

18th August 2008

www.unmis.org



Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

Local News Headlines

- We will not compromise the country's sovereignty – President Bashir (all dailies)
- Peace process in Sudan fragile – UN (Ray Al-Shaab)
- UN troops safety and presence depend on Bashir's safety – MP (Al-Intibahad)
- NCP and SPLM agree on Abyei oil revenues sharing (Al-Sudani)
- NCP keen to organize acceptable elections – Nafie (Al-Sudani)
- Sudan spearheads campaign to end Sima Samar's mandate (Al-Intibaha)
- Sudan will not bow to America – Presidential advisor (Al-Sahafa)
- Beja Congress demands arbitration for Halaib (Al-Sahafa)
- Kalma IDPs urge government for an alternative shelter (Al-Khartoum)
- JEM says will not accept Darfur initiative unless trials stopped (Al-Sahafa)

Websites/International headlines

- Sudan issues warning for UNSG and his special envoy (ST)
- Female judges to determine the fate of Sudan president (ST)
- Sudan expresses reservations on the Arab League's ICC plan (ST)
- Sudan agrees to allow UNAMID night flights in Darfur - envoy (ST)
- China, Germany voice support to Darfur peacekeeping force (ST)
- Sudanese court sentences more 8 rebels to death over capital attack (ST)
- Sudanese court starts trial for US diplomat assassins (AFP)

NOTE: *Reproduction here does not mean that the UNMIS PIO can vouch for the accuracy or veracity of the contents, nor does this report reflect the views of the United Nations Mission in Sudan. Furthermore, international copyright exists on some materials and this summary should not be disseminated beyond the intended list of recipients.*

Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

Highlights

Local Arabic and English language press

We will not compromise the country's sovereignty – President Bashir

"We will not compromise the country's sovereignty and we will not tolerate derogation of our nation's dignity," said President Bashir, in his speech marking 54th SAF Anniversary, according to local dailies. He said the state's strategy was proceeding with steady steps towards desired goals. He said the nation was being targeted and emphasized the need for unification to block plots. He said the government was determined to complete Darfur peace.

Peace process in Sudan fragile – UN

Ray Al-Shaab reported that SRSG Ashraf Qazi said recent clashes in Abyei and the attack on Omdurman put CPA to the test {press conference by Qazi at UNMIS HQ}. Qazi said last Friday that all these developments increase CPA fragility and constitute warning of potential impact on Sudan and the Sudanese people if the CPA is off the track. Qazi said thousands of residents were displaced by the acts of violence in Abyei last May. However, Qazi said there was a reason for optimism, referring to the Abyei roadmap and the commitment of two parties to peace.

Qazi hoped that the appointment of Abyei chief administrator and deputy would be followed by a full-fledged administration so that IDPs are able to return to resume normal life.

UN troops safety and presence depend on Bashir's safety – MP

Ray Al-Shaab reported that the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mohamed Al-Hassan Al-Amin, has criticized SG Ki-moon's statement on ICC application for Bashir indictment. He said Ki-moon did not speak about possibility of rejection or deferment of ICC indictment; he only spoke about enforcement of the Court's decisions. He said Ki-moon's statement supports ICC against Sudan. "UN and its SG should know that the organization's continuity and safety of thousands of its troops and hundreds of its personnel in Sudan depend on continuity and safety of President Bashir, the symbol of the country's sovereignty," he said. "Ocampo's application is flagrant threat to peace and security in Sudan and Ki-moon's statement is an attempt to influence the court's proceedings though we do not recognize it," he added.

NCP and SPLM agree on Abyei oil revenues sharing

Al-Sudani carried a report saying that NCP and SPLM agreed on sharing oil revenues of Block (2) in Abyei area which is awaiting arbitration. 35.5% of revenues will go to the fund for development in border areas in the north and south of the country, 31.5% will go to GoSS, 25% for GoNU, 2% for Dinka, 2% for Messeriya, 2% for Warrap State and 2% for southern Kordofan State.

NCP keen to organize acceptable elections – Nafie

Al-Sudani quoted the Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie as saying that NCP general convention decided that Bashir would be the party's presidential candidate, as such no other candidacy would be considered. "Bashir does not want to run for a new term but the party functionaries insisted that he should do," he said. "NCP is keen to organize free and fair elections acceptable to all parties," he told Sudan TV.

