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Highlights

Southern Sudan: Improve response to ethnic violence

Reuters and AlertNet 21/6/09 - The Southern Sudan government, the United Nations, and international donors should urgently address critical failures to protect civilians from ethnic violence, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today. On June 23, 2009, the parties to the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended Sudan's long civil war between the southern Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the National Congress Party, donors, and international supporters will meet in Washington, DC to review implementation of the agreement, including security arrangements.

The 15-page report, "No One to Intervene: Gaps in Civilian Protection in Southern Sudan," highlights a recent surge in ethnic violence and the failure of the government of Southern Sudan and the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) to protect civilians. In March and April 2009, armed civilians from the Lou Nuer and Murle ethnic groups in Southern Sudan's Jonglei state killed an estimated 1,000 men, women, and children, and abducted about 150 women and children in vicious attacks and counter-attacks. Government officials knew the conflict was brewing but did not take steps to prevent it or protect civilians, nor did the UN mission address the impending violence, said Human Rights Watch.

"The people of Southern Sudan have a right to expect their government to protect them," said Georgette Gagnon, Africa director at Human Rights Watch. "But the brutal violence in Jonglei showed all too clearly how unprotected they are."

Senior leaders of the government of Southern Sudan should go to troubled areas in an effort to prevent violence and human rights abuses, strengthen police presence in those areas, and train soldiers in civilian protection, Human Rights Watch said.

In Jonglei, the Southern Sudanese Police Service (SSPS) were too few or absent from most attack sites and lacked training and equipment to protect civilians. The Southern Sudanese military, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army, despite having bases near the affected areas instructed soldiers not to intervene to protect civilians, reportedly out of concern that the soldiers would clash with armed civilians.

Although government officials were warned of the impending violence, they did not go to the Lou Nuer and Murle areas until after the March attack. In addition, a committee of government officials carried out an investigation after the attacks but has not taken any steps to prosecute those responsible for the large-scale crimes.

The UN peacekeepers, mandated to protect civilians and to monitor alleged violations of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, were not present at the attack sites. Based at the state capital, Bor, the peacekeepers increased visits to the affected areas after the March attacks but did not travel to most of the remote sites where civilians were killed. In May the peacekeepers temporarily deployed some 120 military and civilian staff to the two affected areas to assist in peace building efforts.

"While the peacekeeping force's presence in Jonglei is helpful, it should increase its presence in hot spots through regular visits, patrols, and bases in an effort to prevent further attacks and protect civilians," said Gagnon. "It should also conduct thorough human rights investigations

into any alleged attacks and help the southern government find ways to provide justice in remote areas."

The southern government and peacekeepers have also failed to protect civilians from ethnic violence in other locations, including from ongoing deadly attacks by the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army rebels in the provinces of Central and Western Equatoria, and from clashes between the southern Sudan People's Liberation Army and the Sudan Armed Forces in Malakal that killed more than 30 civilians in February 2009.

The danger of violence across Southern Sudan could intensify in the months ahead, leading up to national elections scheduled for February 2010 and the southern referendum on self-determination in 2011. Human Rights Watch urged representatives of the government of Southern Sudan, donors, and diplomats attending the June 23 conference to put protecting civilians at the top of their agenda.

The priority should be to increase the presence of trained, equipped police and government leaders in likely hotspots ahead of the elections. The UN and donors should also help the Southern Sudan government to investigate reported violence and ensure accountability for crimes.

"In the face of mounting tensions, the United Nations and international donors should do more to work with the government of Southern Sudan to improve security and protect civilians," said Gagnon.

US envoy submits five proposals to address dispute over census

Al-Sahafa reports US envoy to Sudan Scott Gration has submitted to the NCP and SPLM delegations in Washington five proposals for overcoming the dispute over the census results. One of the proposals is to invoke percentages contained in the CPA for distribution of geographical constituencies.

Miraya FM 20/6/09 reported GoSS minister of legal affairs Michael Makuei as saying that the Naivasha partners agreed in Washington that Khartoum should be the seat of the Referendum Commission headquarters.

A number of differences showed up concerning the formation of the commission and polling stations and the amount required to endorse the referendum itself, in addition to controversy over the definition of voters.

Many Differences in views between the partners on the draft Law of referendum for southern Sudan highlighted by the establishment of the referendum commission and its duties.

