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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

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Link: <http://www.nation.co.ke/oped/Opinion/-/440808/491990/-/3n1fee/-/>

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Highlights

Joint Defence Board receives the inquiry committee on Abyei incidents

Al ayaam reports that the Joint Defence Board received yesterday a report of the inquiry committee on the recent incidents in Abyei. The Board will announce its decision early January when it meets in Dandiru area, Blue Nile State. JDB Spokesperson, Maj. Bior Ajang revealed that the JDB inaugurated the premises of the Joint Integrated Units Fifth Brigade in Kadugli. He stated that the Presidency pledged to add the JIUs budget to the 2009 Budget. The JDB will hear a report on the deployment of the two forces to north and south of the 1/1/56 borderline. The report will be presented in the next Committee meeting by SPLA Maj. Gen. Biong Deng Biong and SAF Maj. Gen. Siddiq Amir.

Al-Mirghani meets with Qazi

Al Sahafa and SMC report that the leader of Democratic Unionist Party (DPU), Mohamed Osman Al Mirghani, received in his residence in Khartoum the UN SRSG Ashraf Qazi. Al Mirghani briefed Qazi of the DPU's efforts to achieve peace in Sudan and particularly in Darfur. He explained his role inside and outside of Sudan, his continued efforts with the Darfur movements and his meeting with the Prince of Qatar. The meeting also discussed the ICC issue. Al Waleed Bakri, DPU Information Committee Rapporteur, said that Al Mirghani affirmed the importance of national justice, as well as the importance of democratic transformation and timely elections provided that are free, transparent and internationally observed.

UN welcomes appointment of members of elections commission

Al Ray al aam reports that UNMIS described the approval of the appointment of members of the National Elections Commission as an important cornerstone in the implementation of the CPA. SRSG Qazi pledged the Mission's readiness to support and assist with the remaining Protocols and preparations for the elections at the national and state levels.

Parties Coalition calls for postponement of referendum

Al Khartoum reports that the Political Parties Coalition called on the people of South Sudan to push back the referendum to choose between unity and secession after 2011, so that the Sudanese people would be given a good opportunity to strengthen interaction and build the spiritual unity among them. Chairperson of the Coalition, Abud Jabor, stated that "we fully stress the right to the referendum in accordance to article 222 of the Constitution and the CPA".

90% of Southerners would vote for separation, say Pagan Amum

The Citizen reports that SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum said that Sudan would be united only if it is a secular country. He added that more than 90% of the southerners would choose secession if referendum were to be held now. Amum added that what is happening now on the Sudanese political scene makes the majority believe that the unity option is less attractive.

Vice President inaugurates southern private hospital, lauds Minister of Health

SMC reports that Vice President Ali Osman Mohammed Taha lauded the efforts exerted by Federal Ministry of Health in promoting and rehabilitating health services in Khartoum and other states during the inauguration of Southern Private Hospital, which rehabilitated through partnership between Khartoum Teaching Hospital and Bajafar Brothers Co. Taha affirmed that such partnership would pave the way for health services to serve the citizens to adopt the social sponsorship. For her part, Minister of Health, Dr. Tabitha Butrus praised Vice President's support to the Primary Health Care and free treatment for children under-five-year of age, besides the free emergency cases treatment. Southern Private Hospital Director, Dr. Mutasim Sirelkhatim pledged that the Hospital would provide its services at reasonable costs.

Strict measures to protect oil workers

Al ayaam carries a report on the meeting between the State Minister of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Ali Karti and the Chinese Ambassador. The two sides stressed the importance of adopting strict measures to avoid an act similar to what happened to the Chinese oil workers in South Kordofan. MOFA Spokesperson Ali Al Sadiq stated that the meeting discussed the cooperation between the two countries to counter the danger that Sudan faces and avoid the negative impacts of the plots made by the enemies of Sudan.

