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**(By Public Information Office)**

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## **HIGHLIGHTS:**

### **United Nations**

#### **Annan cautions that delay in reintegration of armed militia groups may result in violence**

(*AlAyaam* – 12<sup>th</sup> Jul. **Khartoum**) The United Nations has warned that the delay in the reintegration of the armed militia groups may cause more conflict.

In his Report to the Security Council, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that human rights violations still continue.

He also pointed out that the parties do not fully use the many committees formed to regulate and bolster the peace process.

Kofi Annan expressed concern over the delays in the formation of the JIUs and pointed out that the problems faced by the OAGCC and the JIUs in addition to the acute competition over resource may lead to renewed violence in southern Sudan where small arms are widespread.

He further explained that the committees on national Security, Human Rights, National Public Service Commission, the National Lands Commission and the Elections commissions are yet to be formed. He also said that controversy over whether the National Petroleum Commission should be an advisory or decision-making body has made it not to convene its meetings on a regular basis.

Annan further pointed out that the National Assembly that is now on its second recess has not ratified many of the laws required including the Elections Act and the Legislative Assembly of the GoSS has not tabled any bills.

He also said that the committee charged with the protection of the rights of non-Muslims in the capital is yet to be formed despite ratification of the constitution while the government of South Darfur remains without a constitution despite the formation of an interim government there.

Kofi Annan also called upon the Presidency of the Republic to resolve the issue of Abyei and guarantee freedom of movement for members of the United Nations mission.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations further said that the current laws on national security, the police and the press gives total power to the security and may open avenues for abuse of power. He pointed out that security officials in Khartoum, Darfur, Kassala and the Red Sea still widely use the emergency laws to justify violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

#### **Government to present in August to the United Nations a Darfur plan of action**

(*AlSahafa* – 12<sup>th</sup> Jul. **Khartoum**) The Sudan government says it will present to the United Nations Secretary-General on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August a Darfur Plan of Action agreed upon during the recent meeting in Banjul between President Bashir and United Nations Secretary-General Annan.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday criticised France for trying to push for a United Nations Security Council resolution that will allow for the transition of the AMIS in Darfur to a United Nations operation.

The Ministry pointed out however that this is a view held by one member of the Security Council and does not represent the official view of the Security Council.

### **Mr. Egeland on the humanitarian situation in Sudan**

*(Reuters/Newsedge – 11<sup>th</sup> Jul. UN)* The U.N. humanitarian chief warned that Gaza is at "a breaking point," Sudan's conflict-wracked Darfur region is facing a new wave of killing and mass rape, and Somalia's capital is still too insecure for U.N. relief workers to return to help desperately needy civilians.

Jan Egeland told a news conference Tuesday that the three hotspots need massive humanitarian assistance but the U.N. faces financial, security and access problems. He urged donors to be more generous and called on opposing parties to talk peace instead of escalating fighting.

On Darfur, Egeland said, security is still nonexistent for civilians, humanitarian workers are being attacked every day, and "new front lines are opening all the time in new areas."

He accused the Sudan Liberation Army faction led by Minni Minnawi, the only rebel group to sign the May 5 peace agreement with the government, of attacking villages held by SLA splinter groups.

"The infighting has displaced 8,000 civilians over the last 10 days alone," Egeland said. "The attacks have included indiscriminate killings, mass rape, beatings, looting and the burning of villages. It is heartbreaking to see what the SLA groups rightfully accused the Janjaweed of doing they are now doing themselves to the civilian population caught in the crossfire."

Minnawi has denied his forces were responsible for the upsurge in fighting and new atrocities.

Egeland, the U.N. undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs, said there are reports of government forces supporting the latest attacks against the SLA splinter groups.

There are also reports that Sudanese security and armed forces are again painting their helicopter white, the same color as U.N. and African Union helicopters, he said.

"This is again a violation of international principles and poses a direct threat to U.N. and NGO staff who go on the white helicopters that are neutral, impartial and should not be attacked," he said.

