international community.

State minister Al-Sammani Al-Waseela said at symposium organized by the NCP's Youth Secretariat that the US is also using the weak financial resources of the African Union and pushing the Sudan into confrontation with the international community.

He says the government has not succumbed to US pressures to change its position on an international force deployment to Darfur but has only accepted the strengthening of the AMIS forces. He said that the 3-months extension of the United Nations Mission in Sudan mandate in southern Sudan instead of the usual 6 months is an attempt to send United Nations troops to Darfur. He adds however that the United Nations can only deploy troops to Darfur with government consent.

Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail who also spoke at the symposium agreed that Darfur is in need of a political process to address the security and humanitarian problems. He said that Israel lobby groups seek to liken Darfur to the Holocaust.

US pressures on Sudan, he said, are aimed at forcing Sudan to normalize relations with Israel.

The two state officials also explained that United Nations troops allowed into Darfur are to provide technical assistance and will include police, administrative staff and flight crews. The Presidential Advisor says talks on the “hybrid operation” have not yet started.

On the other hand, a prominent member of the National Umma Party pointed out that the 3-phase support package could not solve the problems of Sudan if there is no political solution from Sudanese. She called for a ceasefire and a new agreement that will address the concerns of the people of Darfur.

A prominent member of the Popular Congress Party attending the symposium said that the issue of the 3-phase plan is could be attributed to the “constitutional crisis” on rights of the citizen. This crisis, he says, has been the main reason for the political crisis in the country. He called on the government to seek an alternative to the DPA.

## **CPA**

### **VP Taha says elections will be held on schedule**

(*AlSahafa*) Addressing a mass rally in Kosti, White Nile State, Vice-President Taha reiterated government commitment to hold free and fair elections on schedule.

He said that the government envisages elections where the people will have their say. He also called for a true partnership in government that will transform peace into a culture and way of life for the people.

The VP further pointed out that peace is an irreversible option with obligations that have to be met. This, he says, requires grassroots participation in the process.

### **NCP, SPLM to discuss Abyei tomorrow**

(*Sudan Vision*) The joint political committee of the NCP and the SPLM will meet next Friday to discuss outstanding issues with Abyei expected to feature prominently.

### **National DDR Council to discuss its national strategy**

(*Khartoum Monitor*) The Executive Secretary of the National DDR Committee says the committee has approved the strategy laid down by the Northern DDR Commission and is now discussing the one by the Southern DDR Commission.

He said that the council had unanimously adopted a decree in a recent meeting that there should be a national DDR strategy executed by nationals while preserving the country's right to receive foreign aid from the international community.

## **GoNU**

### **Authorities release NCP's Hassan Bargo**

(*AlSahafa*) Authorities released yesterday Mr. Hassan Bargo after 60 days in detention.

Mr. Bargo heads the party's West African Affairs desk.

Bargo told the press following his release that he was not interrogated throughout his 60 days in detention and was not told the reason for his arrest. Neither Nafei Ali Nafei and Kamal Obeid [*both prominent members of the party*] who visited him in detention knew the reasons for his detention.

### **Foreign minister says conflict with Chad is over**

(*AlRai AlAam*) Foreign Minister Lam Akol said the differences with Chad following the recent events along their common borders have been resolved following the recent visit here by his Chadian counterpart.

He said that the two states have agreed to avert such problems in future and to work towards consolidation of relations between them on the basis of the agreements signed.

### **Justice Minister brands southern constitutions as illegal**

(*AlIntibaha*) The Federal Minister of Justice says the constitutions of southern states are illegal. The minister also criticized the GoSS Ministry of Legal Affairs for allowing southern states to operate with their constitutions without having received a conformity certification from the Justice Ministry.

The GoSS has also come under attack from the States' Council for not presenting the draft constitutions of the southern states to the justice ministry for endorsement and conformity to the CPA and the Interim National Constitution.

## **Southern Sudan**

### **Southern Sudan security minister accuse northerners of "terrorising Ugandan traders"**

(*AlIntibaha*) The Security Minister at the GoSS has accused northern Sudanese traders of "terrorising" Ugandan traders by hiring gangs to protect their interests against the large flow of commodities from across the borders.

Speaking to the press in Uganda, Minister Paul Mayom said that the GoSS does not target its allies but pointed out that northern traders have suffered as a result of the CPA that has opened the south to markets across the borders.