Sudan spearheads campaign to end Sima Samar's mandate

Al-Intibaha reported that the UN Human Rights Committee will discuss early next month a report on whether Sima Samar will continue as a special rapporteur for human rights in Sudan or not.

The Rapporteur of the Advisory Council for Human Rights Abdul Moneim Osman told Sudan Media Centre (SMC) that Sudan would rely on its campaign on the Arab, Islamic and African groups to block extension for Sima Samar.

Sudan will not bow to America – Presidential advisor

“Trial for crimes committed in Darfur will exclude no body whether a president, a minister or a janitor,” **Al-Sahafa** newspaper quoted Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman as saying. Ismail has reiterated Sudan government’s rejection to deal with ICC, accusing it of being politicized in favour of USA and some western countries. “The indictment will be resisted by all legal and diplomatic means,” he said. Ismail denied the existence of any deal to settle the issue. “We will not bow to America,” he declared. Ismail who was speaking at symposium in Cairo said the coming week would witness formation of special courts to try anybody proved involved in criminal offences in Darfur.

Beja Congress demands arbitration for Halaib

Al-Sahafa reported that participants at a general convention of the Beja Congress have demanded arbitration for Halaib to address the dispute between Sudan and Egypt over the Triangle. The convention revealed that Egyptian authorities have detained several Sudanese nationals in the Triangle. The convention which was concluded yesterday, renewed confidence in the chairmanship of Musa Mohamed Ahmed.

Kalma IDPs urge government for an alternative shelter

Al-Khartoum carried a report saying that floods caused death of six persons and destroyed 1500 shelters in kalma IDPs camp (South Darfur).

Commissioner of Beleil Locality Omer Adam Khatir said a meeting was held with the camp chiefs and NGOs operating within Kalma. He said the Locality proposed relocation of the camp and that was accepted by the IDPs chiefs.

JEM says will not accept Darfur initiative unless trials stopped

Al-Sahafa quoted Khalil-led JEM as saying that it would agree to negotiate with GoS only if trial of the persons accused of participation in attack on Omdurman is ceased. JEM leader Khatab Ibrahim Widaa said SPLM leader Pagan Amum held yesterday consultations with JEM leaders in London focused on the Darfur peace process, efforts to unify armed movements, Omdurman attack trials, Darfurian detainees, freedoms and democratic transformation and the Sudanese peoples’ initiative to resolve crises in Sudan. Khatab told Amum that JEM was of the view that creating a conducive atmosphere was essential for political settlement and stoppage of trials of persons accused of participation in the attack on Omdurman was needed for creating the right atmosphere for negotiations.

Websites/International Headlines

Sudan issues warning for UNSG and his special envoy

(Sudan Tribune) – The Sudanese government warned the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon from making statements in support of the ICC. Khartoum also lashed out at the head of the UN mission in Sudan (UNMIS), Ashraf Qazi for describing the special courts formed to try those alleged to have been involved in a May's attack on the capital as unconstitutional. The powerful Sudanese presidential adviser Nafi Ali Nafi told Sudan TV that Ban and Qazi "are playing with fire".

"We tell those who support the court [ICC] that this is a red line for us and this [warning] excludes no one in any capacity" Nafi said. The UN chief said in an interview with the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram that there should be no impunity for war crimes perpetrators in Darfur. He also expressed confidence "that the ICC will be able to enforce its decisions".

The Sudanese official also accused US, Britain and France of standing behind the decision by the ICC's prosecutor last month to charge President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir. He cited "regime change" as the main motive. Nafi also lashed out at the French government and dismissed its proposal to resolve the ICC row.

"The French role in supporting the charges against Al-Bashir is a result of the growing Zionist influence in France. I see no taste or smell or use from the so called French initiative" he said.

The French proposal was conveyed by the Sudanese foreign minister Deng Alor last month and included a request to hand over Ahmed Haroun, state minister for humanitarian affairs, and militia commander Ali Mohamed Ali Abdel-Rahman, also known as Ali Kushayb. However, Nafi said that his country will not deal with the ICC and that all Sudanese rejected Ocampo's accusations.

