

**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN****UNMIS****Media Monitoring Report, 26 February 08**

(By Public Information Office)

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IN THE NEWS TODAY:**➤ UN/ Agencies**

- Humanitarian flight ban in West Darfur restricting relief assistance, UN says
- Western Darfur: following attacks, UN officials voice concern for civilians' safety

➤ GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

- Deng Alor receives US envoy (SUNA)
- Sudan religious leaders campaign in favour of people living with HIV/AIDS (ST)
- Lino: Abyei historically for the Dinka, Presidency meeting did not resolve the issue (Khartoum Monitor)
- SPLM says No to CPA review (the Citizen)
- Government enforces presidential directive to boycott Danish products (Al-Khartoum)
- Minawi: forthcoming census is a fiasco (Khartoum Monitor)
- Japan in talks for a peace mission to Sudan (The Financial Times)

➤ GoSS

- 1500 delegates from 25 states including international observers to attend Sudan's SPLM Convention in May 2008 (ST)
- Two die in Bentiu clan clashes for Rupkona control in Unity State (The Citizen)

➤ Darfur

- China provides more humanitarian aid to Darfur (ST)
- Rebel JEM welcomes visit of US envoy to Sudan (ST)
- JEM claims downing third SAF chopper (the Citizen)

➤ Miscellaneous

- Pro Al-Qaeda wall drawings appear in large parts of Sudan capital (ST)

Highlights

UN/ Agencies

[Humanitarian flight ban in West Darfur restricting relief assistance, UN says](#)

25 February 2008 – Tens of thousands of Darfurians living in the west of the war-ravaged Sudanese region are without access to humanitarian aid because of the continuing ban on relief flights to the area, the United Nations reported today.

The prohibition on all such flights to the north of West Darfur's state capital, El Geneina, has remained in place over the last week, UN spokesperson Michele Montas told journalists.

West Darfur has been the scene of the conflict's most intense fighting in recent months, and UN officials estimate that three quarters of the 80,000 civilians who have become displaced across Darfur since the start of this year come from that state.

Yesterday the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan, Ameerah Haq, and the Joint Special Representative for the UN-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID), Rodolphe Adada, issued a joint statement voicing grave concern for the safety of civilians in West Darfur's Jebel Muun, which has reportedly been subject to aerial bombing in recent days.

Ms. Haq and Mr. Adada appealed for an immediate end to the fighting and stressed that "the solution to Darfur's problems can never be a military one."

More than 200,000 people have been killed and at least 2.2 million others displaced since 2003 because of fighting between rebels, Government forces and allied militia known as the Janjaweed. UNAMID was deployed at the start of this year to try to quell the violence and suffering.

Ms. Montas warned today that Darfurians are also facing food insecurity in some areas because of bad crops which, in combination with the harassment by militiamen, is spurring major population movements towards the camps housing internally displaced persons (IDPs).

[Western Darfur: following attacks, UN officials voice concern for civilians' safety](#)

24 February 2008 – The head of the United Nations-African Union (AU) hybrid peacekeeping force, known as UNAMID, and the world body's Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan today said that they are "gravely concerned" for the safety of

thousands of civilians in the Jebel Muun area of Western Darfur, which was reportedly the scene of aerial bombings.

“It is imperative that civilians are kept out of harms' way, and for this to happen, any fighting must stop immediately. The risks at this stage to civilians are unacceptably high,” according to a statement issued by UN/AU Joint Special Representative Rodolphe Adada and UN Humanitarian Coordinator Ameerah Haq.

The Government has assured them that civilians will be able to move out of the area and to safety, and they are seeking similar assurances from the area's rebel movements.

“The solution to Darfur's problems can never be a military one,” Mr. Adada and Ms. Haq said, adding that they hope to have humanitarian access to Jebel Muun and nearby areas.

“The eyes of the world are now on Darfur and the concerns of all of us have to be with the innocent children, women and men who are caught-up in the fighting.”

