

**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN
UNMIS**

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(By Public Information Office)

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HIGHLIGHTS :

UN/ Agencies

Sudan, UN agree to speed up humanitarian aid to Darfur

(Sudan Television via BBC Monitoring, 29 March) The Sudanese government and the UN have signed a new agreement* to facilitate humanitarian operations in Darfur.

Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ali Karti signed on behalf of the Sudanese government and Deputy UN secretary-general's envoy to Sudan Manuel Da Silva signed on behalf of the UN in the presence of Humanitarian Affairs Minister Kosti Mabibe.

The two sides hailed the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Darfur following the joint declaration signed between the two sides in 2004, which reduced the number of deaths, diseases outbreak and malnutrition in areas affected by the crisis.

The two sides agreed to set up a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the agreement and ensure the participation of the international community and the civil society.

** Please see full text of the joint communiqué in separate attachment*

Envoys Eliasson and Salim arrive in Chad and meet Darfur Peace Agreement non-signatories

(AlAyaam) Envoys Eliasson and Salim are in Chad following talks in Khartoum and South Darfur.

in Chad, the envoys held talks yesterday with the country's foreign minister and are expected to meet later with representatives of Darfur Peace Agreement non-signatory groups and all other stakeholders as part of their efforts to broaden consultations over peace in Darfur.

UN USG Holmes says in Juba that UN support Juba All-Darfur Conference

(Juba Post) UN USG for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes, in a press conference in Juba last Friday, said that the UN supports the prospects of Darfur peace negotiations being held in Juba as suggested by FVP Kiir but said that the question of providing money has not yet been brought up by Kiir.

He also said that he will be fighting to make sure that funds directed to Sudan did not all go to Darfur since Darfur and southern Sudan are both very serious problems.

UNMIS-Maridi imports bricks ... local produce unsold

(*Juba Post*) UNMIS' Maridi offices has imported three semi-trailors of bricks from Khartoum for construction of their offices in Maridi but local officials are complaining that the UN agency should have bought locally produced bricks.

A local construction worker notes that the cost of importing brings needlessly doubles the construction expense.

UNHCR drafts 2008-2009 strategy

(*AlAyaam*) The UNHCR presented yesterday its strategy and country operations plan for 2008-2009 to government officials, the Diplomatic Corps in Sudan, UN agencies and international and local NGOs in Khartoum.

UNHCR is currently carrying out five main operations: assisting some 130,000 mainly Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees in eastern Sudan, providing legal assistance and protection to some 30,000 Ethiopian, Eritrean, Congolese and other refugees in Khartoum, repatriating and reintegrating tens of thousand of Sudanese returnees to southern Sudan and Blue Nile State, caring form some 25,000 Chadian refugees in West Darfur as well as providing protection assistance to some 400,000 IDPs in West Darfur and protection monitoring for IDPs in six sites in Khartoum.

According to the UNHCR's mandate, the five main strategic objectives for 2007-2009 will be to continue providing protection for refugees, IDPs and returnees, to realise the physical well-being of its population of concern, to achieve durable solutions for refugees and IDPs, to strengthen advocacy and partnership within the interagency framework and to improve management by working towards higher efficiency and effectiveness on the ground.

Darfur Peace Agreement non-signatories train volunteer polio vaccination workers

(*AlIntibaha*) Darfur Peace Agreement non-signatory factions have started training volunteers from within their ranks to assist in the polio vaccination campaign in response to calls by the vaccination program and partners in the WHO and UNICEF.

The non-signatory armed factions did indeed facilitate the passage of vaccination teams through areas they control and a federal government official says the vaccination program went on well.

WHO to adopt circumcision as HIV/AIDS prevention measure

(*AlWifaq*) The WHO and UNAIDS have called for male circumcision to be adopted as an HIV/AIDS prevention strategy to stem the spread of the pandemic.

Recommendations issued yesterday by international experts in Paris point out that millions of lives could be saved, especially in Africa, if this is adopted.