He also noted the recent appointment of a special prosecutor for Darfur by Sudan's justice minister and said it was meant to "speed proceedings".

However Nafi stressed that the special court "will not indict people based on what the Westerners want".

Female judges to determine the fate of Sudan president

(Sudan Tribune) – The judges of the International Criminal Court (ICC) return on Monday from a month-long judicial recess with a high profile case waiting for them.

The unique aspects of Al-Bashir's case don't stop here. All the judges of the Pre-Trial Chamber I happen to be females consisting of Akua Kuenyehia from Ghana, Sylvia Steiner from Brazil and Anita Usacka from Latvia. Judge Claude Jorda from France was the only male in the Chamber until he resigned a year ago for health reasons.

The female factor also arises in the application by the ICC's prosecutor against the Sudanese president. Ocampo alleged that rape in Darfur "has been committed systematically and continuously for 5 years". "Rape is an integral part of the pattern of destruction that the Government of the Sudan is inflicting upon the target groups in Darfur" the prosecutor stated in the summary of his application submitted to the judges.

Kuenyehia, who is also the presiding judge of the chamber, has written extensively on gender law and rights of women in Africa. She provided consultancy services to the World Health Organization (WHO) on "Women's Health and Violence" in 1998.

In 2004 the Ghanaian Judge also presented a paper titled "Gender Challenges of the Rome Statute" at Nottingham University.

A non-profit organization has been established under Kuenyehia's name in 2007 with a mission to "the development and empowerment, through formal education, of women in Ghana". The other two judges Steiner and Usacka have also written on topics relating to violence against women throughout their careers.

The extent of the impact of the Judges' background on their decision is yet to be seen. They make take months to make a decision on the prosecutor's application.

The last application by the prosecutor in the Darfur case took exactly two months before a decision was made. However the prosecutor said in his July 14th press conference that due to the complexity of Al-Bashir's case it may take more time. There is no timeframe specified under the ICC statute for judges to make rulings.

While some Sudan experts such as Alex de Waal and Julie Flint have questioned the strength of the case against Al-Bashir particularly with regards to the crime of genocide, Ocampo expressed confidence his will request will be endorsed.

"I present a case to the judges because I am convinced that my case is strong" Ocampo told Sudan Tribune in an interview last week. However he did not rule out the possibility that the Judges may dismiss all of some of his charges against Al-Bashir.

Sudan has dismissed the ICC as a Western conspiracy against the country and a tool against third world nations only.

However it will be judges from non-Western countries in three continents who will rule on Al-Bashir. The Sudanese government has ruled out any dealings with the ICC based on the fact that it is not a state party to the ICC.

Sudan expresses reservations on the Arab League's ICC plan

(Sudan Tribune) – The Sudanese government for the first time unveiled disagreements with the Arab League on a plan it formulated to counter a move by the International Criminal Court to indict Sudan president.

IBut the Sudanese presidential adviser Mustafa Ismail was quoted by the daily Al-Hayat newspaper as telling reporters in Cairo after meeting with Moussa "that there are some parts of the plan that need more discussions".

Ismail also insisted that the Sudanese judiciary is capable of looking into the Darfur war crimes and noted the recent appointment of a special prosecutor for Darfur by Sudan's justice minister. The Sudanese official also accused the ICC of targeting third world countries only. "We did not see that the court looked into what superpowers did in Iraq, Palestine or Afghanistan" he said.

Sudan agrees to allow UNAMID night flights in Darfur - envoy

(Sudan Tribune) — Eight months after the start of the hybrid mission, Sudanese government agreed to allow the African Union-U.N. peacekeeping force to fly at night, the head of UNAMID said today.

In the past, Khartoum rejected to authorize the joint peacekeeping operation in Darfur the use of Darfur airports in the night saying they are not properly lighted. The issue was considered as one of the main obstacles hindering the hybrid mission.

Rodolphe Adada, Joint Special Representative of the joint mission in Darfur told reporters on Sunday that Sudanese government gave UNAMID the green light to conduct its night flights in Darfur enabling the operation to reach the vital 24-hour capability of flight.