Parliament calls for monitoring of public funds

Khartoum Monitor reports that members of Parliament met yesterday with the governor of the Central Bank of Sudan, Sabir Mohammed Al-Hassan, to discuss the 2009 state budget and related laws. The chairman of the Economic Affairs committee, Babiker Mohammed El-Tom, said that “the members of parliament in their deliberations have recommended strict monitoring of public funds to prevent them from being wasted in useless projects.”

Al Bashir heads for Qatar to discuss Darfur peace arrangements

SMC reports that President Al Bashir will leave for Qatar at the end of November to discuss arrangements for the peace talks. According to the Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry, Dr. Mutrif Siddig, President Al Bashir will brief the Emir of Qatar, Shiekh Hamad ibn Khalifa Al-Thani, on current political and internal developments in the country on the light of People of Sudan's Initiative. Meanwhile, French Ambassador to Sudan stated that the EU will support Sudan by seeking to freeze any decision by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against President Al Bashir. Diplomatic sources in the Foreign Ministry indicated that the decision made by France and Britain to support efforts at putting off an ICC warrant of arrest on Bashir should be augmented by further efforts to convince the United States not to use the veto if a draft resolution on that issue is presented.

Fernandez pledges to carry more contacts with armed groups

Al Sahafa reports that the US Charge d'Affairs Alberto Fernandez affirmed commitment to carry out the necessary contacts with the armed groups to join the Qatari peace process. Fernandez added, after his meeting with Governor of North Darfur Osman Kibir, that willingness to improve the situation on the ground represented the major challenge not only for the government but also for the US, movements, residents and IDPs. Fernandez stated that the objective behind the visit to El Fashir was to support implementation of the deployment of UNAMID troops and to support efforts at the national and state level on the deployment of more troops in the next two months. He pointed out to the US Administration emphasizes on partnership with Sudan to improve the humanitarian situation in Darfur. He announced that the Deputy Foreign Secretary Brian Hook would visit El Fashir next month to support the efforts of deployment of the UNAMID troops.

MOFA urges EU exert more energy to help resolve Darfur and ICC crisis

SMC reports that Ministry of Foreign Affairs appreciated EU positive reaction concerning resolutions undertaken by President Bashir following conclusion of Sudanese People Initiative forum. The ministry's spokesman, Ali Al Sadig, said he hoped to see this European positive reaction translated practically on the ground. He said the government considered EU presidency appreciation of SPI recommendations as a positive stance. Al Sadig affirmed that government would continue efforts with ambassadors and representatives to reactivate bilateral talks and consolidate cooperation with Europe on all aspects.

SLM Revolutionary Council to meet for discussing Darfur inclusive conference

SMC reports that Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) revolutionary council would hold a meeting on 24 December to assess the Abuja peace agreement and arrange the launching of the

Darfurian inclusive conference. Revolutionary council information officer, Saf Al Dein Haroun, said the meeting would hold sessions under chair of Issa Bahr Al Dein.

Sudan Participates in 44th Session of African Committee for Human Rights

SUNA reports that Sudan is taking part in the 44th session of the African Committee for Human Rights and Peoples in Abuja with a delegation headed by the State Minister of Justice. The Coordinator of the Consultative Council of the Human Rights, Dr. Abdul-Moneim Osman, said yesterday that the participation of Sudan came in compliance with the stance of the African Union with regard to the International Criminal Court (ICC) allegations against Sudan, indicating that Sudan address before the session included the legal evidence on falseness of the ICC allegations. He added that Sudan address also tackled the role that could be played by the Forum of the People of Sudan on Darfur Issue and the recent declaration of cease-fire by the government, pointing out that Sudan called on the African Committee to practice pressure on the armed movements, so as to come to the negotiation table. Dr. Osman said that the address explained the efforts being exerted by in the field of protection of civilians in Darfur and cooperation with UNAMID.

Darfur Peace and Reconciliation Council agrees with AU Security Council on Reactivation of Ceasefire

SUNA reports that the Darfur Peace and Reconciliation Council of the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA), agreed with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) to reactivate the cease-fire in Darfur in coordination with the armed movements, as well as working to complete the UNAMID troops and establish early warning centres in Darfur. This was announced by the Secretary General of the Darfur Peace and Reconciliation Council, Mubarak Hamid Ali.

