



UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

UNMIS

Media Monitoring Report 2.3.2008

(By Public Information Office)

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Highlights

UN/ Agencies

[UN says refugees fleeing new attacks in Darfur, many to dangerous area of Chad](#)

29 February 2008 – As West Darfur continues to be scourged by a new wave of air and ground attacks, the United Nations refugee agency estimated today that more than 13,000 Sudanese have fled to a remote area of Chad that is beset by its own inter-ethnic strife.

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), just this week an additional 3,000 refugees arrived in eastern Chad's volatile Birak area, where an assistance mission was cancelled yesterday after armed men on horseback were spotted, along with black smoke rising from a burning village.

“The insecurity and close proximity to the Sudanese border mean UNHCR cannot establish a camp in the Birak area, but we are trying to provide emergency assistance when our teams can get there,” UNHCR spokesman Ron Redmond said in Geneva.

The agency is still awaiting approval from the Government of Chad to move the refugees to existing camps that already house 240,000 people uprooted by the five-year conflict in Darfur, in which the Sudanese Government and militias are fighting rebel factions and in which over 200,000 people, mainly non-combatants, have died.

A UNHCR team which reached the Birak area earlier in the week reported that the new arrivals had come there because of repeated militia assaults on the Jebel Moun region of West Darfur.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Special Representative for Sudan, Ameerah Haq, visited Sileah in West Darfur yesterday as part of an inter-agency assessment mission and found the town – which normally has a population of 20,000 – almost empty.

Only around 300 people remained, mostly elderly citizens who could not flee. The town was attacked on 8 February, in the beginning of the current onslaught.

[UN warns of deterioration of situations in Abyei](#)

(Al-Sudani) Clashes renewed between the Messeiriya and SPLA yesterday in the area of Girinti, 35 km to south of Meiram, claiming lives of 43 Messeiriya and 64 others wounded, evacuated to Mujlad for treatment. Those killed on the part of SPLA will be announced today.

It is reported that the reason of the clash was that a group of SPLA entered a Messeiriya area.

Deputy Head of UNMIS Abyei told MirayaFM that the humanitarian situation was deteriorating steadily as all routes to Abyei remain blocked. He said UNICEF evacuated half of its staff as security situation deteriorated.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

[SPLM slams NCP over possible adoption of Sudan elections law](#)

(ST) March 1, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) has criticized its peace partner the National Congress Party (NCP)'s statements on the possible adoption of elections law without consensus to overcome current impasse on the percentage of proportional representation.

NCP member in the National Constitutional Review Commission, Ismail Al-Hajj Musa, said his party can resort to a vote in the commission to resolve the controversy over the electoral law reminding that his party has the majority.

Atem Garang, a SPLM leading member and deputy speaker of the National Assembly, criticized Musa's statements saying that such move constitute a breach to the Comprehensive peace Agreement. He further said the constitution provisions are binding upon all political forces.

He said only the consensus can bring a solution that satisfies all the parties, warning that other solution could lead to grave consequences in the case of failure of elections.

The National Constitutional Review Commission had to meet on February 23 to discuss the draft of the elections law, but the meeting was postponed to allow the NCP and the SPLM to agree on the disputed articles.

The disputed articles in the project of law deal with proportional representation, women representation and the number of constituencies. The SPLM, backed by the opposition forces, tries to convince the NCP to accept a common position that it shares with the other political forces.

In its last meeting on February 9, the NCRC discussed the electoral system without going in the disputed articles on the proportional representation, articles 29 to 40 of the draft law.

The SPLM position is to distribute the constituencies 50% elected by proportional representation system and 50% of the seats are elected by majority election system. Women are to be represented by 50% of the proportional representation lists.

The NCP wants 60% for the majority election system and 40% for the proportional representation system. Regarding women, it proposes to establish separate lists on the state level and the list that obtains the highest votes will have all the seats.

[Sudan cancels U.N. envoy trip to dam protest site](#)

(ST) March 1, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Sudan has refused to allow a U.N. human rights envoy to visit an area north of the capital where police shot protesters last year, citing security concerns, the world body said on Saturday.

Sudanese police killed four people in June during a protest against plans to build a new dam in Kajbar in the Northern State, around 200 km (125 miles) north of Khartoum.

Sima Samar, the U.N. human rights special rapporteur for Sudan, was scheduled to travel to the area over the weekend as part of an official visit to the country.