"The UNAMID would do whatever possible to facilitate the necessary changes to the airports in conjunction with the Civil Aviation Authority," Adada added.

The joint representative said he asked to allow the hybrid operation to use the new runway in El Geneina, West Darfur.

The UNAMID top official was speaking following the monthly Technical Committee Meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Rodolphe Adada headed the hybrid mission delegation while the Under Secretary at the foreign affairs ministry, Mutrif Siddig led the Sudanese side.

Also, the Deputy Joint Special Representative for Mission Support, Hocine Medili and Deputy Force Commander, Major General Emmanuel Karenzi Karare, took part in the meeting.

Besides, the night flights, UN officials since last year accused Sudan of putting administrative obstacles that may weaken the efficiency of the peacekeeping force.

However, the UNAMID spokesperson, Nouredine Mezni told Sudan Tribune that the meeting also addressed issues related to convoy protection from El Obeid capital of North Kordofan to Darfur, customs clearance of COE into Darfur, visa processing, and police training.

Mezni also added that Sudanese officials pledged to do all what they can to facilitate the deployment of the troops. He added that Adada thanked the Government and underlined the importance to work together for the achievement of this goal.

Addada expressed satisfaction with the arrival of the engineering team from Egypt and Ethiopia, adding that he is looking forward for the arrival of the main body of these troops which will boost UNAMID capabilities on the ground.

A batch of 114 Ethiopian engineering personnel arrived on Saturday while the remaining of the advance contingent of 350 peacekeepers is expected to arrive on Sunday and Monday. Also an Egyptian engineering company of 335 personnel arrived to Darfur since last week.

China, Germany voice support for Darfur peacekeeping force

(Sudan Tribune) — China and Germany on Sunday agreed that the international peacekeeping force in western Sudan region of Darfur had to be expanded in order to help resolve peacefully the five year conflict.

The hybrid mission still lacks troops and the necessary helicopters. However, Sudanese government showed some willingness to cooperate with the UNAMID; the peacekeeping operation faces some administrative obstacles besides Khartoum rejection of non-African troops German Defense Minister Franz Josef Jung, who is here to watch the Beijing Olympic Games, informed reporters of the joint position following talks in Beijing with his Chinese counterpart Liang Guanglie.

In a statement he made in Beijing today German Defense minister announced the agreement, saying that Liang assured him of the necessity of such a step. The two ministers met on Friday August 15.

International community considers china, a close ally to Khartoum, as the one that can

exercises pressures on Sudan to accelerate the deployment of the hybrid peacekeeping mission and to engage political talks with the rebel groups in Darfur. Beijing had been blamed for preventing the UN Security Council from taking concrete measures against Khartoum. It is also accused of providing weapons to the Sudanese army. China has important oil investment in Sudan.

But China says that it is making enough efforts to help for a peaceful settlement of Darfur crisis. "China's efforts on Darfur are no worse than and no less than any other country in the world," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang last June.

Chinese troops are among the rare non African troops admitted by participating in the African Union – U.N. peacekeeping mission in Darfur.

Sudanese court sentences more 8 rebels to death over capital attack

(Sudan Tribune) — A Sudanese court on Sunday sentenced to death eight Darfur rebels who had participated in an attack against the Sudanese government in Khartoum where more than 220 people killed last May.

Today sentences bring to 38 the number of the rebels condemned to death. Another 20 await a verdict on Wednesday in the same case. Hundreds of Darfurians were arrested after the attack, and it remains unclear how many remain behind bars.

The special courts charged the defendants of waging war against the state and the illicit use of weapons. They were sentenced to hang after a trial that began on July 3.

The judges pronounced the verdicts after declaring the rebel guilty under Sudanese criminal and counter-terrorism legislation of involvement in the May attack on Khartoum. He gave them one week to appeal before President Omar Hassan al-Bashir signs the execution order.

Among the sentenced rebels Abdel Aziz el-Nur Ashr, half brother of Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) leader Khalil Ibrahim.

Ashr, the head of JEM troops in Eritrea until 2005 and chairman of its intelligence office, was arrested days after the May 10 attack in eastern Sudan while he was trying to cross the border. Special Sudanese courts last month sentenced 30 alleged Darfur rebels to death over the attack on the capital.