The second point concerning the registration and voting processes, the SPLM observes that the registration would be in the south only while the National Conference party thinks that the registration should take place in all Sudan.

Other disputed points were the adoption of the final result. SPLM believes that the adoption of the result is with half plus one voting majority, but the National Congress, believes the adoption of the result as two-thirds majority considering the separation of the south as a dangerous procedure to the country.

Makuei added that the SPLM has refused to discuss the issue of post-separation benefits linked to the referendum law but it calls for a separate meeting to reach an agreement witnessed by the partners of the Naivasha agreement.

According to *Al-Ahdath*, Washington meeting focused on Abyei, census results, border demarcation, southern Kordofan, Southern Blue Nile and wealth sharing. A press release issued by the office of SPLM SG Pagan Amum said the parties agreed to continue their consultations on the CPA at two meetings in Khartoum and Juba in July and August.

Arab League to participate in Washington Sudanese Conference

Sudan Vision 206/09 - A delegation representing the Arab League headed by Ambassador Sameer Hassan, the Director of the African Department and including Ambassador Salah Halima the Arab League envoy to Sudan is going to participate in the CPA supporters' conference which will launch its works tomorrow in Washington.

Ambassador Salah Halima the Arab League Envoy to Sudan affirmed that Arab League is going to present its own view about the implementation of the CPA considering that it was one of the witnesses of the CPA, adding that the appointment of new envoy to Sudan indicates that the new US administration has a new vision about Sudan. He further revealed that a proposal was given to hold a meeting of the Arab League at the level of permanent envoys in Darfur in the first half of next July at the request of Syria. He explained that holding of the meeting aims to affirm Arab solidarity with Darfur and that it would be a good opportunity to review the humanitarian and political situation on the ground.

Abyei people to abide by decision of arbitration tribunal – Lino

Sudan Tribune website 20/6/09— Edward Lino, SPLM leading member from the disputed area, reiterated the commitment of Abyei people to the decision of Abyei Arbitration Tribunal which is expected to be issue next month.

"Whatever the decision, we will abide by and work to implement and will not return to war. Peace process, which started must continue" said Lino in a public rally organized in Kadugli, Southern Kordofan state on Saturday. "We moved forward and will not go back again," he further said.

Meanwhile, **Sudan Tribune website** 19/6/09 reported GoSS Acting Spokesperson and Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services, Madut Biar as saying that the contested region of Abyei has been denied geographical constituency for the upcoming general elections.

Biar revealed this after the GoSS cabinet meeting on Friday during which he said the GoSS VP Dr. Riek Machar Teny, briefed the Council of Ministers on the new development.

Machar, who returned from Khartoum on Friday after five days of debates on referenda laws for Southern Sudan and Abyei, told the cabinet meeting that the NEC had not allotted any geographical constituency for the Abyei area.

He said the matter was brought to his attention while in Khartoum by members of the Ngok Dinka in the Abyei administration.

Machar said he then contacted the NEC Chairman Abel Alier who confirmed to him that his Commission did not allot any geographical constituency to Abyei.

He said Abel Alier explained to him that the region was not mentioned in the Electoral Law, which was passed this year by the National Assembly, and therefore could not qualify to get a geographical constituency.

Constituencies are being allotted by the Commission based on the recently declared population census results and as the basis for representation in the National Assembly and contest in the coming elections in February 2010.

In a related development, Machar also explained that Abyei's population, as a semi-autonomous region, had not appeared separately in the recently declared population census.

Its population has been instead put under Warrap state by the Census Bureau with a population of only 52,000 inhabitants.

This number of population, even if featured independently under Abyei area, may not qualify for a geographical constituency, according to the new Electoral Law.

Delay of referendum bill may lead to extension of Parliament session

Al-Sudani reports National Assembly Deputy Speaker Atem Garang as saying that the Parliament's session may be extended if the CPA Partners fail to submit the referendum bill this week. However, Atem has stressed the need to pass the bill before the Parliament session ends. Meanwhile, NCP Political Mobilization Secretary Ibrahim Ghandour has accused unnamed political parties of questioning integrity of upcoming elections which might send a wrong and negative message to the voter and that could result in a low turnout. He pointed out that the NCP and SPLM agreed on 99% of the trade unions draft bill.

