



UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

UNMIS

Media Monitoring Report, 19 July 2007

(By Public Information Office)

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Highlights

UN/ Agencies

Coverage on the UNMIS regular briefing to the press

(The local media) The local media covered the regular UNMIS briefing to the press with extensive quotes from the transcript. In their coverage of the briefing, the press mainly focused on quotes from the CJMC report on the Status of Redeployment.

A discordant note comes from the headlines of the *AllIntibaha* daily that reads, “UN criticises SPLM emphasis on members from the Diaspora at the expense of services”. The Office of the Spokesperson has sent a Letter to the Editor* of *AllIntibaha* stating the headliner was in error and requesting a correction. The Office of the Spokesperson further pointed out that the actual text below the headline was correct in saying that the reference was to concerns raised by participants attending the first SPLM Chapters Conference in Juba and not a quote from the UN.

* *The Letter to the Editor of AllIntibaha (in Arabic) is attached. Transcripts of UNMIS briefings to the press can be accessed through the website: www.unmis.org.*

Activities of Special Envoy Jan Eliasson

(UN News; AlSudani; AlSahafa; AlHayat) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s Special Envoy for Darfur, Jan Eliasson, today left Sudan’s capital, Khartoum, where he met with senior Government official, and travelled Nyala for further talks with other groups.

The Special Envoy will be meeting with representatives of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and civil society groups, as well as with UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local authorities, Mr. Ban’s spokesperson Michele Montas said at a press briefing in New York today.

Informed sources told *AlSudani* daily that Mr. Eliasson held secret talks with a number of field commanders in Darfur. He held talks with field commanders of the AbdulWahid faction of the

SLM, among others, with the objective to convince them to join the peace process and engage in the direct talks between the parties to the Darfur conflict expected to kick off next September and the talks in Arusha before that.

AlHayat daily quotes Radhia Achouri as stating at the regular press conference last Wednesday that Eliasson will on Thursday hold talks with representatives of the Diplomatic Corps and of UN agencies operating in Sudan. She said that the envoy is in Sudan in the framework of efforts to expedite implementation of the second phase of the Road Map and to conclude preparations for the forthcoming 3 – 5 August meeting in Arusha.

Sima Samar expected in Khartoum next week

(*AlAyaam*) Special Human Rights Rapporteur for Sudan, Sima Samar, is expected in the country on the 25th of this month. Her visit will continue until 2nd August.

During her stay here, Samar will hold talks with the ministries of justice and interior, the Commissioner for Humanitarian Assistance and Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman.

More on the UN: *Attached is the text of an interview by the BBC with Chris Ache, the UNHCR's Sudan Representative, on Darfur.*

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Ranks unification committee mandates President Bashir to chair Council of the Wise

(*Alltibaha*) A lengthy meeting held in Juba between representatives of the ranks unification committee with SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amoum culminated in an invitation by the committee for an SPLM representation in the Council of the Wise.

The SPLM said it will respond in writing within the next two days to all proposals of the committee over possible solutions to the country's problems. The SPLM Secretary-General also reiterated SPLM commitments to the full implementation of the CPA in such a manner as to consolidate trust within the north and south and to resolve all outstanding issues between the Parties.

A member of the committee said that they hoped to meet GoSS Vice-President Riek Machar to discuss the basic structures of the proposed Council of the Wise.

The member further pointed out that the committee is currently looking into nominations to the council and has nominated President Bashir to chair the council. Other members would include Vps Kiir and Taha, Minnawi, Saiq el-Mahdi, Mohamed Osman el-Mirghani, Dr. Turabi, Mohamed Nugud, Nafei Ali Nafei, Abel Alier, Mekki Ali Bilaiel, Dr. Amna Dirar, Pagan Amoum, and others.

China will continue efforts to bring peace to Darfur – VP

(AP – July 18, BEIJING) China will continue its efforts to help bring peace to the troubled Darfur region, Vice President Zeng Qinghong said Wednesday during a meeting with a top Sudanese official.