On 22 February, Ms. Haq expressed alarm at the level of destruction she witnessed while participating in a joint assessment of the West Darfur town of Sirba, which came under air and ground attack from the Sudanese Government and allied militia groups earlier this month.

For now, the UN can provide humanitarian assistance, “but the clear message obviously is that what the people really want is protection. They are looking for security,” Ms. Haq said. “The ability to provide that - whether from the government or the international community – is still a long way away.”

Women and girls face being raped when gathering firewood in the Wadi, and the Humanitarian Coordinator appealed to both the international community and Khartoum to recognize the need for UNAMID's speedy deployment.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

[Deng Alor receives US envoy](#)

Khartoum, Feb. 25 (SUNA) - Minister of Foreign Affairs Deng Alor received at his office Monday US special envoy to Sudan Richard Williamson in the context of dialogue and consultations between the two countries to overcome the issues of differences. Foreign Ministry's Spokesman Ambassador Ali Al-Saddig said in a statement to SUNA that the two sides underscored the importance of continuation in the constructive engagement approach to narrow differences alongside working together to restore the relations to the normal situation. He added that the meeting reviewed progress of CPA implementation and Darfur issue as well as the bilateral relations between the two countries.

[Sudan religious leaders campaign in favour of people living with HIV/AIDS](#)

(ST) February 25, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Religious leaders and specialists gathered in a two day workshop last week to finalize a training curriculum to build the capacity of religious leaders in responding to HIV/AIDS in Sudan.

Over 50 key religious leaders from both the Christian and Muslim faiths joined together to fully endorse the first training curriculum. This module focuses on enabling religious figures to promote spiritual values of care and compassion for People Living with HIV/AIDS.

Associations for People Living with HIV/AIDS, UN representatives, and government representatives all attended the ceremony. The event was hosted and organized by the Ministry of Guidance and Endowment, in collaboration with Sudan National AIDS Programme and supported by UNDP.

Sunday's event came as a demonstration of commitment from religious leaders and government officials to advocate for the protection of the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS. The event included speeches from key religious and governmental figures who expressed their determination to support people living with HIV/AIDS.

This event is the outcome of the first forum held in 2006 which brought together approximately 100 Christian and Muslim religious leaders to discuss their role in responding to HIV/AIDS in Sudan.

The forum was organized by Sudan National AIDS Programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Guidance and Endowment. The Ministry of Guidance and Endowment, committed itself to establishing an AIDS Council in the Ministry with the mandate to build the capacity of the religious leaders to effectively contribute to the HIV/AIDS response in Sudan.

With a strong reference to the religious teachings of compassion, Tabitha Butrus, Federal Minister of Health emphasized the role of women and said "I also wish to call on religious leaders to stand up to their responsibility in this society and raise the awareness of the public in order for them to assist those living with HIV/AIDS and refrain from discriminating against them."

Bishop Adi Ambrose, Director of Churches, Ministry of Guidance and Endowment, stressed that people living with HIV/AIDS have been "rejected, disowned and thrown out of their homes. As people who love God, we need to stand together and give hope to those losing hope". He also made it clear that HIV/AIDS "has no tribe, no culture and no religion" therefore Muslims and Christians alike must unify their efforts to respond to this disease.

Recognizing HIV/AIDS as a crisis of "enormous spiritual, social, economical and political proportions", Jerzy Skuratowicz, UNDP Sudan Country Director, highlighted the tolerant and hospitable nature of Sudanese society, and addressed the religious leaders saying "we hope that your esteemed support will help people living with HIV/AIDS to be pulled out of this isolation as your religious guidance and leadership is instrumental in eliminating stigma and discrimination."

Bishop Sarabamon, Orthodox Church, said "we should not discriminate against those who have HIV/AIDS; we should encourage them to overcome their disease." Speaking to those fearing people living with HIV/AIDS, he reminded them that "God forgives and calls on us to forgive and to exercise tolerance and clemency when dealing with others."

