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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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

# Highlights

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## Local Arabic and English Language Press

### *Army capable to deal with conspiracies – President Bashir*

**Al-Raed** reports that SAF yesterday conducted military exercises in Um Sayala area, west of Omdurman, aiming at confronting any attack on the country. Air carriers, Fighters, bombers including MiG 29 as well as reconnaissance and unmanned aircraft have taken part in the exercise.

President Bashir reassured the Sudanese people of SAF capacity to deal with possible plots against the country.

Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Mohi Al-Din Ahmed said JEM attack on Omdurman would never recur. "The enemy will be bombed should it dare to advance from any part in the Sudan," he declared. "The aircraft paraded yesterday in Um Sayala area are capable of spotting targets 350 km away," he added.

"SAF will continue to buy aircraft and to train," declares Defence Minister Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein, according to **Al-Rai Al-Aam**. "SAF is not preparing to fight bandits and thieves, it is preparing for any regional and international aggression," says Joint Chief of Staff Gen. Mohamed Abdul Gadir. "The country is facing major threat and SAF is ready," he added. "The aircraft will be used to deal with foreign aggression not for internal security operations," declares DG of military operation Maj. Gen. Salah Abdul Khaliq.

### *Abyei security stable – Rahma Al-Nur*

**Al-Raed** reports the Abyei Area Administration announced that IDPs continue to return to Abyei after the recent GoNU delegation visit. Deputy Chief Administrator Rahma Abdul Rahman Al-Nur denied any frictions between the police and the army in the area.

### *SAF, UNICEF sign child protection MoU*

**Al-Sahafa** reports that SAF (military judiciary) and UNICEF yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to train officers in Khartoum and Darfur on child protection concepts. Maj. Gen. Hussein Mohamed signed on behalf of SAF, Ted Chaiban signed for UNICEF and Ameera Al-Fadul signed for the National Council for Child Care.

### *Thursday official holiday*

**Local dailies** report the Cabinet General Secretariat announced that Thursday 25 December 08 will be an official holiday across the country on account of Christmas.

### *North Darfur Governor denies new displacement*

**Al-Sahafa** reports the North Darfur Governor Mohamed Yousuf Kibir as saying that more than 90,000 IDPs returned to their villages over the past three years but denied claims of new displacement in the state. Kibir accused some foreign organizations of impeding his government's efforts to return IDPs to their original areas. He also told a press conference yesterday that preparations have been finalized to receive President Bashir today in El Fasher.

### ***Over 3000 expected to attend peace celebrations***

**Khartoum Monitor** reports the Upper Nile state Governor Galwak Deng as saying that more than 3000 people are expected to participate in peace celebrations in Malakal. He said preparations had been completed for the events which will start on 28 December and continue until 9 January 2009.

### ***France likely to lower diplomatic representation***

**Al-Sudani** learns that the French Government began degrading its diplomatic representation in the Sudan to the level of a Charge d'Affaires. However, MFA spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq said the government received no official notification from Paris to that end. He said Sudan's relations with Paris are good except for its stance on the ICC application.

## **Websites/International News Coverage**

### ***Security Council authorizes Mission in DR Congo to protect civilians***

**(UN News Center)** - The Security Council yesterday told United Nations peacekeepers in strife-torn eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to prioritize the protection of civilians, including humanitarian personnel, as the number of attacks on aid workers, some of them deadly, passed 100 since the start of 2008.

"As we pass this awful threshold of 100 reported attacks on aid workers in the DRC this year, I insist in the strongest terms that all the armed groups operating in that country, including the national army, ensure the safety of these essential staff, not least for the sake of the people they are desperately trying to help," UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes said in a separate statement.

At the same time, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's special envoy for the Great Lakes Region, Olusegun Obasanjo has described talks he is leading between the DRC Government and a leading rebel group in the east, where an upsurge in fighting has driven over 250,000 more people from their homes since August, as both difficult and encouraging.

In unanimously adopted resolutions the Council extended the mandate of the 20,000-strong UN Mission in DRC, known by its French acronym MONUC, for another year until 31 December 2009, and renewed until 30 November 2009, sanctions intended to stem the illicit flow of weapons into the DRC and the illicit export of mineral resources that fuel the rebel groups.

The Council condemned the mainly Tutsi rebel Congrès national pour la Défense du peuple (CNDP) for repeated military offensives which have caused massive displacement of populations in North Kivu province, and the illegal presence of the mainly Hutu Forces mainly Hutu Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) which it said "represent one of the primary causes for the conflict in the region." It also denounced attacks by the rebel Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Orientale Province and the resumption of hostilities by illegal armed groups in Ituri province.

It expressed "extreme concern at the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation," condemned "the targeted attacks against the civilian population, sexual violence, recruitment of child soldiers and summary executions," and stressed the urgent need for the DRC Government in cooperation with MONUC and other actors to end abuses carried out by militias, armed groups, and elements of the Government army, police and security services.