Egeland said U.N. peacekeepers are desperately needed in Darfur because the 7,000-strong African Union force can't effectively protect civilians. The Sudanese government has refused to approve the handover saying a U.N. force would bring Westerners to the country, but Egeland said the only countries that have offered troops are from Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

### **Darfur/ DPA**

## **Sudan military reported to be aiding rebel attacks**

(Reuters 12<sup>th</sup> Jul. UN) Rebels in Darfur are fighting each other with the Sudanese military apparently supporting one faction, sometimes with aircraft disguised as relief planes, a senior U.N. official said.

Jan Egeland, the humanitarian relief coordinator, told a news conference on Tuesday that the mainstream rebel faction, led by Minni Arcua Minnawi, was in conflict with splinter factions of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA).

SLA infighting had resulted in indiscriminate killings, rape, looting and the displacement of some 8,000 civilians over the past 10 days alone, Egeland said.

"It is heartbreaking to see that what the SLA groups had rightfully accused the Janjaweed of doing they are now doing themselves to the civilian population caught in the crossfire," he said.

Egeland said there were reports that government security forces were supporting attacks against splinter groups of the SLA. They were using white helicopters, the same color that the African Union, the United Nations and relief groups fly.

"This is again a violation of international principles and a dire threat to U.N. staff who go on the white helicopters that are neutral and impartial and should not be attacked," Egeland said.

He also said that humanitarian workers throughout Darfur were being attacked "on an almost daily basis."

Egeland said United Nations peacekeepers, which the Khartoum government opposes, were sorely needed because the 7,000-strong African Union monitoring force, the only bulwark against atrocities, was "not able to protect effectively the civilian population" nor humanitarian staff.

Minnawi, the SLA leader who signed a peace agreement with the government in May, has denied allegations that his fighters attacked other rebel factions, as another U.N. report in Khartoum alleged on Sunday.

The U.N. report listed a series of attacks by Minnawi's group on other Sudan Liberation Movement factions, one led by Abdel Wahed Mohammed al-Nur and one known as the G-19, neither of which signed the Abuja peace agreement.

## **Sudanese government, SLM's al-Nur hold secret contacts**

(Sudan Tribune – 11<sup>th</sup> Jul. **Khartoum**) Sudanese government seeks to convince a holdout rebel group to join Darfur peace agreement signed with Minnawi group in last May. Contacts are going on between the two parties Sudan Tribune has learned.

Sudanese government launched secret contacts with the Sudan Liberation Movement led by AbdulWahid al-Nur in a move to convince him to join DPA. According to ST sources, Khartoum made several concessions in term of compensations and political representation but al-Nur insists on the International guaranties particularly in the disarmament of the Janjaweed militia, and the UN role in the peacekeeping mission.

The expected visit of the Sudanese First Vice President to Asmara should push in this direction to persuade Nur to join the peace deal with the signing of a complementary document.

The Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi is also involved in these contacts with al-Nur; a delegation of his movement was in Tripoli to present their point of view to the Libyan official last June.

A dissident group from al-Nur SLM provoked a surprise in Khartoum by declaring their nomination of AbdulWahid al-Nur for the position of the Assistant of the President of the Republic.

Ibrahim Abdeldayem al-Sideiq, the spokesperson of the SLM (Free Will), a faction from al-Nur group which joined the DPA in June, said they hope that al-Nur would join a peace agreement soon.

Khartoum sees it is difficult to ignore al-Nur who represents the biggest tribe in the western Sudan of the Fur ethnic group.

Minnawi who is also nominated by this movement to the position of Presidential Assistant is weakened by the internal divisions after the signing of the 5 May agreement. He was representing the most powerful group. But his ethnic group Zaghawa is a small group in the region.

Thousands in Darfur's refugee camps have demonstrated daily against the accord saying it does not meet their basic demands and AU forces monitoring a shaky truce there have been attacked by angry and frustrated Darfuris.

Earlier in July, Sudan's top U.N. official has said the Darfur peace deal should be amended to meet key rebel demands to save the foundering agreement, in an apparent shift from his previous statements.