SPLA kill 21 people in eastern Equatoria

Al-Intibaha reports tension has snowballed between SPLA and some east Equatorian tribes over killing of SPLA soldier near the areas of "Boya" tribes. SPLA troops surrounded the Boya tribes' villages, looted their cattle and killed 21 persons. Meanwhile, SPLA atrocities against civilians along Torit-Kaboeta road have also increased. GoSS leaders who spoke to the paper on condition of anonymity said the situation could explode any moment if SPLA atrocities continue. A source described the situation as "dangerous", pointing out that SPLA soldiers resort to cattle rustling due to salary delay.

Tripartite mechanism meeting to convene in Nyala

Local dailies report the tripartite mechanism between Sudan government, AU and UN on UNAMID deployment will hold its sixth meeting in Nyala during the next few days. The meeting will discuss the progress of implementation of the parties' commitments with regard to the hybrid deployment. The meeting will be chaired by MFA Undersecretary Mutrif Siddiq, AUPSC Commissioner Ramtane Lamamre and USG S. Malcourra.

Government has the right to reject rights expert

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports Deputy Chairman of the Advisory Council of Human Rights Ahmed Idriss as saying that Sudan government would take a political decision with regard to the appointment of a human rights expert to monitor the human rights situation in the Sudan. He said Khartoum has the right to reject the expert.

Rights watchdog hails appointment of Sudan's independent expert

Sudan Tribune website 19/6/09 — The defeat on June 18 in the UN Human Rights Council of efforts led by Egypt and Sudan to end the scrutiny of Sudan was an important step, Human Rights Watch said.

"Most member governments made it clear that they intend to keep an eye on Sudan," said Julie de Rivero, Geneva advocacy director at Human Rights Watch. "That is a strong signal to the

people of Sudan that the victims of human rights abuses will not be forgotten."

The Human Rights Council decided to appoint an independent expert on the situation in Sudan. The independent expert will continue the work carried out by the special rapporteur on Sudan of reporting to the Human Rights Council on the situation in the country, including the implementation of recommendations made on Darfur.

Sudan has attempted to lobby the 47-member council to end Sima Samar's mandate and the scrutiny over the human right situation on its territory. But the US which joins the council formally on Friday played behind the scene role in preventing Sudan from getting the required number of votes.

Sudan secured the votes of China, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia and South Africa. However, the result of the vote was 20 in favor and 18 against creating the independent expert post.

"The lack of mechanisms for civilian protection and the rule of law in Darfur and Southern Sudan are serious concerns that the Human Rights Council should continue to monitor closely," de Rivero said. "Though the vote was close, we are pleased that governments such as Brazil, Mauritius and Zambia voted to keep this situation under close scrutiny."

More than a thousand civilian deaths from armed conflict in Sudan have been reported so far in 2009. Many thousands more are at risk following the government's expulsion of humanitarian organizations.

The harassment and arbitrary arrest of human rights defenders by security forces and increasing censorship and restrictions on media freedoms have also caused serious concern, particularly because such measures diminish the chances that elections currently slated for February 2010 will be free and fair.

Efforts to disarm Sudanese ex-combatants making headway -UN

News Center 18/6/09 - The United Nations reports that progress is being made in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of soldiers in north and south Sudan, a key component of the 2005 agreement that ended the country's 21-year civil war.

"The Sudanese DDR programme is unique and potentially the largest and most complex ever undertaken," Adriaan Verheul, Chief of the DDR Unit at the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), told a news conference in Khartoum Thursday.

"Some 180,000 members of the armed forces and women who have helped the armed forces will be given the possibility to make a living as a civilian. Any child soldiers will be reunited with their families," he added.

Mr. Verheul said that more than 5,000 soldiers have now gone through the demobilization process, which was launched in February.

The DDR process is a key component of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which was signed by the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A).

Other key benchmarks of the pact include border demarcation and preparations for national elections in 2010 and a referendum on the final status of areas of Southern Sudan in 2011.

The goal of the reintegration of the soldiers is two-fold, noted Mr. Verheul. One is to provide people who have fought for their country with an exit from military life with a degree of dignity, while the other is to contribute to stability, which in itself will help generate greater trust and provides the foundation for peace and development.

"We hope that DDR would contribute to a better and more positive climate for the elections and the referendum," he stated. "But let us start with an overall contribution to the situation on the ground."

UNMIS is tasked with assisting the parties and the people of Sudan in fulfilling their commitments under the CPA.