Sudanese First Vice President Salva Kiir was in Beijing as part of a six-day visit to China. He said he appreciated China's role in helping resolve the bloodshed in Darfur, where more than 200,000 people have been killed and 2.5 million others displaced since February 2003, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Defence minister to visit Saudi Arabia for talks on Darfur

(*AlAyaam*) Defence Minister AbdelRaheem Hussein is due for a two-day visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during which he will hold talks with his counterpart over the situation in Darfur.

Informed sources say talks between the two defence ministers will focus on steps taken by the Sudan to restore security in Darfur.

The Sudanese is also slated to hold talks with the Saudi interior minister for discussions along similar lines.

Governor addresses States' Legislative Assembly in English; says consistent with the CPA

(*Khartoum Monitor*) The Governor of Western Bahr-el-Ghazal State denied that his address before the States' Legislative Assembly that was delivered in English was meant to marginalize Arabic.

Governor Mark Nyipoc said it was consistent with the CPA. He urged people to learn English.

The governor criticised the media for not covering news of his state and described journalism as crucial for good governance.

At a press conference yesterday, the governor blamed the shortage of medical staff in Wau to "rumourmongers working against the CPA". Medical doctors in Wau claimed that the government had hired foreign doctors, he said.

Sudan army, SPLA trade accusations over troops redeployment

(*SudanTribune.com; AlSahafa*) A tense regular meeting of the Joint Ceasefire Technical Committee ended with the two sides traded accusations over troop redeployment as per the CPA.

The SAF insisted that it maintain its 3,000 or so presence to protect the oilfields as per an agreement reached with the SPLA at a JDB meeting earlier but the SPLA insists there was no such agreement and no justification for such a presence of the SAF in those areas.

The head of the SPLA team to the committee, Brg. Mark Paul, revealed that the meeting reached agreement that the SAF had redeployed 66.5% of its troops from the south and still has 33.5% spread around different parts of the south even after the 9th July deadline. He described this as a

clear violation of the CPA. He pointed out that the SAF still has about 15,000 SAF south of the 1.1. '56 line.

The SPLA representative denied any link between this and the redeployment of SPLA from the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile region. He explained that the JIUs have not yet been formed in these areas and that the two sides still maintain their troops.

On the other hand, Peter Ajang, the SPLA Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, said that he personally supervised the launch of the SPLA redeployment from the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile regions last week. Despite the difficult terrain and the difficulties in movement as a result of the rains, the SPLA has started to redeploy from Kurmuk in the Blue Nile region and Kauda in the Nuba Mountains on foot, he said. He added that aircraft are used to ferry supplies to them en route as they head towards their new positions.

AlSahafa daily has learnt that the SAF had proposed that the issue be referred to the Ceasefire Political Committee for arbitration and from there to the Presidency but the SPLA says this is a violation of the mechanisms of the CPA.

Demobilised Popular Police Forces spell riot in Khartoum

(AlSahafa; AlRai AlAam) About 300 demobilised members of the Popular Police Forces who were deployed to the Upper Nile region blocked yesterday the [new] Salvation Bridge that links Khartoum and Omdurman.

The demobilised combatants blocked the bridge to traffic for a short time until efforts led by the chief of Khartoum State Police brought the situation under control.

State Minister for the Interior, Alieu Ajang Alieu, revealed that the near 300 former combatants came to Khartoum to demand pay for services rendered. He said that they first rioted at the headquarters of the Popular Police Forces where they were dispersed by the police who shot in the air. They then headed for the bridge over the White Nile and closed it to traffic.

The state minister explained that the GoSS had earlier ordered their demobilization or reintegration of the Popular Police Forces into the southern Sudan Police Force and that those who chose to return to civilian life then came to Khartoum to demand severance pay. He said that their demand is not acceptable because the period they spent in service is considered compulsory national duty without pay.

Authorities impose media ban over recent sabotage attempt

(AlSahafa) The Prosecutor-General has slapped a ban on media coverage of the case and the investigations into the recent sabotage attempt in order not to prejudice the course of justice.

The Prosecutor-General said that the public will be given the appropriate information once investigations are concluded, he said.

Defaulters will be brought before the law pursuant to Article 115 of the Criminal Code, he warned.