"The visit was not approved by the government which cited security concerns by the state authorities," Khaled Mansour, director of public information for the U.N. mission in Sudan, told Reuters.

Sudanese Justice Minister Abdel Basit Sabderat declined to comment.

Sima, a former Afghan deputy prime minister, has served as the U.N. special rapporteur on human rights in Sudan since 2005. She has reported war crimes by Sudanese forces and their allied militia in the troubled Darfur region.

Mansour said Samar was also set to visit Port Sudan on the Red Sea and the war-ravaged region of Darfur in the west.

International experts estimate some 200,000 have died and 2.5 million have been forced to flee their homes since the conflict flared in 2003 when rebels took up arms against the central government, accusing it of neglecting the region.

The United States calls the violence a genocide. Sudan rejects this and says only 9,000 people have lost their lives.

[Delay of Sudan border demarcation may affect census](#)

(ST) March 1, 2008 (JUBA) — the delayed demarcation of the contentious border between north and south Sudan could complicate next month's national census, the head of the southern Sudanese census body said on Saturday.

The census is considered vital for the success of Sudan's first democratic elections in 23 years, which follow a peace agreement in 2005 between the former north-south foes.

"In some areas, administration is divided between north and south. There could be conflict," Isaiah Chol Aruai, chairman of the Southern Sudan Commission for Census, Statistics and Evaluation, told Reuters.

He gave an example of the town of Renk. The semi-autonomous southern government considers it part of its territories while northerners living there are demanding to be counted as living in the north.

The national census is expected to start on April 15 for two weeks. The elections are due to take place by mid-2009.

The peace deal that ended 21 years of civil war looked shaky in October when former southern rebels walked out of a national coalition government complaining parts of the agreement, including border demarcation, were not being implemented.

Salva Kiir, president of the southern government, said after crisis talks that the demarcation of the border, agreed to be the same as it was at Sudan's 1956 independence from Britain, should begin in mid-February.

The southern government's chief representative to the border committee, Riek Degoal, said on Saturday only the first research phase had been completed.

He said the delay was due to funding shortfalls, administrative and technical problems, and because some members including the head of the committee work only part-time.

Degoal said colonial maps and descriptions of the border had been collected. "(But) we have not yet decided if all the documents are authentic or not," he told Reuters.

The committee hopes to send its report to Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir within a month for approval before the demarcation of the 2,000 km (1,200 mile) border.

He said the distance between any current border mark and the line that his committee will draw was not likely to be more than about 10 km (6 miles).

Sudan's north-south conflict claimed 2 million lives and displaced another 4 million people. Under the peace deal, southerners have a referendum in 2011 on secession.

[Misseriya say opening of Abyei routes depends on South Sudan army redeployment](#)

(ST) March 1, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Misseriya leaders said that the opening of the road leading to Abyei depends on the redeployment of the southern Sudanese army southern to the border of 1956 accusing the SPLM of rising tension in the area

Clashes erupted between Sudan People Liberation Army (SPLA) and the nomadic Misseriya tribe, who go to Abyei for cattle herding, during November and December of last year, which claimed dozens of lives. Both sides accuse each other of initiating the violence. Recently members of the Misseriya tribe closed the route leading to Abyei.

Misseriya leaders staked the success of the efforts of the Joint Defence Board in opening route of Miram Al Mujlad Abyei al-Heglig and the route of Almirm Awil to the withdrawal of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) southern to Sudan border of

1956. They also want to ensure the safety of pastoralists within the state of North Bahr el-Ghazal

Bishta Mohammad Salem, Chairman of the Committee on tribal reconciliation between Misseriya and Dinka said that the SPLA forces are still present in the north of Abyei in the Makaire, Al-Na'ama and in east of Abyei in Luo.

He pointed out that SPLA forces stationed in those areas exerting pressure and harassment over non Dinka population.

Bishta added that a committee from the Joint Defence Board which is currently present in Al-Mujlad is in contact with parties and seeks to open the roads and defuse tension in the area.

He emphasized the need to wait for the decisions of the next presidency meeting and see its vision to solve the problem of Abyei.

However, Salem said that the SPLM position in favour of the Dinka Ngok and the interference of the SPLA besides them make it difficult to solve the problem of Abyei and undermine coexistence among tribes, calling for the need to make room for the tribal administrations in the region.

Last week Bishta said "If the outcome comes unfavorable to the Misseriya we will not carry arms but will try to get our rights through dialogue and peaceful means."