Pronk said "We need the support of AbdulWahid and his followers, who together represent at least two thirds of the displaced people in the camps," he said. "In Darfur the people who are the victims of the war turn against the Darfur Peace Agreement."

### **Darfur's Minnawi denies his group behind fighting**

(AP/ST – 11<sup>th</sup> Jul. Cairo) The most significant rebel leader to have signed a peace deal for Darfur reaffirmed his faith in the partially implemented agreement Tuesday and denied his forces were responsible for a surge in fighting and atrocity allegations in western Sudan.

Minni Minnawi of the Sudan Liberation Army also said he would accept the position of senior assistant to Sudan's presidency - a post that would make him head of an autonomous authority for the Darfur region - if his group nominates him for the job in the near future.

"If I am nominated, I will accept it," Minnawi told a press conference in Cairo.

Under the May 5 Darfur Peace Agreement, the authority is to run Darfur as an autonomous part of Sudan, but all militia must be disarmed in the war-torn region for the deal to come into effect.

The agreement sought to bring to an end three years of fighting between several rebel groups and pro-government forces that has killed 200,000 people and displaced another 2 million. Minnawi signed the accord, but a breakaway faction of the SLA and the Justice and Equality Movement rejected it.

The agreement isn't popular in Darfur's refugee camps, where many people have tribal links to the leader of the breakaway SLA faction and argue that the peace terms are inadequate. Violence has continued in some areas.

Last month Minnawi threatened to withdraw from the agreement unless more was done to enforce the cease-fire.

But Tuesday, he said: "We are fully committed to implement this DPA."

He acknowledged the agreement had yet to transform the lives of Darfur's people. Asked to name its benefits, he said "the only thing" he could point to was that the cease-fire was holding in some parts of Darfur.

"(In) some of the area now, there is a cease-fire 100%. The government respected the cease-fire and also our troops are respecting the cease-fire," he said.

Sunday and Monday, situation reports issued by the U.N. mission to Sudan said people in the region said there were nine cases in the past week where Minnawi's faction of the Sudan Liberation Army was accused of attacking North Darfur settlements under the control of the rival SLA faction led by AbdulWahid Nur. The U.N. cited the claims but did not confirm them.

"This is not true," Minnawi said Tuesday.

"Our faction is not going to attack any civilian," he said, insisting his forces respond only when "bandits" attack civilians and NGOs in Darfur.

Minnawi also dismissed allegations quoted in the U.N. reports that members of his faction committed rapes and kidnappings.

Minnawi said his faction continued to have dealings with former colleagues and other rebels who had refused to sign the peace accord.

He said he could not give details to the media, "but we have relations, and they are our friends, our brothers, and also we have (the intention) to make our relations more close."

### **SLM's Minawi invited to visit Washington**

*(Bloomberg/ST – 11<sup>th</sup> Jul. Washington)* The U.S. has invited the Darfur rebel leader who agreed to peace with Sudan to visit Washington amid signs the African Union-brokered accord is in danger of unravelling because of infighting and violence against civilians.

Minni Arkou Minnawi, leader of one of two feuding factions within the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army that has warred with the central government in Khartoum, will visit later this month for about a week, a State Department official who asked not to be identified said.

The discussions with U.S. officials will explore how to get other rebels to sign the accord.

Among rebel leaders in Darfur, only Minnawi was persuaded by U.S. negotiator Robert Zoellick to support the power-sharing agreement in May. Now Minnawi is facing rising opposition to his leadership among commanders in northern Darfur, including those from his Zaghawa ethnic group, according to the United Nations.

The three-year conflict has killed tens of thousands of civilians and forced about 2.5 million from their homes in what the UN calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The U.S. has accused Sudan's government of committing genocide in Darfur.

A report issued this week by the UN Mission in Sudan cited allegations by internally displaced Sudanese that Minnawi's faction "was indiscriminately killing, raping women and abducting" civilians.

And the UN's top envoy to Sudan, Jan Pronk, said July 6 that the peace agreement is in jeopardy of collapse and violence is worsening due to clashes among rebel factions and increased attacks on civilians by pro-government militias.