Sudan, former eastern rebels sign military deal

(*AFP* – July 18, ASMARA) Sudanese army commanders and former rebel leaders from the east of the country have signed a military deal in Asmara, bolstering a peace agreement signed last year, Eritrean state media said Wednesday.

Following a two-day meeting in the Eritrean capital, a joint committee of military commanders signed an eight-point agreement to help the reintegration of former rebel fighters into the regular forces.

"The Joint Committee assessed the effective integration of the East Sudan Army and held extensive deliberations on the activities carried out thereafter," said a statement quoted in the Eritrea Profile newspaper.

The statement said a timetable was drawn up but did not provide further details.

Repatriation hits the 2 million mark

(*The Citizen*) The Chairman of the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission said on Monday that nearly two million people have so far been repatriated to Southern Sudan from the neighbouring countries in the course of the ongoing voluntary repatriations.

He said that their centres in the Central African Republic and the DRC are now closed following a successful repatriation exercise.

Flood relief efforts

(*Xinhua* – July 18, DAMASCUS; *the local press*) Syria would send a batch of humanitarian aid to Sudan to help the people suffered from the floods which swept many areas in the country, the official SANA news agency reported Wednesday.

Upon the directives of President Bashar al-Assad, a Syrian humanitarian airplane, loaded with 40 tons of food, tents and blankets and many other materials, was scheduled to be headed to Sudan on Thursday.

Sudanese ambassador in Damascus Abdul-Rahamn Dhirar has expressed thanks for the support.

The death toll as a result of the floods is said to be closing on the 100 mark.

The interior ministry meanwhile points out that transportation remains a major obstacle to ferrying relief to those affected by the floods.

National Congress Party and NDA resume talks to re-energize the Cairo Agreement

(*AlSahafa*) The Supreme Political Committee formed between the government and the National Democratic Alliance resumed business yesterday following a long lull.

The two sides agreed in their meeting yesterday to resume meetings of their political, legal and redress committees. The committees have been tasked to table their respective reports before the supreme committee within a fortnight.

Khartoum prepares to repatriate 500 Eritrean refugees

(*Allintibaha*) Khartoum is set to repatriate about 500 Eritrean refugees following a dragnet of illegal immigrants. Sources report that the dragnet in Khartoum scoops a number of Eritrean immigrants on a daily basis from their homes.

Sources also say that most of those caught have been interviewed before and qualify for refugee status. Other sources attribute this action to the closer ties Khartoum and Asmara are witnessing of late.

GoSS

Al-Cardinal corruption hearing aborts

(*The Citizen*) The Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly was yesterday abruptly called off leaving lawmakers no chance to grill a minister over the al-Cardinal corruption scandal.

Deputy Speaker Tor Deng Mawien told lawmakers who turned up that there was no agenda despite an earlier schedule listing the constitutional affairs minister as the next minister to face the House. Lawmakers have been eagerly awaiting the appearance of the minister to ask him to explain how a corruption investigator was dropped from the case and an attorney helping him transferred from his post.

The Police Press Office had since said that the investigator, a Lt. Col. Francis Chol, was found guilty for billing vehicles without enough evidence.

SPLM Chapters Conference adopts working recommendations

(*The Citizen*) After six days of open and frank deliberation on the conference theme, *The Challenges of Transition, the Implementation of the CPA and the Role of the SPLM Chapter during the Transition Period and Beyond*, participants of the First SPLM Chapter Leaders' International Conference passed a series of recommendations with amendments.

Parliament passes media policy for southern Sudan

(*SudanTribune.com; The Citizen*) The lawmakers of southern Sudan legislative assembly have, yesterday afternoon, passed the media policy and work plan presented by minister of information and broadcasting Samson Kwaje without any counter motion.

Appreciating Samson Kwaje's presentation, MP Tor Mowyien Deng, Deputy speaker of southern Sudan legislative assembly said "On behalf of the august house, I urge the Minister of Information and Broadcasting together with his team to double their effort in ensuring that masses in southern Sudan are informed and constantly updated on the importance of the upcoming three events of National Population Census scheduled for November this year, the General Election of 2008 and the Referendum in year 2011 respectively."