Journalists enjoy complete immunity under new Press Act - Shumo

SUNA 20/6/09 -The Sudanese Journalists enjoy complete journalistic immunity under the new Press Act, affirmed the Chairman of the National Council for the Press and Publications, Prof. Ali Mohamed Shumo. The Press Act stressed the protection of the Journalists by specifying SDG 650 as a minimum salary for the Journalists who are working in the media institutions both in the public or private sectors. He added that the new Press Act includes wide range of freedom of publication and expression. Answering a question by SUNA about the most important gains included in the new Press Act for the benefit of the Journalists, Prof. Shumo said the Act makes the National Council for the Press and Publications belongs directly to the Presidency of the Republic while providing all the necessary guarantees for independence of its decisions. "Under the new Act, the Register of the Sudanese Journalists is also being shouldered by the General Union of the Sudanese Journalists, "added Prof. Shumo, who expressed his hope that a new era would start with the implementation of the new Act to cope with the requirements of the democratic transformation in the country.

Darfur peace talks suspended, to resume next month – UN

UN News 19/6/09 - The current round of ceasefire talks between the Government of Sudan and JEM have been suspended, a United Nations spokesperson told reporters in New York Friday.

Michele Montas said that ongoing negotiations with the JEM, held in the Qatari capital of Doha, are expected to start up again at the end of July.

The sticking point involves the timing of the release of prisoners, with the JEM calling for their freedom before an agreement on the cessation of hostilities is reached, according to Ms. Montas.

She added that during this period, consultations with other major stakeholders in the peace process, which began on 27 May, will continue.

According to **Sudan Tribune website** 19/6/09, the mediation didn't issue a statement about the suspension of the talks. However JEM spokesperson had told **Sudan Tribune** about the suspension since last Wednesday. He said the government had not been serious to implement the confidence building agreement and its delegation seeks to gain time. The Sudanese television reported that the talks would resume within two months in August.

The government delegation last week complained from JEM rejection to agree on a ceasefire; it also asserted that the POWs should only be released according to the progress achieved in the negotiations. Khartoum further said the rebels want to release of the POWs and continue to

carry out attacks on the army positions.

Also, Al-Shartay Jaafer Abdel Hakam, the spokesperson of the Sudanese government delegation said that JEM rejection to involve the other rebel groups had led the talks to an impasse.

JEM chief visits Israel on Chadian diplomatic passport

Sudanese Media Centre 20/6/09 - JEM has received big amount of fuel and weapons delivered at the town of Abache under the supervision of Gen Dosa Dabi. "This Chadian support came after a secret visit conducted by JEM chief Khalil Ibrahim to Israel," a reliable source told **SMC**. The source elaborates by saying Ibrahim visit to Israel was coordinated by Chadian president Idriss Debi via an African country.

The source reveals Ibrahim delegation composed of Gen Timan Idriss and Omar Idriss crossed Shari River and entered a central African country where he was received by Israeli ambassador to the respective state. Meanwhile according to the source Ibrahim and his accompanied delegation were supplied with the necessary documents to enter Israel. The source cited that Ibrahim entered Israel holding Chadian diplomatic passport under false name as Chadian presidency advisor. The source affirms Israeli political and military authorities pledged to supply Ibrahim with necessary equipment needed to overthrow the Sudanese regime.

Meanwhile, **Al-Intibaha** reports Government chief negotiator to Doha talks Amin Hassan Omer as saying that they do not rule out an escalation of military operations on the part JEM during the next two months, adding the experience was that after each round of talks JEM would engage in a military gamble.

South Sudan leader on war footing

BBC18//09 - The leader of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, has warned his armed forces are being re-organized so they are prepared for any return to war with the north. Kiir said he would not be the one to take the country back to war. But if it was imposed on the south, they would be ready, he added.

His sabre-rattling remarks follow this week's claims the Khartoum government was supplying arms to ethnic groups in the south to destabilize the region.

GoSS Announces great food gap

Sudan Vision 21/6/09 - GoSS expected a food gap in the South and appealed to the UN and the international organizations for providing food for the affected people.

GoSS Vice President Riek Machar said that they would face a great gap in food this year indicating that his government has started the implementation of the Green Growth Program to decrease the reliance on petroleum revenues. He affirmed that the world financial crisis has affected the program saying that his government will focus efforts on agriculture to avoid food gap.