IOM keen to transport 10,000 IDPs in Bahr-el-Ghazal

(SUNA) The head of the IOM office in Bahr-el-Ghazal says his office intends to repatriate around 10,000 IDPs from Wau to Rumbek and Warrap before the rains set in.

he also highlighted the efforts the IOM is undertaking in repatriating IDPs and refugees to their homes.

Of the challenges faced, he cited the weak infrastructure, especially roads, and shortage of funds for the programs but said a number of donors have visited the IOM and have promised support.

The head of the IOM in Bahr-el-Ghazal also confirmed the organisation will cooperate with the Humanitarian Aid Commission and the concerned UN agencies in identifying priorities, provision of seeds and foodstuffs.

In unprecedented development, Sudanese authorities return hijacked MSF-France vehicle

(AlWihda) In an unprecedented move, Sudanese authorities handed over to MSF-France operating in eastern Chad a pick-up truck hijacked earlier.

The handover ceremony took place between el-Geneina and Adre on the Chadian border and was witnessed by representatives from the HAC, the head of MSF-France in Sudan and his counterpart in Chad.

The head of MSF-France in Sudan lauded the government for the handover of the vehicle hijacked three weeks previous and found recently by government officials.

The Transition Debate

UN chief meets Sudanese president over Darfur [lead story in most local dailies]

(SudanTribune.com; AlRai AlAam et al) In closed door talks between Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Sudanese President Bashir in the Saudi capital yesterday, the two sides discussed Sudan's position on the UN support package to the African Union as agreed in the African Union Peace & Security Council meeting earlier. The closed-door meeting that span almost an hour preceded a meeting of the two with the Saudi monarch, African Union Commissioner Alpha Oumar Konaré and Sudan foreign minister Lam Akol.

This second meeting continued until the early hours of this morning amidst hopes that a new agreement could be reached to break the deadlock between the Sudanese government and the UN over the issue of Darfur.

Sources say President Bashir blamed the UN of not meeting its commitments to the part of the agreement that says the number of forces to be deployed to Darfur will be determined by a joint tri-partite committee following a field visit of the committee to Darfur.

Bloomberg News (via *SudanTribune.com*) reports that United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he achieved a breakthrough with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on deploying an expanded peacekeeping force in Darfur.

"I think we broke the stalemate," Ban said early today after a two-hour meeting in Riyadh with Bashir, Saudi King Abdullah, African Union Chairman Alpha Oumar Konaré and Arab League Secretary-General Amru Moussa on the sidelines of the Arab summit.

Ban said Bashir agreed to allow up to 20,000 peacekeeping troops to go to Darfur, while the secretary-general accepted Sudan's demand that the soldiers be supplied by the African Union with only logistical support from UN forces.

The Saudi king was instrumental in winning concessions from Sudan during the meeting, which Ban told reporters was "sometimes very heated."

** Please also see attached excerpts from the address of some leaders before the AL summit meeting.*

Cairo proposes deployment to Darfur of a force set up of Arab and African states

(AlSahafa) The meeting between Secretary-General Ki-moon and President Bashir was preceded by a meeting of some Arab leaders on Darfur. Sources say Egypt has promised to try to sell the proposal to send peacekeeping forces from African and Arab states to Darfur.

CPA

Commission tries to convince south to hand in small arms

(Juba Post) The Southern Sudan DDR Commission plans a community mobilisation campaign this month to encourage communities to promote the removal of small arms from civilians.

Those whose guns are not yet taken need to register with the local authorities and will be advised on how to keep the guns until disarmed, explains the commission's Director of Programmes. He also strongly advised local authorities to make sure that the weapons are collected, controlled and security is provided for the civil population.

The commission expects to accelerate cooperation and collaboration with partners in the international community.

On his part, the GoSS interior minister says he believes peace will not be possible until all civilians are disarmed. He remains sceptical of peaceful means to affect disarmament and says the SPLA would continue to use forceful disarmament "wherever it is applicable".

GoNU

Parliamentary defence committee condemns the "tortoise pace" in militia disarmament

(*Alwan*) The head of the parliamentary defence and security committee has criticised what he described as the “tortoise pace” the Khartoum State defence council is using in disarming the militias in the capital.

