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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

Local News Headlines

- President Bashir visits Darfur States (State TV)
- Al Bashir Darfur tour refutes Ocampo's Allegations (Sudan Vision)
- US Charge d'Affaires: Abusing Bush and America will not solve Darfur problem (Al-Sahafa)
- First Vice President urges deferment of ICC indictment (Al-Rai Al-Aam)
- Khartoum agrees to Arab League proposal (Al-Rai Al-Aam/Sudan Vision)
- SAF withdraws from Abyei by 77% (All dailies)
- SAF rejects charges of targeting civilian property in Abyei (Al-Sudani)
- Police Chief: Foreigners in Khartoum are safe (Al-Sahafa)

Websites/International Headlines

- Southern Sudan accuses northern army of Abyei attack (Reuters)
- Sudan and UN sign four-year development assistance plan (UN Daily News)
- ICC prosecutor said Sudan wanted guarantees before handing over two Darfur suspects (ST)
- Darfur refugees term return of Darfur refugees as "fabricated story"
- Sudan brushes off calls for a regional court to try Darfur suspects (ST)
- SLM chief says ICC will bring justice to Darfur (ST)
- Ugandan troops kill 10 civilian in southern Sudan - report (ST)
- Sudan's president pays defiant visit to Darfur (AP)
- Sudan's President goes on tour (NY Times)
- Sudan president calls on Darfur peace partner to resume functions
- Sudan's Bashir accuses France of damaging Darfur peace
- UN-African Union mission chief meets with Sudanese President in Darfur

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Highlights

Local news coverage (Arabic and English language press and TV)

State TV reported that President Bashir arrived yesterday in north Darfur State as part of his tour in the three Darfur States. This rally sends a message to the world that we are committed to peace; we know there is a problem in Darfur but from the outset we have been exerting efforts to resolve it, they [the West] are using Darfur to destroy Sudan, but we want to tell them that all of us have agreed on the need to achieve peace, the President told a rally in El Fasher. Each time we near a peace agreement {they} step in to block us. All the political parties will participate in the peace process. We will continue to provide security, stability, education and different services to the people of Darfur because we are committed to implement peace in Darfur. What Ocampo is saying will not divert us from our work; we know who is behind Ocampo, he told the crowds.

At a later rally in Nyala, the President announced an amnesty for the children arrested during the attack on Omdurman. We will involve all Darfurians in the peace process so that peace is comprehensive, the President declared. Slogans such as "Ocampo the coward, Muslims are in the field", "Ocampo is a traitor" and "Ocampo is America's agent and mercenary" were shouted by the organizers and echoed by the crowds. He criticized France for being an obstacle in the way to peace by continuing to shelter Abdul Wahid and not pushing him toward peace. "A country like France is holding Abdul-Wahid and

preventing him from joining the peace process", he said. "It is talking about peace in Sudan, genocide in Sudan and war crimes in Sudan, yet it is the one inciting the continuation of war," He said. The President will proceed to west Darfur State today.

Al-Sahafa Newspaper reported that the US Charge d'Affaires Alberto Fernandez said he was disappointed by his visit to Darfur. He said he came with diplomats in President Bashir's plane hoping to hear something new and practical steps to resolve Darfur issue but he was surprised by the abuses for America, George Bush and others. "Insults will not solve Darfur problems, we have no link with Ocampo and ICC," he said. "The International Community is awaiting action not promises on the part of the Government to end tragedy in Darfur," he said. Asked about the president's initiative to resolve the crisis in Darfur he said, "I see nothing new".

The FVP and head of crisis management committee Salva Kiir has urged the ICC to defer the request for warrant against President Bashir to give time for CPA implementation, according to **Al-Rai Al-Aam** newspaper. The Government should implement the CPA and negotiate with the movements in Darfur, he said. Salva Kiir concluded his visit to Uganda yesterday where he discussed border and development issues between Uganda and Southern Sudan.