South Sudan speaker reaffirms SPLM commitment to unity

Sudan Tribune website 20/6/09 — the speaker of southern Sudan parliament reaffirmed yesterday, in southern Kordofan, the SPLM's commitment to the unity of the country.

James Wani Igga was speaking in a public rally to launch the electoral campaign in the capital

of southern Kordofan state stressed the need to maintain a united Sudan, indicating that the unity is a prerequisite for SPLM since its inception and will remain a lofty goal that "we are all working for."

He said lack of development and services is a problem of the whole Sudan adding the building of a united Sudan based on justice and equality would bring positive change that benefits to all Sudanese.

"This is the vision and strategy of the Movement developed by Dr. John Garang and we will continue to be inspired by," he emphasized.

Igga called on the state government, formed by the NCP and the SPLM, to work in a genuine partnership and to cooperate for the implementation of the peace agreement saying "We signed it and we are well placed to implement it."

Wani pointed out the importance of involving the various political actors in the decision making process and to interact with the different segments of the society.

He also called to renounce violence and tribal intolerance as well as to promote coexistence in the state. He added that all the political parties should compete with democratic spirit and abide by the result of the forthcoming election.

SPLM allegedly receiving foreign support for Sudan elections

Sudan Tribune website 19/6/09 — the NCP has echoed reports published in Khartoum about foreign financial support to the South Sudan ruling party saying law bans parties from receiving external financial assistance.

The Sudanese pro-government newspaper ***Akhir Lahza*** on June 15 published a letter allegedly written by Pagan Amum SPLM Secretary General to Tim Shortley, Director of the Sudan Programs Group, asking him to support his party in its efforts to prepare for the forthcoming elections. The letter is dated as of December 21, 2008.

Reacting to this letter Mahdi Mandour, the secretary for political relations at the ruling National Congress Party told reporters in Khartoum that such issue can only be ruled by a judge. He further stressed that laws forbid any political party from receiving foreign funds.

Mandour said the receipt of external funds is unacceptable, adding that bringing a case against the SPLM is up to the judicial and legal authorities.

Mandour said if the SPLM maintains its rejection of the census results that means it has no interest in the elections.

Ugandan President calls for an end to “Arab Chauvinism”

Al-Sahafa reports Sudan government has criticized statement by President of Uganda Museveni which called for strict measures against perpetrators of violence in Darfur. Museveni has called for an urgent move to halt what he described as “Arab chauvinism against African sovereignty”. An official source has criticized Museveni’s statement describing it as “unbalanced”. According to the source, Museveni assured President Al Bashir in Zimbabwe of his country’s support for Sudan’s efforts to overcome the ICC crisis and to resolve Darfur crisis.

SPLM elections body to begin work in Lakes by Saturday

Sudan Tribune website 16/6/09 - The Chairman of the Lakes State Elections Campaign Strategy Committee (LSECSC), Philip Marol Mading, has released a plan for the body,

mandating the committee to begin its functions of guiding the party ahead to the election in February 2010.

The committee was formed early in May 2009. Its action plan for Lakes state covers all eight counties, 69 payams and 150 bomas.

The plan is completed and the SPLM party is expected to give the go-ahead to her County Campaign Management Teams (CCMT) to begin in Rumbek Central County by Saturday, June 21, while being adopted immediately by the other counties down to the grassroots level.

However, the committee will follow rules and regulations laid down in certain paperwork, as follows: (1) Preparation of the Action Plan; (2) Formulation of Rules and Regulations governing the functions of the Elections Campaign Strategy Committee; (3) Drafting and approval of the LSECSC Budget; and (4) Stipulation of Terms of Reference (steps and procedures) to guide formation of County Campaign Management Teams.

According to this document signed by members of the body, the regulations "shall help the Elections Strategy Committee maintain its rigorousness, impartiality and credibility to achieve its set objectives of selecting competent SPLM members to win majority seats in the forthcoming general elections 2010. The Rules and Regulations are also expected to guide us and curb the elements of wrongdoings and other problems that might arise in the nomination process".

The action plan has covered all the activities of each and every subcommittee in accordance with the National Elections Strategy. Priority has been given to the formation of County Campaign Management Teams (CCMT), with terms of references developed by the Committee after a series of meetings conducted, noted Mading.