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Under the protocol a commission known as the Abyei Boundaries Commission (ABC) was to "define and demarcate the area of the nine Ngok Dinka Chiefdoms transferred to Kordofan in 1905, referred to herein as Abyei Area".

"The ABC report should be binding to all parties but the NCP rejected it and is looking for an alternative. This is not acceptable to us and we will stick the report" Kiir said.

However the president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir said that the NCP is committed to the Abyei Protocol only with the border of 1905. He further said the government is not concerned with the ABC report and that the latter is of no value to them.

[Dr. Nafie and High-Level Delegation to Leave Sunday for Japan](#)

Khartoum, Mar. 1 (SUNA)- Assistant of the President of the Republic Deputy Secretary General of the National Congress for Political and Organizational Affairs, Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie, is due to leave Sunday for Japan on a five-day visit, accompanied by a high-level delegation. Meanwhile, the Presidential Advisor, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, said after a meeting with Dr. Nafie and in the presence of the Ambassador of Japan Sunday noon that the meeting reviewed the preparations for the Sudanese delegation's visit to Japan. He said that the delegation will discuss with the Japanese officials ways to consolidate the bilateral relations in all fields. On the other hand, Dr. Nafie received in his office at the

headquarters of the National Congress Sunday the Ambassador of Britain to Sudan who handed Dr. Nafie a written message from the British State Minister for Foreign Affairs dealing with the bilateral relations and issues relating to the dialogue which commenced during the recent minister's visit to Sudan. Dr. Nafie and the British Ambassador also discussed a number of regional and international issues of mutual concern.

[Dr Mustafa the meetings of the US Envoy with officials in Sudan opens the field for mutual understanding](#)

Khartoum, Feb 29 (SUNA) - The Advisor to the President of the Republic, Dr Mustafa Osman Ismail, on Friday described the meeting of the Assistant of the President of the Republic Dr Nafie Ali Nafie with the visiting American Envoy to the Sudan as being frank, open and detailed. Dr Ismail pointed out in a statement following the meeting of the American Envoy with Dr Nafie that the visit of the Envoy has opened the field for more dialogue between the two countries to reach a common understanding. He added the meeting has reviewed the pending questions in the Sudanese American relations including the question of Darfur and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the sanctions imposed by America on the Sudan. The Advisor said the visit of US Envoy to the Sudan was meant to explore and that it comes after a visit by the Adviser and the Minister for Foreign Relations Deng Alor to the United States of America and that contacts between officials would continue. On his part the American Envoy Richard Williamson pointed out after his meeting with Dr Nafie that he reviewed with the Assistant issues of mutual interest with the view to find a path forward for future progress in the relations between the two countries. He said he was leaving the Sudan cautiously optimistic that progress would be made in the bilateral relations between the two countries. In the meantime the Director of the two Americas at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Al-Sanousi told SUNA that the meeting was good, constructive and businesslike and that it discussed ideas brought by the American Envoy within the context of the continued dialogue for improvement of the situation in Darfur.

[More than 2000 Indian soldiers set for Sudan on UN mission](#)

(Sudan Vision) More than 2000 soldiers of the Indian Army will leave for Sudan on 5 March to be part of the UN Peacekeeping force in the trouble-torn African country.

Personnel of 2-NAGA and 5/1 Gorkha Rifles along with medical units will join their counterparts from other countries who are currently deployed there as part of the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).

“Two battalions are earmarked to represent the country in the UNMIS. The first batch will leave on March 5 and will work in coordination with their other counterparts,” said Lt. Gen. SPS Dhillon, Deputy Chief of Army Staff.

[43 killed and 70 wounded on the part of the Messeriya in a clash with SPLA in Meiram](#)

(Al-Rai Al-Aam) At least 43 persons killed and 70 others wounded on the part of the Messeriya in clashes took place yesterday between the Messeriya and the SPLA in Daleiba area, 30 km from Meiram. Rockets, tanks and light weapons were used in the fighting.

Meanwhile UNICEF evacuated its staff due to the deterioration of the situation in the region.

Chairman of Abyei Liberation Front, Mr. Mohamed Al-Ansari, told the newspaper yesterday that the clashes occurred as retaliation to SPLA last week attack on the area of Aradeiba and its refusal to withdraw south of 1.1.1956 Line. He said SPLA used 12 tanks, 24 land cruisers and rockets. he said the Messeriya destroyed 7 land cruisers and one tank adding that the Messeriya lost 43 lives among them commander Suyoof Ahmed Hamid and his deputy Musa Manzool. He said the wounded, 70 persons, were transported by animals to Mujlad for treatment.