Al-Rai Al-Aam newspaper carried a report that the Director of the office of the Arab League Secretary General Husham Yousuf said that the Sudan Government agreed to the establishment of a special

tribunal to prosecute those accused of crimes in Darfur. He said the Government also agreed to a proposal that Arab League, UN and AU follow up the trials to ensure that laws in Sudan address the international law's concern.

Sudan Vision reported that the Arab League announced yesterday that its talks with the Sudanese government yielded a package of decisions on Darfur. The Sudanese government has agreed to establish special courts to be supervised by international organizations such as Arab League, AU, and UN to try those involved in Darfur issue, the Arab League Secretary General said. Musa pointed out that he informed UN Secretary General about these developments.

"SAF has withdrawn from Abyei by 77%", SAF spokesperson Brig. Osman Al-Agbash told SMC, according to local daily newspapers. "SAF is committed to the roadmap", he said. "Brigade (31) is in the area since 40 years so it can not be withdrawn overnight", he said.

Al-Sudani newspaper reported that SAF has rejected JIU commander Thomas Sirilio's charges that some elements from brigade 31 had targeted civilian property in Abyei. SAF spokesperson office told Miraya FM that the accusations were unfounded. "Even SPLA withdrawal from Abyei has not yet been verified," the office said. JIU commander Thomas said JIUs would not deploy in the area unless other troops withdraw from Abyei.

Al-Sahafa reported that the Director General of Police Gen. Mohamed Najeeb Al-Tayeb said foreigners in the country particularly in Khartoum were safe. "There is nothing to fear," he said. He said police was committed to protect relief convoys in Darfur.

Website/International news coverage

Southern Sudan accuses northern army of Abyei attack (Reuters)

(Reuters) - Southern Sudan's army accused northern forces on Wednesday of raiding a village in the oil-producing Abyei region but SAF said the accusations were untrue.

SPLA said a village 10 km (six miles) north of Abyei had been attacked on Tuesday by the northern Sudan Armed Forces.

"They have burned down houses and schools," the SPLA Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics James Hoth Mai told Reuters. He said he had no reports of casualties.

But the army spokesman in Khartoum said: "There is absolutely no truth in this matter... Until now we have withdrawn 77 percent of our battalion from Abyei and we are continuing with this."

The southern army says it has withdrawn all its forces from Abyei. It says that if the northern army maintains soldiers in Abyei, it will refer the matter to Sudan's presidency and the body monitoring the north-south ceasefire.

Sudan and UN sign four-year development assistance plan

(UN Daily News Centre) - The Sudanese Government today signed an agreement with United Nations agencies operating in the country on a four-year aid plan covering peacebuilding, governance and

the rule of law, employment, education and health care as well as other services.

The agreement, known as the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), was signed by representatives of the Government of National Unity and the Government of Southern Sudan and 18 UN agencies headed by Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator Ameerah Haq.

Ms. Haq said the new agreement, which covers the years 2009 to 2012, “will enable us to move beyond annual planning, and set more ambitious development goals with the help of all our national and international partners. With the endorsement of this planning tool, the UN will spare no effort in helping the country achieve tangible progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).”

“The consolidation of peace and stability in the country remains the ultimate goal of the UNDAF process,” she added.

Welcoming the new agreement, Sudan’s State Minister of International Cooperation El Elias Nyamlell Wakoson said that it “represents an important step in terms of moving forward jointly with a common vision of our strategic direction in support of the peace process.”

ICC prosecutor said Sudan wanted guarantees before handing over two Darfur suspects

(Sudan Tribune) — The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) revealed today in an interview with the ‘*Time*’ magazine that the Sudanese government sent an envoy to inquire about how far up the chain command he is willing to go.

The unidentified Sudanese envoy asked Ocampo if handing over Haroun would stop investigations of people above him.

“Suppose Haroun comes to The Hague and says he was only following instructions do you have to investigate the person who gave the instructions?” Ocampo disclosed the dialogue between him and the Sudanese envoy.

Last month a senior Sudanese official told Sudan Tribune on condition of anonymity that the leadership of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) “is getting very nervous over the upcoming announcement by the ICC of new suspects”.

He said that the NCP is considering handing over two Darfur suspects Haroun and Kushayb to the ICC “as a protection from further indictments”.