The Council called on MONUC, using "all necessary means within the limits of its capacity" and working in close cooperation with the DRC Government, to make the protection of civilians, including aid workers, a priority, contribute to improved security for the provision of humanitarian aid, and assist the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The Mission is to deter the use of force by any armed group, foreign or Congolese, coordinate operations with the Government army's integrated brigades and support operations led by these brigades to disarm recalcitrant local and foreign armed groups to ensure their participation in the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration processes.

The Council stressed the importance of MONUC implementing the mandate fully, "including through robust rules of engagement," and called on the Mission to strengthen its efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence, "including through training for the Congolese security forces," in light of the scale and severity of such abuses by armed elements.

It also urged the DRC and Rwandan Governments to take concrete steps to defuse tensions and reiterated its demand that all armed groups, in particular the CNDP, the FDLR and the LRA, immediately stop recruiting and using children and release all children associated with them.

Reporting on the "dialogue" he is facilitating between the DRC Government and the CNDP, Mr. Obasanjo noted that the CNDP had refused to sign a draft cessation of hostilities agreement to strengthen unilateral ceasefire declarations already made by both sides and declined to recommit itself to its own unilateral ceasefire.

Instead it alleged that the Government army had occupied positions from which it had voluntarily withdrawn under its own ceasefire. But investigations by mediators proved the allegations to be unfounded, Mr. Obasanjo said.

Both sides, however, confirmed their continued commitment to the dialogue and are scheduled to hold their next meeting on 7 January.

### ***Darfur rebels reportedly announce "imminent attacks"***

**(Sudan Tribune website)** JEM warned yesterday that it would attack positions of the Sudanese government very soon. In a press statement released yesterday, JEM deputy general commander Suleiman Sandal urged the Sudanese to remain away from military positions in all Sudanese cities and to stay at home because "our attack against these cities is imminent."

In a separate statement Ahmed Tugud, the secretary of political affairs, called on the Sudanese soldiers to join the rebel movement adding "you are not our enemies." He also pledged to retain their salaries, rights and positions in the army.

It is not clear whether the rebel movement intends to attack the capital Khartoum or other cities. However, Sandal in his statement said "our warning extends to all diplomatic missions and embassies" to take the necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of their employees and properties.

### ***US diplomat murder case postponed***

**(Sudanese Media Centre website)** The Khartoum Criminal Court assigned to try those involved in the murder of U.S. diplomat John Granville and his driver Abd-al-Rahman Abbas has adjourned because the judge is sick. Defence counsel advocate Adil Abd-al-Ghani told reporters that when the court resumes its sessions in mid-January, he would question prosecution witness and ask the court about the surgeon who operated on Granville before his death.

### ***Sudanese army denies involvement in DRC conflict***

**(Miraya FM)** SAF has denied claims made against Sudan in a recent report by the UN group of experts for the Security Council.

The five-person group said that arms, believed to have originated in China, had been flown into the Democratic Republic of Congo from Sudan. Director of SAF Spokesperson's office Al-

Sawarmi Khalid Sa'd said Sudan has no military cooperation of any kind with the DRC. A recent report on UN arms trade restrictions on DRC submitted to the Security Council said the DRC had re-exported more than 50 tons of ammunition to Zimbabwe earlier this year.

### ***UN lauds government's treatment of Omdurman attack children***

**(Suna website)** The UN has expressed appreciation for the measures adopted by the Government of Sudan toward children accused of involvement in the Omdurman incident, and stressed its support and backing for these steps. Representing the UN, Dr Muhammad Ibrahim told a workshop on the legal framework of delinquent justice that the government had shown awareness of international laws and charters on child protection. Rapporteur of the Sudan Advisory Council on Human Rights, Dr Abd-al-Mu'umin Uthman Muhammad Taha, stressed that child protection as cited in the Constitution and relevant legislation emanate from the cultural heritage and religion of the Sudanese community. He pointed out that the delinquents and youth are detained in different locations in police custody.

A number of workshop participants called for special training for officials involved in delinquent arrest and interrogation, for hostels to house street children and for an overhaul of relevant legislation.

### ***Ugandan rebel spokesman wants resumption of peace talks***

**(New Vision website)** LRA rebels have demanded an immediate halt to Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) attacks and a resumption of peace talks, LRA Spokesman David Nyekorach Matsanga said in Nairobi yesterday.

Negotiations should be moved from south Sudan to Tanzania or South Africa, he added, because GoSS "is not neutral in the conflict". Matsanga told a news conference that chief mediators Riek Machar, GoSS vice-president, and former Mozambican President Joachim Chissano should be dropped from the talks because they are biased. He described Machar as a traitor and an enemy. Any new talks should address rebel chief Kony's concerns about his indictment for war crimes at The Hague. Matsanga insisted that Kony and his high command survived the recent UPDF bombardment. He would not confirm reports that Kony had fled to the CAR but said that he had spoken with him "very recently and his spirit was very high".

Yesterday, President Yoweri Museveni said Kony was trapped in the forest and would not escape this time unless he signed the pact.

## **Links**

### **Sudan**

**Sudan ruling party is not serious about peace in Darfur.** [Commentary].(Noon).

<http://unhq-apps-01.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2008-12-22DSIA->