He has called upon the central government to intervene to ensure the implementation of what was agreed upon whereby SPLA should withdraw south of 1.1.1956 Line.

[Police Crackdown on Robber Gangs Continues for third Day](#)

(Sudan Vision) Sun. March 2. Khartoum State police authorities have pushed on for the third successive day their crackdown on crook and robber gangs, a press release issued by the Police Forces Press Office yesterday stated.

According to the press release, the move targeted the areas of Kalaklat in Jebel Awlia Locality, East Khartoum and Sahafa locales in Khartoum Locality.

The crackdown resulted in the arrest of 12 crooks and hoodlums, in addition to the seizure of 48 unlicensed tricycles (rakshas) , 21 scooters without number plates and 12 cars with shaded glass-windows, demolishing 150 hookah (shisha) sheds and spilling of 350 local wine containers. Criminal charges were filed against the suspects.

Khartoum State Assistant Chief of Police Lt. Gen. Mohammed Najeeb Al-Tayeb was quoted by the press release as revealing that police troops participating the crackdown day before yesterday managed to arrest all five members of a robber gang that had pillaged a supermarket in Riyadh area in broad daylight and then managed to get away, indicating that criminal charges will also be filed for the five members of the robber gang in Riyadh Police Station. He further affirmed that police campaigns will continue against gangs that use scooters and rakshas to threaten the peace and security of citizens.

[Messeriya: SPLA camp destroyed, 25 Messeriya killed](#)

(SMC) Clashes between the Messeriya and SPLA took their most fierce turn as a group of Messeriya attacked SPLA border camp. The all-Messeriya tribe chief, Mr. Mukhtar Babu Nimir, in statement to SMC said the attacked claimed the lives of more than 25 Messeriya but the SPLA camp had been completely wiped out. “The camp and those inside were burned down, no one survived,” he said. He said the attacked is launched in retaliation to SPLA attach and called upon the centre to intervene adding that the situation could take even a more serious turn.

GoSS

[Blue Nile State praises National Television Programmes in the States](#)

Khartoum, March 1 (SUNA) -The Wali (governor) of the Blue Nile State Malik Aggar, has expressed his satisfaction over the great efforts being exerted by the National Television in reflecting the activities of the state. In an appreciation letter to the Director General of the National Sudanese Radio and Television Corporation, Mohamed Hatim Suleiman, Aggar praised the Open Day programme, which was conducted by Sudan Television last week in the Blue Nile State. He said that the Open Day was a fruitful programme through which the citizens of the state were able to cast light on their heritage and to reflect their political, economic and social issues. It is to be recalled that the National Television commenced its experiment of the open days from all the states in Sudan.

[GoSS and UNICEF review access of water in Juba](#)

(Khartoum Monitor) The Southern Sudan Government and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) conducted a meeting on Thursday to review an agreement signed with the European Union for the improvement of access to safe and sustainable water in Juba.

The Director General for multilateral and international organizations in the Ministry of Regional Corporation in the Government of Southern Sudan, Beatrice Khamisa, said that the meeting discussed what UNICEF, in partnership with the Southern government, had done as regards water and sanitation during the one-year programme.

She reminded the meeting that the European Commission has provided an amount of eight million US dollars for sustainable water projects.

Darfur

[Sudan says rebel's office in Israel proves "foreign hands" in Darfur](#)

(ST) February 29, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Sudan has condemned a Darfur rebel leader for opening an office in Israel saying it gives "a material proof that Darfur crisis is manipulated by foreign hands and a Jewish lobby."

Abdel Wahid Al-Nur, the rebel leader of Sudan liberation Movement, has announced three days ago the opening of an office in Tel Aviv praising the Israeli government "for protecting Darfur youth from genocide".

Sudanese Presidential Assistant and government top negotiator for Darfur peace talks said that Abdel Wahid al-Nur wanted to establish direct relations with Israel, instead of dealing with the Israeli lobby in America.

He also accused Abdel Wahid of placing Sudanese in Israel "to convert them to Judaism."

He considered this step as provocative action to Sudanese people and particularly to the Fur tribe.

While the Sudanese state minister of information, Kamal obeid, said that Abdel Wahid move targets Sudan in its unity and faith predicting strong reaction from Darfur people.

Sudan, which considers Israel as enemy state, has no diplomatic relations with Tel Aviv and remains hostile to the Jewish state on the grounds that it is occupying Arab lands.

