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- Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan Security Arrangements Committee met yesterday (**Al-Sahafa**)
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- AU Commission chairman urges the two partners to tackle border demarcation and elections issues (**Al-Sudani**)
- Elections will not be held before 2011 (**Al-Ahdath**)
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- CISSIA Workshop session in Khartoum today (**Local dailies**)
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- Peace in Uganda will be signed by the end of this month – Riek Machar (**Al-Sahafa**)

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- AU urges Sudan's rival north-south groups to fulfill peace deal (**AFP**)
- Sudan's Bashir cancels Sennar visit amid reports of being hospitalized (**ST**)
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- World celebrates Day for Elimination of Violence against Women (**Miraya FM**)
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- Visiting Chad, top UN relief official calls for stronger refugee protection (**UN News Service**)
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Highlights

Local Arabic and English Language Press

ASG Holmes to visit Darfur

Local dailies report USG for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes is to visit Darfur today to familiarize himself with the humanitarian and security situation and the obstacles impeding delivery of aid to IDPs. Mr. Holmes will proceed to Juba for a meeting with FVP Kiir.

MFA spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq said Holmes would visit Zalingi and Nyala to meet Government officials, UNAMID troops and NGOs operating in the region. On Saturday, he will meet officials of the MFA, Humanitarian Affairs and NISS.

According to **Akhir Lahza**, the Government considers ASG Edmond Mullet's statements about serious consequences for UNAMID and UNMIS should President Bashir be indicted as being consistent with Sudan's strategy and vision to achieve stability. MFA spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq "Characterized the remarks as being concerns voiced by a man of long experience in humanitarian work which require security and stability to do".

According to **Miraya FM** USG Holmes wrapped up his visit to Chad with a tour of refugees' camps in western Chad. He also held talks with Prime Minister Yousif Abbas and Chadian officials on the recent positive shift in the Sudan - Chad relations.

Abyei Area Arbitration Panel holds first meeting

Al-Rai Al-Aam/Al-Ahdath reports the Abyei Area Arbitration Panel convened yesterday in The Hague. The meeting agreed that the two partners would simultaneously submit a first memorandum on 13 December, including all points of dispute referred for arbitration.

Meanwhile, SPLM official Edward Lino told a symposium in Egypt of efforts to convene a meeting of Darfur movements in Juba to unify their negotiating position. He said if Darfur crisis is not addressed within six months, Kordofan would follow. Lino also warned that the situation in Abyei might explode when the Messeriya begin moving southwards. He said that the SPLA would not allow them to carry arms on southern territory. He also pointed to the likelihood of another crisis between the two partners over oil revenues and said elections are likely to be postponed.

Should Southern Sudan secedes, he said, the fate of the Nuba Mountains and the Angessana (Southern Blue Nile) would be ascertained by the two areas' Parliaments.

Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan Security Committee met

Al-Sahafa reports the Security Arrangement Committee for the Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan States convened an emergency meeting yesterday in Damazin with the Blue Nile Military and Security Committee. Issues discussed included progress of implementing security arrangements and force deployment north and south of 1.1.1956 Line.

Ocampo addresses Darfurians from Radio Dabanga

Al-Ahdath reports a Government official criticized ICC Prosecutor Ocampo for urging Darfurians from the Netherlands-based Radio Dabanga broadcast to arrest President Bashir.

AU Commission chairman urges partners to tackle demarcation/elections issues

Al-Sudani reports AU Commission Chairman Jean Ping yesterday presented a comprehensive report on CPA implementation to AUPSC meeting in Addis Ababa. The report also focused on security and political developments as well as the issue of N-S border demarcation. Mr. Ping urged the two partners to resolve issues of border demarcation and remove obstacles that may prevent elections on schedule.

Elections will not be held before 2011

Al-Ahdath reports opposition National Democratic Alliance official Farouk Abou Essa as saying that the two partners' decision to extend Parliament session to July amounted to a decision to postpone elections.

US envoy stresses need for respect to ceasefire in Darfur

Al-Ayyam reports US Envoy Richard Williamson told journalists in Doha that his country was not opposing normalizing relations with Khartoum. He said USA wants a comprehensive settlement of all crises in the country, Darfur in particular.

Press and Publication Council to discuss censorship today

Al-Sudani reports the Press and Publication Council will meet today to discuss censorship. The meeting will be attended by chief editors of newspapers and NISS representatives.

According to Miraya FM, SPLM denied that FVP Kiir has approved a Presidential decree to impose censorship on newspapers. Deputy SPLM Secretary General Yassir Arman told Miraya that Kiir respects the country's constitutional law and would never approve such a decision.

"If the presidency released the decree, then it must have been done without the Vice President's knowledge," he said

CISSIA Workshop opens session in Khartoum today

Local dailies report the third workshop of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services in Africa kick off today. Brig. Mutassim Abdul Gadir, who heads the Sudanese delegation, said participants would include 45 African countries as well as 30 other delegations and 150 security experts. According to **SUNA** Abdul Gadir expects the workshop to set up a mechanism to implement AUPSC decisions regarding ICC. yesterday, Abdul Gadir accused the ICC of hindering efforts to achieve peace in Uganda by indicting LRA leader Joseph Kony.

Akhir Lahza reports Abdul Gadir as saying that the CIA would not participate in the workshop. **Al-Ahdath** says Abdul Gadir said indictment of President Bashir would create insecurity.

Parliament passes budget

Local dailies report the National Assembly yesterday unanimously passed the 2009 budget. MPs stressed the need to rationalize defence and security budgets.