MP Deng assured the minister of information that the assembly will through its weight behind the minister in ensuring that their request for money from the Southern Sudan ministry of finance and economic planning are released in time for the purchase of radio and TV equipments which are very crucial at this particular time.

The information minister had earlier urged participants at the First SPLM Chapter Leaders' International Conference to invest in the development of the media and especially FM radio. [Follow the link to the full text [South Sudan invites Diaspora to invest in FM radio production](#); [Parliament passes media policy for southern Sudan](#)]

Darfur

Political:

Darfur rebel leader says he will not attend Arusha meeting

(*SudanTribune.com* – July 19, LONDON) The leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) has announced that he will not take part in a meeting organized by the AU-UN envoys for the non signatory groups in preparation for the peace talks aimed at ending the four year conflict in the region.

Al-Nur explained that his group demands the implementation of a constructive environment before any talks can be held.

The aim of the Arusha meeting is to find a common ground for the demands of the non signatory rebels.

Al Nur said that world forsakes the plight of Darfur people and speaks about the reunification of the rebels.

He further added that "the so called factions were created by Khartoum, some countries or regional organizations because they want these phantom groups to ink a deal that does not bring tidings of security or accommodates the legitimate rights of Darfur people."

Al-Nur said "In our view that international community has chosen the easy way, and decided to pressurize the victims of this conflict in order to satisfy the culprits in Khartoum. But we will never betray our people and the heavy responsibility that we shoulder."

"The rights of the Darfur people is a red line" he stressed

He further said "to realize a genuine peace, world should put pressure on Khartoum to provide security for our people as we request and then we would proceed with negotiations to find a political solution of the conflict."

The SLM demands that Khartoum undertakes some measures before kicking off any negotiations.

The rebel holdout group says that concrete steps must be taken to establish security in the region such as the disarmament of the Janjaweed militias, to stop aerial bombardment of civilians, deployment of an international peacekeeping force with a robust mandate and facilitating the relocation of the IDPs and refugees in their villages.

The rebel leader renewed his commitment to the Abéché ceasefire agreement signed in 2004 despite violations on the part of Khartoum.

Gordon Brown challenges Sudanese

(© *Theherald.co.uk*) Fresh United Nations sanctions could be taken against the Sudanese government if it does not end the violence in Darfur and stop its allied militias blighting the crisis-hit region, Gordon Brown warned yesterday.

The Prime Minister's message was being personally delivered to representatives of the Khartoum government by Douglas Alexander, International Development Secretary.

A departmental spokeswoman told The Herald last night Mr Brown's hard-hitting remarks would be "one of the messages the Secretary of State is conveying" to the government of President Omar Hassan Ahmad al Bashir.

A Foreign Office spokeswoman said the "fresh sanctions" would include the UN extending its arms ban to the whole of Sudan. [*Follow the link to the full text [Brown challenges Sudanese](#)*].

Advocacy group urges Olympic Committee to do more for Darfur

(*SudanTribune.com* – July 18, NEW YORK) A global advocacy campaign using the 2008 Olympics to highlight China's role in the Darfur genocide said the International Olympic Committee's distribution of sportswear at a refugee camp on July 18 is a welcome gesture, but called on the IOC to use its influence with the Olympic host nation to urge China to do more to end the violence in Darfur.

"We welcome the fact that the IOC recognizes the Darfur tragedy," said Jill Savitt, Director of Olympic Dream for Darfur. "But in addition to handing out sportswear, the IOC should help ensure security for Darfurians, by using its position of influence to persuade China to take a leadership role on Darfur. If the IOC and China do not act, the Games will be marred by an ongoing genocide – a genocide in which the Chinese government is complicit."

There is broad consensus within the Darfur advocacy community that China is a – if not the – key to providing security in Darfur. In its role as Olympic host and close partner of Sudan, China could use its influence to press Khartoum to allow a civilian protection operation in to Darfur, Savitt said. The IOC, as custodian of the Olympics, is in a position to influence Beijing.

In the past month, the Olympic Dream for Darfur campaign has written to the IOC, the US Olympic Committee, and Olympic corporate sponsors, urging them to impress upon the Chinese government the urgency of a response to deteriorating security on the ground in Darfur. Beijing must exert its influence well before the Olympics – or risk facing mounting public pressure over the role of the Olympic host.