### **Eritrean government to establish information centre in Juba**

(*The Citizen*) In a press statement in Juba yesterday, SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum described the just-concluded visit to southern Sudan by Eritrea president Asiyas Affewerki as a success. He hailed the role Eritrea played in bringing about the CPA.

The Eritrean president had declared the full support of his people to the people of southern Sudan and had agreed with authorities in Juba that Eritrea's information minister visit Juba to establish an information center.

The visit also resulted into the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the SPLM and the ruling Eritrean Popular Front.

### **Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement**

#### **African Union welcomes Darfur authority**

(*SudanTribune.com*) The African Union Mission in Sudan welcomed today [24 Apr. '07] the inauguration of the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA), which was formally launched from its offices in Khartoum yesterday.

"The TDRA is a central part of the power sharing arrangements of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) and its launching marks a major milestone in its implementation," said the AMIS Acting Head of Mission Madame Monique Mukaruliza.

"Its inauguration is especially welcome, coming as it does as we approach the first anniversary of the signing of the Agreement," she said.

The African mission said will continue to provide support and cooperation along with its other International Partners to assist in making the TDRA a success on the ground and in helping it become a truly inclusive institution that represents the desires and aspirations of the people of Darfur.

#### **Minnawi travels to Darfur to launch TDRA**

(*Alwan*) Mini Minnawi travels to el-Fasher today to set the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority in motion.

The TDRA was officially launched in Khartoum last Monday.

#### **African Union condemns aerial raid on villages in Anka, N. Darfur**

(*AlAyaam*) The African Union Ceasefire Commission has issued a statement condemning recent aerial raids by government forces on Jabra and Amarai villages north of Anka in North Darfur. The raids took place between 19 – 21 April.

### **AbdulWahid says talks are impossible while people in Darfur are in camps**

(*AlAyaam*) AbdulWahid Mohamed Nur thanked Eritrea and Libya for their initiatives for Darfur but says these initiatives would not lead to peace as long as Khartoum adamantly refuses to harness the Janjaweed, continues to scorch villages and remains against the deployment of a UN force to protect the civilian population.

The leader of the opposition SLM/A said that they will not hold talks with Khartoum against the background of these policies it continues to hold.

“Our priority is towards protection of the civilians in Darfur ... not peace talks that will lead in the long run to signature on paper and no actual implementation on the ground and to government positions without solutions to the problems of the refugees and the IDPs”, he said.

*SudanTribune.com* says AbdulWahid Nur on Monday accused Khartoum of recruiting 17 thousand of Mahamid Arabs of Niger. Al-Nur said Darfur Arab tribes refuse more and more to participate in Sudanese government plans in Darfur.

He further said that SLM engaged intense dialogue with Arab tribes in Darfur and several reconciliation meetings were organized by the SLM.

He said the Mahamid are now settled in different parts of Darfur form Habila area area in west Darfur to Dab Nirah , Bendfi, Jumaiza and wadi Salih.

In October 2006, the Niger’s government suspended deportation of nomadic Arabs, who fled warfare and drought in neighboring Chad during the 1980s.

Abdelwahid said Khartoum in doing so, continues to carry its initial design to re-define the demographic reality of the region. He added that National Congress government wants to generalize the chaos in the country by adopting the priciple of “War of all against all”.

The rebel leader reiterated that deployment of international troops is only can secure lives of the IDPs and the refugees. He further said they will not engage peace talks with Khartoum as long as Darfur civilians are not protected.

### **Armed group raids el-Fasher market**

(*Rai AlShaab*) Traders in a market in el-Fasher continue their second day of strike following a spate of raids by armed groups on the market.

A trader said that they had noticed of late persons in military attire looting the stores and night and taking off with their loot on vehicles mounted with heavy machineguns.



He said that they had filed a case at the local police station pointing out that the locks were shot open and that the raiders raped two girls in the market.

## **Other Developments**

### **Khartoum landlords fear renting former Darfur rebels**

(*SudanTribune.com*) Landlords in Khartoum State fear and are refusing to rent their houses to former rebel Sudan Liberation Movement/Army soldiers of Mini Arkoi Minawi because of the last months clash between Minawi soldiers and the Sudanese police in Muhandisin and Al Muwrada in Omdurman West of Khartoum capital that has resulted to the dead of eleven from both sides.

Minnawi maintains however that no one can prevent his soldiers renting in any part of the capital Khartoum as long as they are Sudanese nationals.