The Advisor of Darfur Peace and Reconciliation Council, Dr. Yousif Bakhit, called for the unity of the Darfurian rank, explaining that around 700,000 families were affected by the conflict in Darfur, 500,000 families of them are in 37 displaced people camps, 200,000 turned to be refugees in the neighbouring countries and 200,000 families moved to various cities in Sudan.

Website/International News Headlines

UN experts urge wider arms embargo on Sudan, Chad

(Reuters) 19 Nov - U.N. experts have recommended that an arms embargo on Darfur be extended to all of Sudan as well as neighboring Chad to combat "flagrant violations" of the ban by Khartoum and Darfur rebel groups.

In a report for the Security Council, released yesterday, a panel of four experts said both sides in Darfur were bent on a military solution to the five-year conflict in the west Sudanese region and a peacekeeping force had so far been ineffectual.

The hard-hitting experts' report, covering the year up to September 2008, noted "continued flagrant violations of the arms embargo by all parties in Darfur," allowing continued attacks by both sides inside and outside the region. "The actions of all sides make it clear that a military solution to the conflict has been chosen over any substantive engagement in peace talks," it said. "Arms and related military materiel delivered to Chad and the Sudan outside of the provisions of the embargo and the territory concerned by it are diverted into Darfur and fuel the conflict."

The panel called on the council to look again at options for widening the embargo to cover all of Sudan, Chad and the northern parts of the Central African Republic.

Monitoring it should be entrusted to UNAMID that is now slowly deploying in Darfur, it added.

The Security Council has shown no inclination so far to extend the sanctions and such a move could be opposed by veto-holding China and Russia, both of which believe Western states are over-using sanctions.

The experts' report accused Khartoum and allied militias of launching attacks in Darfur with

"purposeful regularity," while rebels had engaged in banditry, criminality, extortion, attacks on the U.N. and aid groups, and violations of human rights.

Since the arms embargo was first imposed in 2004, the situation in Darfur had followed "a seemingly inexorable descent into chaos," it said, with more than 20 groups now claiming to represent the Darfuri people.

Emphasizing the wider regional nature of the conflict, the report said it had become part of a proxy war between Sudan and Chad, with both countries backing rebel groups that had attacked each other's capitals over the past year.

A lengthy analysis of weapons found in Darfur failed to trace the origin of all of them but said some light arms and ammunition had been part of legal deliveries by various countries to Chad and Libya. Others had been taken from Sudanese government stocks.

The report gave a bleak assessment of UNAMID, which is supposed to reach 26,000 troops and police but is at less than half that level amid shortages of equipment and persistent disputes with the Sudanese government. The force "has not produced the security dividends expected" and had so far proven incapable of defending itself, let alone Darfur civilians, it said.

Rights advocates tell Russia to halt warplane sales to Sudan

(Voice of America) 19 Nov- A New York-based human rights group is asking the Russian Federation to suspend all arms sales to Sudan following media reports that Moscow recently sold 12 MiG-29 fighter jets to Khartoum. Human Rights First is urging Russia to take steps to ensure that the war planes are not used to attack civilians or rebel groups in Sudan's conflict-ridden western region of Darfur.

Between 2004 and 2007 Sudan purchased at least 33 military aircraft from the Russian Federation and obtained other arms and training from the Russians.

"There's a report that's in the works right now that lays out in very clear language specific instances of various countries violating the arms embargo", Human Rights First's Crimes Against Humanity Program Director, Julia Fromholz notes.

Peacekeepers pushing Darfur rebels to ceasefire

(AP) 19 Nov— UNAMID deputy commander, Maj. Gen. Emmanuelle Karenzi, said yesterday the mission is encouraging rebel groups to accept a government cease-fire offer — a task made difficult by recent violence.