In August, Olympic Dream for Darfur will launch a symbolic torch relay, starting on the Chad/Darfur border, which will stop in six countries historically associated with genocide. There will also be a simultaneous US torch relay, from September to December, through more than 20 states, and symbolic torch relays in Canada and Australia as well.

“The theme of the Beijing Games, ‘One World/One Dream,’ will seem perversely ironic – even hypocritical — if images of the dead and the dying in Darfur are juxtaposed with images from the Games, hosted by a country facilitating the suffering and destruction,” Savitt said. “Such a juxtaposition can only serve to tarnish the Olympics, and all it represents. The IOC is in a position to make sure this doesn’t happen.”

In announcing the “Giving is Winning” launch, IOC President Dr. Jacques Rogge said the project, a joint effort with the UN and the US Olympic Committee “will bring hope and joy to thousands of refugees.”

Dream for Darfur, which runs the Olympic Dream for Darfur campaign, said it does not advocate a boycott of the 2008 Games.

"Our goal is to highlight the fact that China is hosting the Olympics – while it is also a close partner of the genocidal regime in Sudan – and by thus drawing attention to the plight of Darfurians, elicit a change in China’s policy toward Sudan. "

Security:

Committee of the local administration holds talks with rebel group in el-Diein

(AlKhartoum) A leader of the Rizeigat tribe of South Darfur reports that talks took place between a new-formed rebel group and a committee made up of the commissioners for el-Deien, Bahr-el-Arab and a local leader in the el-Joghan area.

Ali Adam Mohamed said that the committee from the local administration requested that the rebel group define their demands. Their demands, he says, were for the provision of roads, means for agriculture, universities, and schools in their region. They also demanded the reintegration of 5,000 of their combatants into the SAF and demand that the Darfur Peace Agreement be scrapped. The fledgling rebel group further pointed out that they had served the government

long, fought and were martyred in the south. They also demanded compensation for their martyrs. The group declared launch of their rebel activities from 10th July 2007 but the committee of the local administration requested 20 days so that they could forward the demands to the government to determine who should negotiate with this group.

The local leaders, on their side, asked the rebel group to leave the Darfur Peace Agreement out of their demands because it is now a national and international concern and no one tribe could tamper with it. The local leaders told the rebels that they were ready to resolve the problems right away if it had to do with the Rizeigat tribe and would refer the problem to the government if the demands were government-related.

The group is mainly made up of Rizeigat tribesmen living in the eastern parts of el-Diein municipality.

Darfur needs international security for peace - UK

(*Reuters* – July 18, EL-FASHER) Britain's new international aid minister said the violence plaguing Darfur would only end once there was proper security in place from the international community allied with proper support from Sudan.

"We need to have security here on the ground in Darfur that requires both the international force ... but also requires clear action by the government of Sudan to make sure that there is a degree of stability and order within Darfur that is sadly lacking at the moment," Douglas Alexander said on Wednesday.

Britain's international development minister made the comments during a tour of the Al Salam camp for displaced persons near El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur State.

"These people are living in genuine fear and I understand the concern that they must feel given the continuing security incidents that are taking place in the environs of this camp and more broadly across Darfur," he added.

Alexander arrived in Darfur on Wednesday, his first visit to Sudan.

In Al Salam, home to some 50,000 people displaced by more than four years of conflict between the Sudanese government, allied militia and ethnic minority rebels, the minister met separately with a group of women and tribal leaders.

He also met the governor of North Darfur State Osman Youssef Kibir, who told him that security in the region had improved considerably compared to three or four years ago.

EU to send peacekeepers to Chad for Darfur refugees

(*AP* – July 18, BRUSSELS) European Union foreign ministers were expected next week to start planning for a possible 12-month peacekeeping mission to protect tens of thousands of Darfur refugees in Chad, diplomats said Wednesday.

Preliminary planning foresees sending 1,500 to 3,000 troops from the 27-nation bloc to refugee camps bordering Sudan's western Darfur region, where civilians face violence from fighting that is spilling over the border from Sudan, diplomats said on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of negotiations.