The senior official said that the NCP held an unpublicized meeting recently that included the Sudanese president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, 2nd Vice President Ali Osman Taha, presidential adviser Mustafa Ismail and state minister for foreign affairs Ali Karti among others.

According to the official, Karti made a presentation to the NCP leadership in which he outlined the “difficult position” the government will be in if senior officials are charged by the world court of war crimes.

Karti recommended that Haroun and Kushayb being extradited to the Hague “as a protection from further indictments” the official said.

Al-Bashir appeared to be in agreement with the proposal, the official said, as well as others who were present but that Vice President Taha staunchly opposed it “on

the grounds of preserving Sudan's sovereignty".

The ICC prosecutor told the magazine he believed Sudan was worried that Haroun may say he received instructions from the Sudanese president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir.

Ocampo criticized the international community for ignoring the outstanding arrest warrants against Haroun and Kushayb.

He named the former special US envoy Andrew Natsios as one diplomat who was assuring Khartoum that they are safe from the ICC.

"Don't worry about the prosecutor. Just accept the peacekeepers and nothing will happen" Ocampo quoted UN & US officials as telling Khartoum.

Darfur refugees term return of Darfur refugees as "fabricated story"

(Sudan Tribune) July 23, 2008 (NYALA) – President al-Bashir met today in al-Fasher with some one thousand families of IDPs from various tribes in Darfur, including those he is accused of targeting with atrocities, before their return to their villages.

Hussein Abu Sharati, spokesperson of Darfur IDPs and refugees, dismissed this operation of voluntary return terming it as "fabricated story directed to the media" during the visit of the Sudanese president to the region. He further added that "those so called displaced had never been in the IDPs camps."

According to the SUNA news agency, 1000 families from Abu Shock, al-Salam and Zamzam camps are to return to their villages in the areas of Dar Zaggawa,

Tawila and Abu Ziraygga. Before setting out, they met with the President and condemned the charges of genocide filed against him by the ICC prosecutor.

Abu Sharati claimed local authorities had been transporting NCP supporters from different areas in Darfur to attend the rally for al-Bashir. "Most of the people who rallied today are civil servants and government employees who came to meet al-Bashir under pressure and fears."

Abu Sharati also accused the Sudanese army of bombing two villages located north-western of Jabal Marra in South Darfur state. He said nine people were killed and 24 wounded during the aerial attack. "The army bombed Ardebah and Dekour villages, north western Jabal Mara. Ardabah has been totally burnt" he said. (ST)

[According to other reports, Al-Bashir announced during the mass rally in Fasher that his government is planning a peace conference for all Sudanese political forces, including all the Darfuri civil, social and religious leaders. He promised that "even all our brothers in the (rebel) movements, signatories or non-signatories (of the Darfur Peace Agreement), will be invited to participate (in this conference) to achieve peace in Darfur, to achieve justice in Darfur, security and tranquillity and peaceful coexistence between people of Darfur."]

Sudan brushes off calls for a regional court to try Darfur suspects)

(Sudan Tribune) — The Sudanese government denied today that it has agreed to setting up a regional court to prosecute Darfur war crimes suspects.

The Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa carried a number of proposals to

the Sudanese president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir this week to on the row with the International Criminal Court (ICC).

One of the suggestions by the Arab League chief was for Sudan to accept an African court to look into Darfur right abuses under ICC supervision.

But the Sudanese justice minister Abdel-Basit Sabdarat said that Khartoum had not accepted “a regional court in Sudan or any foreign trials”.

“Sudanese courts are capable to carry out its duties and it is open for anyone to attend” Sabdarat said.

SLM chief says ICC will bring justice to Darfur

(Sudan Tribune) – Abdel-Wahid al-Nur, leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) reaffirmed the support of his organization to the ICC indictment of President Omar al-Bashir, adding that only the international court will bring justice to Darfur and to the Sudanese people.

The Paris-based rebel leader who is in visit to the U.S. briefed the members of Southern Sudanese Voice for Freedom, a Washington-based advocacy group about the current developments in Sudan, on July 19.