The agreement is part of an effort to stop the bloodshed. The U.S. also considers crucial the transformation of a 7,000- person African Union force patrolling Darfur into a 15,000-member UN military mission. "I speak frequently with my secretary of state on this issue to make sure that we expedite the arrival of augmented troops to save lives," President George W. Bush said on July 6.

While Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir opposes the insertion of UN troops, negotiations are continuing in an attempt to change his mind.

The State Department official said Minawi's itinerary was still being determined, including whether he would confer with Bush at the White House. National Security Council spokesman Frederick Jones said late yesterday he had nothing to announce about the president's schedule.

Colin Thomas-Jensen, advocacy and research officer for Africa in the Washington office of the International Crisis Group, a policy research organization, said Minawi's weakening position is undermining the accord.

"The U.S. does find itself in a difficult situation because it trumpeted this agreement as the solution, as the way forward for Darfur," Thomas-Jensen said. "However what most people agree is the way forward is the UN peacekeeping force."

To entice Minnawi to sign the Darfur agreement, Bush promised the rebel chief in a personal letter that the U.S. "will strongly support implementation of the peace accord" and will insist that any party not cooperating "be held accountable by the UN Security Council."

Minawi's rival who refused to sign the accord is AbdulWahid Mohamed al-Nur, who has support among the Fur people, the largest ethnic group in Darfur. He was joined by a smaller rebel group, the Justice and Equality Movement.

The State Department official described reports about new violence by Minawi's faction as part of a pattern though not on the scale seen earlier in the conflict.

"The administration should certainly be re-evaluating just how much support they give him in light of these new allegations" of rape and murder by Minnawi loyalists, Thomas- Jensen said.

The May peace deal required "complete, verifiable disarmament" by mid-October of the government-backed Janjaweed militia, which has been terrorizing residents of Darfur.

Painstakingly negotiated during several days by former deputy secretary of state Zoellick, the agreement always risked coming apart, especially because of the lack of support from rebels.

Zoellick, who took personal charge of the Darfur issue and made four trips there, wrapped up his time as the number two U.S. diplomat on July 7, leaving a void in U.S. mediation.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Janjaweed militia would be disarmed before rebel groups prepare to lay down their own arms. The deal also establishes buffer zones around displaced persons camps into which "rebel forces and Sudanese armed forces cannot go."

A power-sharing arrangement would give the residents of Darfur the ability to choose their own leaders, determine their status as a region and be represented in the central government in Khartoum.

### **Chad moves to mend ties with neighbour Sudan**

(*Reuters/ST* – 11<sup>th</sup> Jul. N'Djamena) Chad and Sudan have agreed to work to improve security on their volatile common border in a move aimed at patching up diplomatic ties broken off by N'Djamena in April, Chad's foreign minister said on Tuesday.

Ahmat Allam-Mi had travelled to Khartoum on Monday to deliver a message from Chadian President Idriss Deby to his Sudanese counterpart, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, suggesting moves to mend their relations.

"Chad has expressed its wish to move forward and President al-Bashir has expressed the same willingness," Allam-Mi told reporters in N'Djamena after returning from Khartoum.

The initiative was a surprising diplomatic turnaround by Deby, who broke off diplomatic relations with eastern neighbour Sudan in April after rebels fighting to oust him attacked the Chadian capital N'Djamena from the east.

He accused Sudan of backing and arming the Chadian rebels, a charge denied by the government in Khartoum which has in turn accused Deby of supporting Sudanese anti-government insurgents in the violent Darfur region.

"The two countries have committed themselves to reducing the insecurity on their frontiers with a view to a swift and peaceful settling of the Chad-Sudan crisis," Allam-Mi said.

He added exchanges between the two governments would be stepped up but did not say when he thought formal diplomatic relations might be restored.

The minister did not give details of what security measures would be taken along the long, porous border, across which marauding armed groups have roamed freely, killing and terrorising civilians and refugees on both sides.