Alfatih Mukhtar Mohamed, Head of External Relations and Communication at the Ministry of Guidance and Endowment, stated that “religious leaders have access to all sectors of the society and this is why we highlight their important role in the fight against AIDS. Also reminding the audience of the universality of humanity, Mr. Mukhtar concluded that “an individual living with HIV/ AIDS is someone passing through an ordeal and who God wished to test; he is our brother and we should not discriminate against him.”

Speaking on behalf of the Presidential Advisory for Authentication Affairs, Abubakr Chol Deng, concluded the ceremony by commending the efforts of SNAP, The Ministry of Guidance and Endowment, The Ministry of Health and the UNDP in responding to HIV/AIDS in Sudan. He further asserted that the newly endorsed curriculum will be used in all regions of the country.

[Lino: Abyei historically for the Dinka, Presidency meeting did not resolve the issue \(Khartoum Monitor\)](#)

(Khartoum Monitor) SPLM chairman in Abyei, Edward Lino said Abyei is historically an area of Dinka Ngok with their nine sheikhdoms, and that the Messeriya have nothing to do with Abyei. “Abyei stands in need of a joint administration between the Dinka and the Misseriy” he said.

Speaking at a press conference at the New Sudan Forum in Al-Mugran in Khartoum, Lino said the security situation in Abyei is getting well and that a committee of the Joint Defence Board arrived in the area to open the movement of traffic to Abyei-Higlig-Mujlad road. He asked the Government of National Unity to fairly divide the 2% oil share of Abyei so that both Dinka and Misseriya may have equal rights.

[SPLM says No to CPA review](#)

(The Citizen) A top SPLM official Monday said the party would not consider reviewing protocols in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement as suggested by its Secretary General last week.

Secretary General Pagan Amum, who is also the Cabinet Affairs Minister last Monday said that the SPLM would not mind reviewing the comprehensive peace agreement, including the power and wealth sharing protocols, in order to facilitate a political solution for the five-year crisis in Darfur. Dr. Anne Itto, the Deputy SPLM Secretary General for southern Sector yesterday told a news conference that the items in the CPA were agreed and signed by the two partners before finally inking the deal in January 2005 in Kenya.

“As far as SPLM is concerned, CPA is not going to be re-discussed,” Itto told reporters yesterday. She said the Naivasha peace deal included all parts of the Sudan, including the Darfur. Darfur authorities have already welcomed the suggestion, saying that the three protocols in the CPA should be reviewed to make it a Comprehensive Peace Agreement for all the Sudanese.

[Government enforces presidential directive to boycott Danish products](#)

The Ministry of Foreign Trade has actually carried out the Presidential directive banning the import of Danish goods and commodities and to refuse them entry into the Sudan.

Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Trade, Eng. Al-Simeih Al-Siddiq, told SUNA that the decision is taken following Danish newspapers' re-publishing of cartoons insulting to the Prophet.

Director of Customs, Maj. Gen. Salah Ahmed said they had strictly carried out the ban on Danish goods and commodities and told importers to strictly abide by the decision.

On the other hand, the Sudanese Islamic Movement has called upon the Sudanese people to join a march to denounce the insult to the Prophet. In the statement it issued, the Islamic Movement commended the ban on Danish goods and commodities.

[Minawi: forthcoming census is a fiasco](#)

(Khartoum Monitor) Senior Assistant to the President, Mini Arkoi Minawi, affirmed that the census that will be conducted next April will be a fiasco due to the fact that Darfur displaced people are away from their original villages and out of Sudan.

He added that a successful census covers the whole Sudan including all the Sudanese people, indicating aspects of power, economic and natural resources weaknesses. Assessing the bulk of human resources, Minawi said providing services and goods to the people would not be easy.

Minawi said the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority demanded that the census be conducted in secure and stable environment to access all areas of the Sudan after the return of the immigrants and the displaced.

It also requested the Census Commission to be neutral and include all the signed agreements. April is not suitable as the shepherds are outside their regions at that time. He said made the statement at Margyr Zubair hall in a workshop on: "The planning politics and development extent of the census in Darfur".