Mjr. Gen. Jalal Tauer called for the formation of a joint mechanism to coordinate between the state police and SLM-MM in overcoming the problem and called upon the parties concerned to resort to wisdom as solutions are sought to this problem.

SAF rebuffs reports of violations of Sudanese airspace by French paratroopers

(*Alltibaha*) Following reports of a lightening attack by French paratroopers that completely destroyed a Sudanese border village in Darfur some days ago, the SAF has rebuffed these reports and say no such thing has occurred.

A spokesperson for the SAF says there has been no such violation of the country’s airspace as reported and that the village in question is in fact a village in the CAR. He assured that the SAF is closely monitoring its borders against any such violations of its borders through land, air or sea.

Highlights:

- ❖ *AlWifaq* daily reports that the Ministry of Energy and Mining issued a statement yesterday rebuffing recent press reports of the withdrawal of Chinese companies from oilfields in Sudan

Southern Sudan/ GoSS/SPLM

Southern Sudan security lacks funds

(*Juba Post*) GoSS’ Interior Minister has declared that full police authorities at the state level across southern Sudan has now been established.

The minister said on Friday that a nucleus police force of 256 is also ready in Juba but pointed out that Juba should have 1,000 policemen on duty.

The minister pointed out that security remains a problem in southern Sudan and cited the issue of illicit arms, the Lord's Resistance Army, SAF, SPLA and lack of funds as some of the problems they face. Of the SPLA, he pointed out that the difficulty lies in training soldiers and former combatants into community-friendly police.

GoSS roads and transport minister pledges to tarmac Juba-Nimule road this year

(*Juba Post*) GoSS’ Minister of Transport and roads has pledged to tarmac the Juba-Nimule road this year.

Minister Rebecca Nyandeng said that the operations will start this year under USAID supervision and assured the public that by the end of 2007 or early 2008, the GoSS will be able to connect all 10 states of southern Sudan by road.

She however complained of shortage of funds and has appealed for donor assistance.

Mass cattle raid in Terekeka

(Juba Post) A mass cattle-raid of 7 Mundari cattle camps in Bori village in Terekeka has left ten dead and 3 children abducted eyewitnesses report.

2,000 heads of cattle are said to have been stolen at night when 20 men armed with AK-47s crossed the river on canoes to the village.

No SPLA guns allowed in public

(Juba Post) SPLA soldiers have been ordered not to carry guns in public places.

Brigadier Stephen Buay Rolnyang, commander of the SPLA Military Police, that the soldiers must leave their guns and uniforms in their barracks in order to protect the public.

Garang widow requests further investigation into ill-fated helicopter crash

(Juba Post) The helicopter crash that killed former SPLA leader, the late John Garang, was no accident says widow Rebecca Garang last Tuesday.

She said she had not wished to speak earlier in order not to affect the course of then ongoing investigations but had known throughout that the crash was no accident. She maintains that the answer to this lies with the helicopter pilot who also died in the crash but expressed wishes for further investigations into the crash.

Highlights:

Click to follow the links below:

- ❖ [Nepotism, corruption devouring Eastern Equatoria – ex-minister](#)
- ❖ [Sudanese warriors selling weapons to Ugandans](#)

Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement

23 SLM-MM elements arrested in relation to Omdurman clashes are released, charges dropped

(AlSahafa) Authorities released yesterday 32 SLM-MM elements arrested in connection to the clashes last Saturday with police in Omdurman. 61 others are still in detention pending investigations.

The head of the Khartoum chapter of the SLM-MM said that a committee made up of the police, the security and SLM-MM representatives toured the police cells in Khartoum and the hospitals in Khartoum, Omdurman and Khartoum North and listed until yesterday 93 detainees in 13 police cells.

Armed group spreads chaos in Nyala

(Rai AlShaab) An identified group of gun-wielding, uniform clad men caused chaos amongst the civilian population in a residential area in Nyala as they broke into the house of one of the residents.

The owner of the house sustained bullet wounds and other inhabitants say the robbers took off with all cell phones and electronic equipment they could lay their hands on.

A public opinion poll carried out point to the fact that the phenomenon of armed groups is making a comeback following relative calm the place has seen in recent times.