He said the violence should not derail a cease-fire. "It is unfortunate," Karenzi said in his office at UNAMID headquarters in El Fasher. "But ... if the people have been fighting and one of the parties just declares a cease-fire, it is not like you are switching on and off your lights in the house. You will have incidents like this."

Karenzi said the mission is keeping an eye on the situation on the ground and doesn't believe the fighting means a cease-fire is now out of the question.

Meanwhile, both the Sudanese government and rebel groups in Darfur came under criticism in a report yesterday by a panel of four independent experts tasked by a U.N. committee monitoring sanctions to assess the situation. The committee said it will study the 93-page report and deliver its review to the Security Council.

The report painted a grim picture of combatants stepping up the violence in Darfur while expanding their attacks elsewhere in Sudan and across the border into Chad.

Offensive military overflights, which are supposed to be banned, are also continuing with impunity, it said. The panel said both sides have also flagrantly violated a U.N. arms embargo.

The panel said UNAMID "has proven so far to be incapable of defending itself or the civilian population of Darfur or fulfilling its obligations to monitor the arms embargo."

The panel recommended the Security Council consider widening the arms embargo to include the entire territory of Sudan, not just Darfur, and to expand the embargo to Chad and northern parts of the Central African Republic, which borders Darfur. A message seeking comment from Sudan's U.N. ambassador was not returned.

Karenzi said his troops and the joint U.N.-African Union mission's chief mediator, Djibril Bassole, have been in touch with rebel groups "in an attempt to rally them behind the ... political discussions and the cessation of hostilities." It is "kind of a work in progress," Karenzi said.

Justice and Equality Movement said Bassole was expected to meet with the group's leader, Khalil Ibrahim, "in the next few days."

Suleiman Marajan, a commander from the main faction of the rebel Sudan Liberation Army based in northern Darfur, said peacekeepers are asking the rebels to accept the cease-fire, but can't stop government troops from attacking. "They have not been able to pressure the government on anything," he said in a satellite phone interview from northern Darfur, where he said government planes bombed again yesterday.

Darfur: UN-African Union mission probes fresh reports of military bombings

(UN News) 18 Nov - UNAMID said yesterday that is trying to confirm reports received from various sources of aerial bombings in Kutum, a town in North Darfur state.

Yesterday, the UN in Sudan welcomed the separate announcement by the Government's Humanitarian Affairs Minister Haroun Lual Ron on an extension of the moratorium on restrictions facilitating humanitarian assistance until the end of January 2010, pointing out that the extension "should further enhance the delivery of vital humanitarian assistance for up to 4.7 million conflict-affected people, as well as enabling humanitarian organizations to operate in Darfur." Later this week the UN, its aid partners and the Sudanese Government will launch its joint workplan for 2009 that will include relief and early recovery activities in Darfur.

EU offers to fund Sudan electoral commission

(AFP) — The European Union is ready to bankroll Sudan's electoral commission, which is tasked with preparing landmark polls laid out in a scheduled democratic transformation, a diplomat said Tuesday. "The EU is ready to give full support to the commission in terms of financing," said Italian Ambassador Roberto Cantone.

"We are aware that there are differing opinions concerning possibility that elections would take place or not," Cantone said. "Nevertheless, as EU, we believe the elections are a monumental step, not only for implementation of the CPA, but also reconciliation among people of Sudan," the diplomat added.

Cantone spoke with EU ambassadors in the southern capital Juba for talks with officials, including the head of the semi-autonomous region, Salva Kiir.

Southern Sudan officials warn that a clean election is nearly impossible in July, owing to the rainy season in the south, ongoing failures to demarcate the border between north and south and delayed census results.

Former southern Sudan rebels threaten budget block

(Reuters) 18 Nov - Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) threatened on Monday to withhold support from the budget unless President Omar Hassan al-Bashir's party agreed to enact a list of measures promised in the 2005 north-south peace deal.