[Japan in talks for a peace mission to Sudan](#)

(The Financial Times) Japan is considering stepping up its participation in international peacekeeping operations, including a possible dispatch of personnel to Sudan, Masahiko Koumura, the foreign minister, told the Financial Times.

Mr Koumura, who moved to his present post from the defence ministry, said: "We believe that, compared to Japan's capabilities and strengths as a country, there is more room to make an effort in peacekeeping operations. Sudan is one candidate."

He added that talks were at an early stage and there were other possibilities.

Mr Koumura stressed that Japan, whose constitution bans it from military action except in self-defence, would not send troops to Darfur, but "in relation to Sudan's north-south conflict".

But he said: "As an orientation, or policy direction, we shall strive to step up our contribution."

Japan has just 50 military personnel in peacekeeping operations, mainly in the Golan Heights on the Israeli-Syrian border, according to Hitoshi Tanaka, a former senior diplomat now at the Japan Centre for International Exchange.

This compares with about 10,000 troops sent by Germany, which like Japan has restricted its military activity since the second world war.

"Germany has made a remarkable turnaround in terms of its international contribution," said Mr Tanaka. "Japan needs to be doing the same thing."

Mr Koumura said it was in Japan's national interest to contribute to keeping the world safe. "Japan is an insular country, not blessed with many resources. For us to continue to enjoy prosperity, we need a peaceful and stable world."

Washington has long pressed Tokyo to loosen restrictions on sending its military abroad. Junichiro Koizumi, former prime minister, tested the interpretation of the pacifist constitution by sending 550 military to southern Iraq in December 2003.

Shinzo Abe, whose short-lived administration succeeded Mr Koizumi's, pressed for a more assertive diplomacy, but his vision gained little public support.

Mr Koumura played down the likelihood of resolving a long-running dispute with China over claims to gas resources in the East China Sea. He said it was unlikely that a solution would be found before Hu Jintao, China's president, arrives on a planned visit to Tokyo in April.

"Further political decision on the Chinese side is necessary. If they can do that, we shall also be able to make a more flexible response," he said. "But the last process is the toughest part."

Pressed on whether this could be resolved swiftly, as China's ambassador to Tokyo indicated last month, he said: "I am not necessarily all that optimistic."

On Japan's efforts to fashion an international agreement on a post-Kyoto framework on climate change, Mr Koumura said Tokyo had not ruled out a national cap on carbon emissions.

"But any caps will have to be fair. If we have a cap-and-trade system in which major emitters, like the US, do not participate, that will not be fair," he said. Japan would insist "all major emitting countries", including China and India, participated.

GoSS

[1500 delegates from 25 states including international observers to attend Sudan's SPLM Convention in May 2008 \(ST\)](#)

(ST) February 25th 2008 (JUBA) — The SPLM Second Convention will take place from 10th to 16th May this year and 1500 delegates from the 25 states of Sudan plus 500 national and international observers will attend in a venue yet to be named, Ann Itto, SPLM Deputy Secretary General of southern sector has said.

Speaking during a press conference in her office today in Juba, Itto stated that SPLM northern sector will send 500 delegates while the southern sector including Abyei, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile will have 1000 delegates. All delegates will comprising of youth, women's 25 percent for southern northern sector will be 325, professional, workers, people with special needs, farmers associations, chamber of commerce, war veterans, chief and traditional leaders and diasporas representatives.

During the week long meeting, delegates will review SPLM political and organizational achievements and improvement among others followed by election of officials to various structures of the party because a democratized SPLM would be very strong nation wide. So, "If we want change, we must include everybody in the process", Itto said.

SPLM is a very young political party, barely three years but because its twenty one years of struggle to free the oppressed and marginalized Sudanese" which culminated into signing the CPA in January 2005, SPLM was invited to participate in Pan African Women organization conference held Johannesburg South Africa from 13th to 17th February this month.

She said SPLM competency was vividly seen in the conference when she positively articulated position of southern Sudanese women's contribution in the cause of 21 years liberation struggle. Pan African Women organization was founded in 1962 by liberation movement that was by then struggling to free Africa from foreign colonization.