“The revolution that started in Darfur intends to change some of the norms in Sudan including the taboo regarding the relations with Israel” Al-Nur had told Sudan Tribune this week.

Sudanese refugees started sneaking into Israel through Egypt regularly in 2005 and the numbers increased as violence raged in the troubled Darfur region.

Despite its severe policy against illegal migrants, Israel made exceptions for 600 Sudanese who were granted temporary residency after fleeing fighting in Darfur.

The Israeli Interior Ministry said that the Darfuris would be allowed to stay in Israel "as long as necessary".

Miscellaneous

[Signature of a tripartite agreement to transport Palestinian refugees within the coming few days](#)

Khartoum, Feb 28 (SUNA)-The Advisor of the President of the Republic, Dr Mustafa Osman Ismail, said an agreement would be signed in the coming days between the Government of the Sudan, the Palestinian Authority and the Higher Commission for Refugees on hosting Palestinian refugees in the Sudan. Dr Mustafa pointed out in the press Forum of the Sudan News Agency SUNA on Thursday that Sudan was ready to receive and host two thousand Palestinian refugees in the area of Soba in Khartoum State. He said all services including water, electricity and transportation have been provided in the area. He stressed that the Palestinian refugees would be treated on equal footing as the Sudanese subjects in all service domains. On his part the Palestinian Presidential Envoy, Azzam Al Ahmad, told the same Forum that they were waiting for the holding of the Arab summit meeting to see how Arab states would contribute in the transportation of the Palestinians to the Sudan along with the Higher Commission for Refugees. He denied that the Palestinian refugees were reluctant to come to the Sudan saying on the contrary they were in constant contact with the Palestinian embassy in Khartoum to see when they would be transported to the area. The Palestinian Envoy blamed the American occupation of Iraq as being the main reason behind the deterioration of the conditions of the Palestinian refugees in Iraq. He urged the International Community to shoulder its responsibility towards the Palestinians. The Palestinian official has commended the decision taken by the President of the Republic, Field Marshal Omar Al Bashir to host those refugees and shoulder the resulting burden if the International Community and the Arab states failed to play their role.

[SPLM, DUP, Umma Parties Leading Members Denounce Nur's Move](#)

(Sudan Vision) SLM/A rebel leader, Abdulwahid Nur opening of an office for his faction in Israel triggered a wide wave of public reaction. Sudan Vision yesterday polled a number of politicians from the Sudanese political spectrum on their assessment of that move.

Hassan Hilal, a prominent Democratic Unionist Party leader, described Nur's move as regrettable and ridiculous, wondering what Nur was running after. According to him, the step taken by Nur causes harm to Sudan in general and Darfurians in particular, as well as threatens the security of the Nile Valley, the Red Sea and the African Horn. Hilal hoped that Nur's move would be a mere political maneuvering or an attempt to put pressure on the Sudanese government.

For his part, SPLM member and Deputy Parliament Speaker, Atim Garang, described Nur's opening of an office in Israel as unfortunate and is intended for vexing the government. Garang further added that Nur would not benefit from that as Israel has no relations with the Darfur neighbours and is further detested by Arabs and Muslims. The southern politician said Israel should be cautiously dealt with.

Meanwhile, the Umma Party Spokesman, Abdulwahid Satti said Nur has miscalculated his step by ignoring the Darfurian psychological position on Israel. He added that even Israel would not sympathize with Nur's sloganeering calling for defense of the rights of the aggrieved and the marginalized. Describing the move as unfortunate, Satti said it reflects Nur's lack of political wisdom.

Leader in SLM/ Minnawi faction, Saif Aldeen Salih, attributed Nur's move to the psychological state he has been undergoing after being isolated by the international community, pointing out that the move was the first of its kind to be made by a Sudanese national.

"Nur falls back on his political and popular status because he has no military weight in the field," Salih said, adding that via this step Nur aimed at creating a media fanfare which will reflect adversely on Darfur case. By this move, Nur has overstepped all the red lines, he affirmed.

He further described the move as alien to the traditions of the Sudanese community and will be spiritually and religiously rejected both at the local and regional levels. He remarked that by this move Nur has put himself in a tight position within his factional milieu because the other movements will reject the move as well as established the Sudanese government's accusation that the rebel factions rely on Israel for funding.

"This move also weakens political and popular sympathy with Darfur case and the armed factions in general, including SLM," he said.