Senior SPLM member Yasir Arman told **Reuters** the SPLM wanted Bashir's National Congress Party to pass a list of key laws in the current parliamentary session, which ends next month. "If these laws are not included (in this session), the leadership of the SPLM is thinking of boycotting the endorsement of the budget for 2009," he said.

The measures cover national security, the media, criminal law, and a referendum on secession for South Sudan promised for 2012 under the peace deal.

The National Congress Party controls parliament, but any attempt to force through a budget without SPLM support would lack legitimacy under the peace agreement, and analysts say it is almost inconceivable.

Arman said a high-level SPLM committee was hoping to meet National Congress officials later on Monday to discuss the impasse. He said all the pending legislation was essential to the

democratic transformation of Sudan. No one was immediately available for comment from the National Congress Party.

"We still need the census results, demarcation of constituencies and the demarcation of the north-south border," said Wol Atak, a member of the southern parliament.

EU seeks dialogue with Sudan on death penalty

(Daily Nation) 18 Nov - The European Union seeks an end to the death sentence in Sudan, a country with the highest record of such penalty in Africa. A delegation of European diplomats arrived in southern Sudan on Monday for a three-day visit, during which they would seek to convince the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, to back an EU-sponsored moratorium to the death penalty.

"There is a particular concern important for the European Union – which is the issue of the death penalty," French ambassador Christine Robichon said upon arriving in Juba.

Robichon spoke on behalf of the nine-man delegation of EU diplomats, including ambassadors of Denmark, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, EU Special Representative for Sudan and the EU Head of Delegation.

According to Amnesty International, Sudan is also one of the leading nations in sentencing minors to death. And up to 50 people in Sudan were mid this year sentenced to death by special courts for alleged involvement in the Darfur rebel attack on the capital.

The three-day consultation dialogue marks the first time the EU diplomats are holding the dialogue in Sudan's autonomous region.

Sudan is a signatory of the Cotonou agreement, which organises the relationship between the EU and the Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific countries. Robichon said the visit is part of fulfillment of Article 8 of the Cotonou agreement, saying that political dialogue should be conducted between the signatories of the agreement at both the national and regional levels. "We will discuss different issues, of course, the CPA which is a strongly supported by the EU and all issues related to democratic transformation, human rights, and good governance," Robichon said. The Cotonou agreement gives Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries preference access to the EU market. However, Khartoum is yet to ratify the treaty.

"Ratifying the Cotonou agreement is crucial because there is 300 million Euro which is supposed to be spent as aid, but this money can't be released until Khartoum ratifies the Cotonou Agreement," said Barnaba Marial Benjamin, Sudan's minister for Regional Cooperation.

SMC reports that the government rejects the EU proposal to abolish death penalty and that the EU offered the proposal as a condition to suspend international Criminal Court call to indict President Al-Bashir. Undersecretary of ministry of foreign affairs Mutrif Sidig said death penalty is not debatable issue because it is part of Shoria Laws.

ICC prosecutor to request secret arrest warrants against Darfur rebels

(Sudan Tribune website) 18 Nov— The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Luis Moreno-Ocampo will submit a sealed filing to the judges on Thursday requesting an arrest warrant be issued against an unspecified number of Darfur rebel commanders.

Ocampo's third case on Darfur, opened last December, investigates a rebel attack on the Haskanita military base last year that left 10 African Union soldiers dead and one missing.

The application will be filed under seal meaning it will not be released to the public and the names of the suspects will not be disclosed. If the judges approve the prosecutor's request the arrest warrants will also remain under seal until suspects are apprehended.

US Secretary of State says she has 'real regrets' on Darfur

(Sudan Tribune website) 17 November — The US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice admitted that she has "real regrets" over the handling of the crisis in the Western region of

Darfur. "I have regrets about Darfur, real regrets. I don't know that there were other answers. The president considered trying to do something unilaterally - very difficult to do" Rice said in an interview with ***New York Times***.