SPLM Deputy Secretary General appeal to government of southern Sudan and the designated agencies handling repatriation to urgently come to the aid of returnees in Eastern Equatoria state particularly Nimule corridor and Magwi who lack the necessary basic needs and school for their children, 200 pupils are in one class room while others majority are studying under trees without teachers.

"This is a nation concern and the people are in need of your urgent support", Itto pleaded.

Responding to question that how could SPLM proceed with organization of the second convention when Southern Sudan is in active war with Khartoum in Abyei and in Darfur; She emphasized that the on going war in Darfur and row over Abyei should not in any way stop Southern Sudanese from thinking about their future destiny, organizing themselves politically, looking at policies and improving on them besides managing and governing themselves.

"Of cause to be handling a strong SPLM means dealing with security issues which SPLM has entrusted in the hand of SPLA who are now in total control of the situation in Abyei areas," declared SPLM Deputy Secretary General, Southern sector.

She went on saying that SPLM as the youngest political party in the Sudan offered to shared its experience and wisdom in bring the warring Dafurian together and hence recorded a tremendous success by bring over twenty Darfurian factional groups to Juba unification conference that ended by narrowing the wide gap into three major groups now championing the cause of Darfurian people with the Khartoum government was indeed a great contribution.

Asked whether SPLM as a governing party is not being driven by the government of southern Sudan, she stated that SPLM is counting on the majority right of seventy percent stipulated in the CPA agreements to drive the governing processes in Southern Sudan like any other leading political party in the Sudan.

SPLM Deputy Secretary General said the highest authority of SPLM is the Convention which convenes every five years and in the absence of the convention, the Interim national council takes charge of the party and it meets every two to three months to direct party affairs. Meanwhile the Interim political Bureau which also meets every two months to review progress of the party. However, Itto ruled out any fears of lack of transparency and fairness in organizing the forthcoming convention for 1500 delegates.

She reiterated that SPLM is ready and willing to work together with other political party because that SPLM has nothing to hide like other political parties which operate in clandestinely manner in the Sudan. Adding that SPLM is a decentralized party that operates from Boma to top level and it empowered all levels to carry with fairness political work within their respective localities.

“The SPLM you are seeing today is there to provide leadership to the Sudanese people and to effect development at all levels by attracting investors in the country particularly southern Sudan which is lagging far behind”.

Responding to question on rampant corruption in the government of Southern Sudan, she admitted that there are corruption like in any other part of the world but GoSS did it best by not counseling rather working very hard to minimized corruption because it's very difficult to eradicate corruption worldwide.

In a separate development, the mediators of peace talks between the government of Ugandan and the Lord's Resistance Army/ Movement have today afternoon completed the final draft for comprehensive peace agreement scheduled to be signed on 6th March this year in Juba the capital of Southern Sudan, bringing to an end 21 years of LRA insurgency in northern and northeastern Uganda with spill over to neighbouring Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo.

[Two die in Bentiu clan clashes for Rupkona control in Unity State](#)

(The Citizen) At least two persons are reported killed and four others sustained injuries when fierce fighting broke out Sunday morning between Leek and Jikany communities of the Unity State over the control of Rupkona.

Eyewitness Monday said that police in Bentiu, who were trying to separate the two sides, were outnumbered by the fresh confrontation after State authority sends them to contain the fierce and deadly clash.

Darfur

[China provides additional humanitarian aid to Darfur](#)

(ST) February 25, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The Chinese government's special representative for Darfur, Liu Guijin, Monday pledged China will provide more humanitarian assistance to people in Sudan's western region of Darfur.

"Our government is preparing a new budget and more humanitarian assistance will be forced forward," Liu said at a handover ceremony of an aid package of 20 million Chinese yuan (2.8 million U.S. dollars).

"We just want to send signals to Sudan and the outside world that the Chinese people and their government are sympathetic with the people there in Darfur. China is showing solidarity to the Sudanese unity government in its efforts to help people in Darfur," he said.