Al-Nur said, “There will not be any reconciliation unless those who commit crimes against humanity in Darfur and Sudan are prosecuted.” Anyone charged with genocide, he added, must face justice, without exception.

Al-Nur is in Washington to discuss the Darfur situation with U.S administration

officials. With no real progress on the ground and uncertain peace mediation efforts, American officials are eager to exchange views about the situation in Darfur and seek ways to bring peace to that region.

Ugandan troops kill 10 civilian in southern Sudan - report

(Sudan Tribune) — A Southern Sudanese official accused Ugandan soldiers of killing ten civilians during recent attacks Eastern Equatoria, southern Sudan, but the Ugandan army spokesperson denied the aggression. At least 10 people died after the assault at a cattle camp in Kapoeta, about 250 kilometers (155 miles) east of Southern Sudan’s capital, Juba, Marko Lokoroe, commissioner of Kapoeta- East County, told Bloomberg News.

Sudan's president pays defiant visit to Darfur

(AP) NYALA, Sudan - Sudan's president made a defiant visit to Darfur just a week after being charged with genocide in the war-ravaged region, vowing not to be intimidated by the indictment and then breaking into a tribal dance on a parched field to the delight of cheering supporters... He sought to cast himself as a peacemaker during speeches across the troubled land where an international prosecutor accuses him of committing crimes against humanity.

The carefully orchestrated trip seemed designed to portray the president as being deeply concerned about the region's people as his government tries to persuade the U.N. Security Council to block the case against him. It was al-Bashir's first known visit to Darfur in more than three years, and he rarely allows

Western journalists to accompany him anywhere...

"The president came to Darfur to send a message that (the ICC prosecutor) has no case," said Abdel Mahmoud al-Koronky, a member of al-Bashir's National Congress Party traveling with him. During one stop in northern Darfur, al-Bashir met with 600 refugees from various tribes, including those he is accused of targeting with atrocities, but the crowd in El Fasher appeared to be carefully hand-picked by his advisers.

The president had no plans to visit any of the region's sprawling refugee camps where people have moved to escape violence. He promised to send them farm tractors and improve safety in the camps by giving security jobs to former rebels, but gave no details. "The real sickness here is the suffering of the displaced, because they are the ones who lost their sense of security and safety in their hometowns," al-Bashir told the group in El Fasher.

In another apparent gesture toward his opponents in Darfur, al-Bashir said he would free more than 80 young rebels imprisoned after taking part in a brazen May attack near the capital, Khartoum, which is hundreds of miles from their desert bases in the country's west. He called them "boys" and said they would be freed and pardoned, but did not say when.

...Critics of al-Bashir characterized the trip as a stage-managed affair to bolster Sudan's efforts to rally allies in hopes of getting the Security Council to suspend any arrest warrant by the ICC. "It's all a show and a sham," said Jill Savitt, executive director of Dream for Darfur, an initiative that has sought to pressure China to use its influence as a major trading partner of Sudan to pressure al-

Bashir into improving security in Darfur. Darfur refugees have told relief workers they are "overjoyed" al-Bashir has been charged, said Savitt, who was not in Sudan.

Jerry Fowler, president of the Washington-based Save Darfur Coalition, said, "Whenever al-Bashir or his regime is under pressure, they try to do just enough to alleviate the pressure, and that's what he's doing." If no arrest warrant is issued for al-Bashir, he will "go back to business as usual," Fowler said...

Al-Bashir avoided any mention of the charges against him, but alluded generally to the case by calling it an attempt to foil his government's efforts to restore peace in Darfur. Sudan will not be intimidated by the threat of sanctions either, he said. "We will only bow to God, who is the sole provider," al-Bashir said.

Without mentioning the ICC prosecutor by name, the president said: "Every time we take a step forward, make progress and signs of peace emerge, those people try to mess it up, return us to square one and distract us with marginal issues and false allegations."