Rice criticized the UN Security Council (UNSC) for failing to impose sanctions on Sudan for putting a halt to the violence in Darfur region. "I think it has been an enormous embarrassment for the Security Council and for multilateral diplomacy" the top US diplomat said. "I think we thought "the responsibility to protect" meant something" she said before adding that and "in the Darfur case it has turned out to be nothing but words".

Mexico signals it will vote against freezing Bashir indictment

(Sudan Tribune website) 18 Nov — The Mexican government hinted that it will not support any UN Security Council resolution suspending the International Criminal Court (ICC) move against Sudanese president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir. "There should be no doubt Mr. President that from its seat at the Security Council Mexico will strive to avoid any action that affects the court, its independence and its mandate of putting an end to impunity" Jorge Lomonaco Tonda, ambassador of Mexico in the Netherlands told the ICC assembly of state parties.

Representatives from the 108 nations that have ratified the court's founding treaty started their annual meeting in The Hague last Friday. "Mexico will work with the Court and with Council constructively and will give priority to dialogue and to the search of lasting solutions" the Mexican diplomat said. The North American country will join the UNSC as a non-permanent member next January to replace Panama.

A UNSC resolution requires nine votes in the affirmative with no negative votes from any of the P-5 members. Four of the five new UNSC non-permanent members Austria, Japan, Mexico and Uganda are parties to The Hague based court which will likely make it even more difficult to obtain the required number of votes.

None of these countries, including Uganda have made any statements in support of an Article 16 resolution during the ICC meetings due to adjourn next Saturday.

Two January tenders for Sudan Nile blend crude issued

(Sudan Tribune website) 18 Nov – Sudan and India simultaneously issued new tenders to sell 500,000 and 600,000 barrels respectively of the Nile blend crude. Both tenders made the offers for crude shipment to be delivered in January.

The volume of the current tender is almost 50% less than the average of 1-1.2 million barrels per month (bpm).

State oil firm Sudapet had skipped spot sales for October and December, although it sold November-loading Nile Blend crude to ChinaOil at a about \$2 a barrel.

On the other hand India's Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC), which holds a 25 percent stake in the project, has briefly stopped issuing monthly tenders to sell Nile Blend, as output has fallen and it is keeping some of its equity for its subsidiary Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL). It awarded November-loading Nile Blend crude to Chinaoil at a discount of about \$2 a barrel to Dated Brent.

Jonglei's Pibor gathers more guns

(Sudan Tribune website) 18 Nov – At least 1700 arms have been collected in Jonglei County of Pibor, a survey by SPLM reveals. The collection makes the County more likely responsive to disarmament campaigns which commenced on June 1st 2008 in Southern Sudan.

SPLM Jonglei secretariat, during a visit to Pibor early November, 2008, found that the County collected 1752 small arms. Pibor Member of Parliament to South Sudan Legislative Assembly, Ismail Konyi and Commissioner Akot Maze, who are believed to have invested in disarmament campaigns, pledge progressive efforts, SPLM information office disclosed.

Salaries for teachers in Juba approved, official says

(Miraya FM website) 19 Nov - The acting director general in the Central Equatoria State Ministry of education, science and technology Isidoro Asok has confirmed to Miraya FM that October salaries for teachers in Juba County have been approved. He also said that September salaries for teachers in other Central Equatoria state counties have been approved. Mr. Asok, stated that a number of meetings was held following the students strike in Juba last week and that teachers have accepted to go back to work. He said the pay slips for the Juba and other counties are being processed and "payment of their salaries will take place immediately".

GoNU's partners agree to extend current sessions of parliament

(Miraya FM website) 18 Nov - The Secretary General of National Congress Party Political Bureau Mandour Al Mahdi said yesterday the NCP and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement agreed during a meeting held Monday to extend the current Parliamentary sessions from end of December till the time of the elections in July 9th next year. He said this would give opportunity to endorse a number of unconstitutional bills.

Al Mahdi added to **Miraya FM** that the two partners agreed to revise several key bills, including National Security, Press and Media, Code of Criminal Procedure, Self determination and Referendum of south Sudan.

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