China has delivered five batches of assistance to the Darfur region at a combined value of 80 million yuan (11 million dollars).

Monday's aid includes portable rooms, which could be used either as classrooms or clinics, said the envoy.

"The Chinese government and its people show great sympathy to those internally-displaced people (IDP) living in the camps in Darfur for their suffering and difficulties. So we are willing to provide necessary assistance for them," the Chinese envoy said.

"Though there are many transportation obstacles in Darfur, most Chinese humanitarian goods have already been distributed to those IDP camps there on the ground," he added.

In addition, Liu said Chinese companies have spent about 50 million dollars on development projects in Darfur, including 85 km of water pipelines, water wells and water containers.

Some wells and containers have been put to use, he said, adding that with these projects families in IDP camps and peacekeeping forces of the U.N.-African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur will be able to drink clean water.

"With humanitarian aid and development projects, we show to the world that China is sincere in providing tangible assistance to Darfur," Liu said.

"We have never, and will never in the future, attach any kind of political conditions to these aid and development projects, because we think that providing assistance is just for the benefit of the people, it is not for political purposes, not for showing off to the outside world," he said.

The situation in Darfur, particularly the humanitarian situation, is gradually improving, he said, adding that he will go to Darfur Tuesday and visit some IDP camps to see those changes.

China has committed itself "to working closely with the Sudanese unity government and the transitional authorities in Darfur for the benefit of the people, for the end of people's suffering and for a long-lasting settlement of the Darfur issue," Liu said.

Sudanese Minister of Humanitarian Affairs Harun Run Liwal said his government and people in Darfur are grateful for China's humanitarian assistance, which is free of any conditions.

Run Liwal said he was glad to know that Liu would make a field tour to Darfur and visit the IDP camps again since it will be a good opportunity for the envoy to see how Chinese aid is distributed among the camps.

After a trip to Britain, Liu arrived here Sunday for a four-day visit, the fourth since his appointment on May 10, 2007.

The 62-year-old veteran diplomat and former Chinese ambassador to Zimbabwe and South Africa has been engaged in African affairs for more than 25 years. During his previous missions, Liu shuttled between the United States, Britain, Egypt and other countries concerned to seek support for a solution to the Darfur issue.

Rebel JEM welcomes visit of US envoy to Sudan

(ST) February 25, 2008 (LONDON) – A Darfur rebel movement welcomed the visit of the new US envoy to Sudan hoping it constitutes a turning point towards a peaceful solution to the five year conflict in western Sudan.

“We hope that this visit constitutes a turning point for a new horizon towards a comprehensive, just and speedy solution to Darfur crisis in order to end the suffering of our people.” Said Ahmed Hussein Adam, the spokesperson of the Justice and Equality Movement.

The new US special envoy for Sudan, Richard Williamson, on Monday in his first visit to Khartoum since taking up the job met with the Sudanese Foreign Minister, Deng Alor, to call for practical progress in Darfur amid growing US impatience with the pace of peace efforts.

The rebel spokesperson expressed hopes that the visit breaks the current stagnation of the international community on Darfur and brings a new dynamic during the up coming period.

He further said that the American role is crucial in any coming solution and expressed JEM readiness to cooperate in any effort to solve the crisis.

"We wish that Williamson can conduct frank talks with the security group now in power in Khartoum, which believes only in a military solution and plotting against other states to end and liquidate Darfur issue militarily." Ahmed said.

In the same context Adam added that the US envoy could remind Sudan ruling party the past experiences and help them to learn lessons that "Darfur crisis is a political issue requesting a political solution."

He regretted that the American envoy's visit came while the government continues military escalation on the ground particularly in West Darfur.

"The government has to stop the continuing massacres and we will cooperate in the framework of a political solution addresses the root causes of the problem."

Despite the good cooperation with Washington on war on terror, and the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with the former rebel SPLM, the US Administration

refuses to normalise relations with Khartoum and to revoke sanctions imposed since 1997.

MESSAGE TO THE CHINESE ENVOY

JEM official also reassured the visiting Chinese envoy saying that China must be part of the solution to address the crisis but Beijing should speak with all the parties in the conflict.