The idea has been pushed by French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and gained support from other EU capitals, diplomats said.

Kouchner and British Foreign Secretary David Miliband discussed the idea in Paris Wednesday.

"We have the possibility to be very useful in Darfur, I hope, and in any case, to cooperate on this operation in Chad for its civilian populations," Kouchner said.

Miliband said Britain was "very supportive" of France's initiatives on Sudan and Chad.

Last week, France's U.N. Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sabliere said France's aim is to put "the elements for a decision, with the agreement of Chad," on the table in Europe and the U.N. by the end of July.

The mission would focus on providing security and training and humanitarian relief for the Darfur refugees in Chad and would eventually hand over to a United Nations-African Union peacekeeping force.

In Brussels, diplomats said Chad's government was in favor of allowing in European peacekeepers which would eventually hand over their mission to a full-fledged U.N. mission.

They said a EU force could be deployed for an initial six months up to a maximum 12 before handing over to the United Nations. A final decision after planning and troop contributions are made could be taken before the end of the year and could deploy around the same time as the current African Union force in neighboring Darfur is strengthened.

Aspects of the mission could include European troops and police being used to train locals to police the refugee camps while more robust forces would be used to secure the perimeter of the camps, diplomats said.

The idea for the mission was discussed by EU envoys this week in Brussels and was also discussed between the EU's foreign policy chief Javier Solana and French President Sarkozy last week in Paris.

The U.N.'s new humanitarian aid chief John Holmes said Monday he hopes the EU agrees to send peacekeepers adding it was key to secure the camps so they can operate "in reasonable safety" within which humanitarian workers can do their job as well.

Holmes said some 170,000 uprooted Chadians and over 200,000 refugees from Darfur were living "in an extremely difficult area with very little water, huge environmental pressures" in eastern Chad.

The U.N. is also discussing sending peacekeepers to Central African Republic, which is also receiving thousands of Darfur refugees.

Miscellaneous:

Huge underground lake could end Darfur conflict: US scientist

(AFP – July 18) The recent discovery of a huge underground lake in Sudan could spell an end to four years of conflict in the drought-stricken region of Darfur, a US geologist said Wednesday.

"Access to fresh water is essential for refugee survival, it will help the peace process and provide the necessary resources for the much needed economic development in Darfur," said Farouk El-Baz from Boston University.

The discovery was reported in last month's "International Journal of Remote Sensing" and the Sudanese government has since launched its "1,000 Wells For Darfur" campaign to raise sufficient funds to tap the precious resource. Egypt has already committed to sinking the first 20 wells free of charge while the United Nations has sought help in selecting the best sites to sink the wells, Baz told AFP.

The United Nations needs water supplies for its planned 20,000-strong joint UN-African Union force, due to deploy in Sudan possibly next year.

The lake was spotted by satellite and lies more than 550 meters (1,800 feet) below sea level. With a surface area of some 30,750 square kilometers (11,800 square miles), it is slightly larger than Belgium or Lake Erie.

The lake may have contained up to 2,530 cubic kilometers (606 cubic miles) of water in the past and was discovered using images from three satellites, one belonging to NASA, another to Canada and a third from the Pentagon.

Scientists were spurred into looking for the lake after the discovery a decade earlier of an underground lake in Egypt north of Darfur that is now used to irrigate some 60,000 hectares (150,000 acres) of land, Baz said.

UN troops deploy in northeast DRC to counter LRA rebels

(AFP – July 18, KINSHASA) UN peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of Congo announced Wednesday they were deploying to the northeast of the country to try to intercept incoming rebels from Uganda entering via Sudan.

A contingent of 80 Moroccan peacekeepers have been deployed at Ngundu, near the border with Sudan, for a week already, said the UN MONUC mission's military spokesman Major Gabriel de Brosse.

They were there to set up an advance base, and Indonesian troops would be joining in the next few days, he added.

The UN troops, in cooperation with soldiers from the DR Congo army, were responding to the appearance of rebels from Uganda's Lords Resistance Army (LRA), who had arrived in the country via Sudan.

The MONUC's mission would be to repatriate any LRA rebels found inside the country, respecting the terms of the Juba peace process, said de Brosses.