In the town of Nyala, al-Bashir touted what he called his accomplishments in the troubled region, such as increasing the number of schools in Darfur from seven to 195 over his 19 years in power. He did acknowledge "injustices" in Darfur, but did not specify them or identify those he thought responsible. "Yes, we all know that there have been problems in Darfur and we know that there have been injustices," he said. "But we, from day one, sought to bring peace for all the people of Darfur."

Sudan's President goes on tour

(**NY Times**) —... on Wednesday, Mr. Bashir did not act as if he felt guilty. He focused on peace, development and pleasing the crowds...

Mr. Bashir was not especially antagonistic at the rally on Wednesday, for instance, and did not rail about evil America. He did not mention any Zionist conspiracies. The approach was a change for a head of state who had threatened not so long ago to mount a jihad against United Nations peacekeepers and turn Darfur into a "graveyard" of blue helmets. Thousands of peacekeepers are now here and more on their way as part of a United Nations-African Union force.

Instead, Mr. Bashir visited their headquarters in El Fasher, expressing condolences for the peacekeepers who had been killed and pledging cooperation with their mission, the joint force said. "You are our guests and our partners," the peacekeepers quoted him as saying.

Mr. Bashir's new strategy seems to be to portray himself and his government as victims, not aggressors. "Whenever we take one step forward toward peace, our outside enemies pull us back," he said. He also admitted that "there had been problems in Darfur and injustices," which was unusual for him. "And we're working on them," he reassured his people. He talked of all the wells he would drill and schools he would build and how he would reach out to rebel groups to stabilize the war-ravaged region in western Sudan. "We are with you, Darfur!" Mr. Bashir said...

Clearly, Mr. Bashir was saying the right things, though he was short on specifics and his track record is highly suspect. "It was vaguely positive," said a Western

diplomat who traveled with Mr. Bashir. "He's not nearly as confrontational as he has been. But the question is: where's the substance?"

Sudan's Bashir accuses France of damaging Darfur peace

(**Sudan Tribune**) July 23, 2008 (NYALA) – The Sudanese president accused France of hindering peace process in Darfur. Addressing a mass rally in Nyala, the Sudanese president accused the French government of preventing the founder of the Sudan Liberation Movement, from joining the peace process to end the five year conflict in western Sudan.

"A country like France is holding Abdel-Wahid and prevented him from joining the peace. It is talking about peace in Sudan, about genocide in Sudan and about war crimes in Sudan, yet it is the one inciting the continuation of war." Said Bashir: "It is the one that does not want peace in Darfur because it wants to steal Darfur's resources."

Abdel Wahid al-Nur has been living in France for two year on a temporary residence permit. Sudanese efforts to persuade France to expel him have failed. Just last month the Sudanese foreign minister visited Paris and asked France's help to end the Darfur conflict and to help improve Khartoum's relations with Chad. The FM's visit was also an attempt to clear up misunderstandings stemming from the 10 May JEM attack on Khartoum. Sudan had accused France of providing satellite photos to the rebels so that they could avoid Sudanese army positions.

Sudan president calls on Darfur peace partner to resume functions

(**Sudan Tribune**) President Al-Bashir urged his senior presidential assistant Minni Minnawi to return to resume his official functions. Minnawi told Sudan Tribune earlier this month that he is in Imbro, a town in North Darfur. He denied traveling to Chad. His absence had led to speculation that he might pull out of government.

In Nyala, President Bashir said the government would implement what is left of the DPA . He also promised to integrate Minnawi's forces into the armed forces.

UN-African Union mission chief meets with Sudanese President in Darfur

(**Sudan Tribune**) 23 July - The head of the United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID) met today with President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan at the mission's headquarters in El Fasher.

Mr. al-Bashir reiterated his country's resolve to provide security for UNAMID staff and convoys. "You are our guests and our partners," he said, "and we are ready to provide any assistance that will help you do your work."

The Joint Special Representative told the President that UNAMID's deployment was besieged by numerous challenges, but said that the mission was strengthening its resolve to reach its full capacity as soon as possible.

The Sudanese leader expressed his condolences to UNAMID and the families of those peacekeepers that have lost their lives in Darfur while serving the mission. Seven blue helmets