"We also hope that China speaks frankly with the regime and explain to them that a military solution will not resolve the problem. He added that China has to push forward international efforts for a political solution and for the deployment of international forces

Chinese envoy for Darfur crisis, Liu Guijin, on Sunday urged nations with influence over rebel groups in the Darfur region to pressure them to return to negotiations with the Sudanese government.

The Chinese diplomat said a settlement of the Darfur issue calls for the implementation of the dual-track strategy, which is designed to push forward political negotiations and the peacekeeping mission in a balanced manner.

[JEM claims downing third SAF chopper \(the Citizen\)](#)

(The Citizen) The Justice and Equality Movement yesterday said they shot down a Sudan Armed Forces plane in Western Darfur and Jebel Moon.

"The plane received a direct fire from our long range ground-to-air missiles and was seen exploding in the area of Kondobay 15 miles north of El-Geneina. The fate of the pilots has not been established yet" said JEM Commander Adam Bakheit.

A Sudanese military spokesperson confirmed that the plane came down in flames and was totally destroyed.

"All day long there has been extensive exchange of artillery gun-fire in the western part of Jebel Moon, betraying GoS claims that it has cleared the areas of JEM forces.

"Once again JEM warns the GoS that all its military build up will face the same fate inflicted upon its earlier adventures. For the safety of civilian flights, JEM advises Sudan Airways, AU, UN, NGOs as well as private commercial companies to avoid the area"

Miscellaneous

[Pro Al-Qaeda wall drawings appear in large parts of Sudan capital](#)

(ST) February 25, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The walls in the Sudanese capital as well as another major city have been smothered with Graffiti supporting the Al-Qaeda terrorist Islamic militant group, multiple sources told Sudan Tribune.

Residents of Khartoum and Omdurman woke up to paintings showing Islamic symbols such as the crescent with the words "Al-Qaeda Organization in Sudan" on them.

The pro-government Al-Rayaam said that the drawings appeared in Al-Thawra, Al-Harah Al-Sadisah and Ali Abd Al-Latif Street close to the US embassy.

There have been numerous reports of an increase in the activities of Islamic militant cells in Sudan. Last year the Sudanese authorities said that they have foiled a plot to blow up several Western embassies as well as UN building.

Earlier this month the Sudanese authorities announced that they have arrested two suspects in the killing of a USAID officer in Khartoum on new years.

Sudanese police said in a statement that there was an exchange of fire between them and the suspects that led to some injuries before they were taken into custody.

The New York Times (NYT) quoting unidentified Sudanese law enforcement official, said that one of the suspect was an army officer who was “the ringleader of a small cell of terrorists, and was not acting on behalf of the Sudanese government”.

A second Sudanese official told NYT that the cell was formed last year following President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir rejection of UN forces in Darfur and portrayed them as colonialists. The official said that the cell included operatives from other Arab countries and it planned to attack American and British officials in Sudan.

The Graffiti also appeared in upscale areas of Khartoum with large presence of foreigners such as Number 2 district”.

But Sudanese security officials talking to Al-Rayaam downplayed the importance of these drawings saying it is the “work of children”.

Sudan has welcomed Bin Laden in the 1990’s but expelled him in 1996 under intense US pressure. Since 2001 the Sudanese Security Services cooperated with the US law enforcement agencies to track down suspected terrorists in East Africa.

The intelligence cooperation between the US and Sudan was publicly exposed in 2005 when the Los Angeles Times disclosed that the CIA sent a jet in April 2005 to Khartoum to ferry Gosh into Washington for meetings on nabbing terror suspects in East Africa.

The same newspaper revealed in June that Sudan has secretly worked with the CIA to spy on the insurgency in Iraq despite the strained relations with Washington over the Darfur crisis.

In 2006 Al-Qaeda’s second-in-command Ayman Al-Zawahri called on Muslims in a video released on Friday to launch a holy war against proposed U.N. peacekeepers in Sudan’s Darfur region.