Jibril Khalil, the brother of the JEM chief and a leading official in the rebel movement told Aljazeera today that this trial is unconstitutional, while Suleiman Sandal, a senior JEM commander in Darfur, vowed revenge if the death sentences against Ashr and others were carried out.

Also, the chief of Sudan Liberation Movement, Abdel-Wahid Al-Nur condemned the sentences terming it as "unfair and criminal" adding they should be treated as Prisoners of War. "Lack of liberty and democratic governance forced these Sudanese citizens to hold arms," he said.

The lawyers of the defendants also challenged the constitutionality of the anti-terrorist courts. Defence lawyer Kamal Omer dismissed the court as a political entity and charged that the sentences would complicate efforts to find a solution to the five-year conflict in the western region of Darfur.

"We will appeal this decision but our appeal will have no meaning. The Sudanese judge is not

independent," Omer told AFP.

Different Sudanese political parties urged the ruling National Congress Party to release the sentenced rebels as a good will gesture and to invite rebels to attend a national conference on Darfur to end the five years conflict.

The attack on Khartoum was the first time a rebel group had brought their fight to the capital. The rebels were stopped at bridges over the river Nile a few kilometres (miles) from the presidential palace and army headquarters.

Sudanese court starts trial for US diplomat assassins

(AFP) — Five suspects appeared in court in Sudan on Sunday in connection with the New Year's Day murder of a US diplomat and his driver that sent shockwaves through the Western community in Khartoum.

The preliminary hearing at the eastern court in the capital lasted around 45 minutes and was attended by US embassy personnel amid a heavy Sudanese security presence outside, AFP correspondents said.

Judge Said Ahmed al-Badri read out the names and ages of the five bearded Sudanese men, aged between 23 and 35, who sat in the dock in traditional white gowns, at one point smiling and chatting among themselves.

He then adjourned legal proceedings until August 31, asking the families of both victims to appoint a lawyer; either a Sudanese or American provided they spoke Arabic.

John Granville, 33, who worked for the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and his 40-year-old Sudanese driver Abdel Rahman Abbas were hit in their car by a hail of bullets before dawn on New Year's Day.

Among those in the dock was a 23-year-old son of the head of Ansar al-Sunna, a pacifist Muslim sect in Sudan that has no political affiliations but has links to the orthodox Wahhabi sect dominant in Saudi Arabia.

The others were listed as an engineering student, a merchant and a former security officer from Khartoum and a driver from Atbara, in northern Sudan.

The suspects proclaimed loudly in Arabic "Peace Be Upon You" upon arrival and asked that they be allowed to perform their prayers on Fridays, the Muslim day of rest.

Federal Bureau of Investigation officers from the United States helped to investigate the killings.

Although it was not clear whether the suspects belonged to a specific group, a group calling itself Ansar al-Tawhid claimed the killing in a statement posted on a militant website on January 4.

The organisation said the attack was in response to attempts to raise the banner of Christianity over Sudan, according to the US-based SITE intelligence group which monitors Islamist websites.

SITE did not give more details about the group, whose claim could not be authenticated. But

variations of its name, which means "Partisans of Oneness" (of God), have been used by Islamist extremists abroad, including in Iraq.

Relations between Sudan and the United States are largely strained, most recently over the five-year conflict in the African country's western region of Darfur where Washington has accused Khartoum of genocide.

Granville was killed one day after US President George W. Bush signed a law encouraging divestment from companies which do business in Sudan in an effort to up economic pressure on Khartoum over Darfur.

According to the United Nations, up to 300,000 people have died and more than 2.2 million have fled their homes since the conflict between the Arab regime and ethnic rebels erupted in 2003. Sudan says 10,000 have been killed.

Sudan and the United States, which has no ambassador in Khartoum, earlier this year held talks in a bid to improve their diplomatic relations.

Sudan is hoping to be removed from the US list of state sponsors of terror, which includes Iran and North Korea, and for Washington to lift economic sanctions which predate, but are also related to, the Darfur conflict.

USAID is the leading international donor to Sudan and has contributed more than two billion dollars for humanitarian programmes in the country, including Darfur, and in eastern Chad across the border since 2004.