Peace in Uganda will be signed by the end of month –Machar

Al-Sahafa reports GoSS VP and Ugandan talks chief mediator Riek Machar said a comprehensive peace agreement in Uganda would be signed on November 29-30.

Websites/International News Coverage

AU urges Sudan's rival north-south groups to fulfill peace deal

ADDIS ABABA (**AFP**) – The African Union called on Sudan's rival groups in the north and south of the country to speed up their application of the 2005 peace deal, the bloc's special envoy told **AFP** yesterday.

"AUPSC welcomes the progress made since 2007, but also noted with concern the fact that a number of very crucial parts of the peace deal have not been implemented," said Oluyemi Adeniji. He added that plans for elections in 2009 had not gained momentum, while the preparations for the 2011 referendum on independence for south Sudan "had not started."

Adeniji, speaking after an AU meeting in Addis Ababa, said the bloc had agreed to meet every six months to evaluate the CPA.

Meanwhile Yahia Babikr, an adviser to President Bashir said Monday the CPA is working well. "We are happy with the progress because there is a government of Southern Sudan which is controlling the region and at the same time participating in the government of national unity,"

Bashir" cancels" Sennar visit amid reports of being hospitalized

(**Sudan Tribune website**) November 24, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — President Omer Hassan Al-Bashir reportedly canceled a trip to the state of Sennar this weekend amid reports that he was admitted to hospital for unknown reasons.

Sudan state news agency had announced last week that Al-Bashir was scheduled to start a two day visit to the Sennar state on Sunday to inaugurate a number of projects including a water dam.

There was no official announcement on the cancellation of the Sennar trip or reasons behind it. Some sources in Khartoum told Sudan Tribune that Al-Bashir fell ill last week and was secretly hospitalized. However these reports could not be independently verified.

President Bashir will travel to the Gulf state of Qatar this week for a conference on development where he is also supposed to hold a meeting with Chadian president Idriss Deby.

Southern Sudan Parliament summons Warrap's governor

(**Miraya FM website**) 25 Nov. - The Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly summoned the acting Minister of the SPLA Affairs and the governor of Warrab State. SSLA Speaker James Wani Igga chaired the session on an urgent motion, tabled by Wol Deng Atak, over alleged crimes of rape and murder in the State committed by men dressed in SPLA uniforms.

Speaking to **Miraya FM** Wol Deng hailed the resolution of the Assembly and added that this move would restore peace and stability in the State.

Meanwhile, the SSLA endorsed the Investment Promotion Bill into law in the third reading. This law is expected to promote and facilitate investments in southern Sudan.

World Celebrates Day for elimination of violence against women

(**Miraya FM website**) 25 Nov. - Today marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon pledged the UN would

strengthen its efforts to raise public awareness, increase political will and resources to eradicate this phenomenon.

UN checks charges of Government bombing in renewed Darfur fighting

(UN News Service) 24 November – UNAMID has sent a team to verify allegations by the Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M) of Government attacks on a village in South Darfur province following reports of renewed fighting in the war-torn region.

The team met the local SLA Commander who led them to the site where camels were allegedly stolen and children abducted in the attack on Abu Dengal, about 125 kilometres southeast of Nyala. The team was also taken to a site where four craters, two showing signs of explosions and another two containing unexploded bombs, were observed.

Local residents, contending this was the result of bombings by the Government, said there was unexploded ordnance in the village and requested UNAMID help in disposing of the devices.

UNAMID has also received reports indicating that Government Central Reserve Police has allegedly attacked a village held by a faction of the SLA. The rebel group reported that three people were killed and several injured in yesterday's attack on Um Martei, some 30 kilometres southeast of Dar es Salaam-Waddah.

When contacted by UNAMID, the Government liaison officer denied the allegation, which will be verified by UNAMID.

Visiting Chad, top UN relief official calls for stronger refugee protection

(UN News Service) 24 November - The top United Nations humanitarian official wrapped up a four-day visit to Chad today during which he called for stronger action to restore stability and rein in criminal activity besetting nearly half a million refugees and IDPs in the strife-torn east.

Touring a refugee camp in Farchana, a site for IDPs in Gassire and a village of returned IDPs in Louboutigue, he noted the impact of very volatile security situation, criminality and restricted humanitarian space, on aid operations, and he stressed the urgent need for closer cooperation between the Government and international institutions to counter this.

Mr. Holmes – who serves as UN Emergency Relief Coordinator – also noted the deployment of the Integrated Detachment for Safety (DIS)), a unit of Chadian police and gendarmes being trained under a UN programme to ensure the protection of refugees and IDPs in and around the camps in the east.

“I hope that this deployment of the DIS and the current consultations for the replacement of European Union Force (EUFOR) in March 2009 by a United Nations force will help improve the security situation in the east of Chad, even if many challenges remain to be addressed,” he said.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has proposed sending 6,000 troops to replace the 3,000-strong EUFOR, which currently works with the UN Mission in CAR and Chad (MINURCAT).

Mr. Holmes thanked donors who have provided \$242 million for the humanitarian appeal for Chad – 77 per cent of the required funding. But he noted that mine action, water and sanitation, education and early recovery remain somewhat under-funded.

The Under-Secretary-General, who met with Prime Minister Youssouf Saleh Abbas, other senior

officials and members of the diplomatic corps and humanitarian community in N'Djamena, welcomed recent progress in relations between Chad and Sudan.

Tough homecoming to war-ravaged south Sudan

NGERJEBI, Sudan (**AFP**) - It is hard work coming home when your country was at war for two decades. Homes must be built from scratch, fields for crops cut where the wild and tough bush has grown, and warning signs erected in areas with landmines.

"Lack of food is the biggest problem," said Josephine Mayo, a farmer who returned in January to the southern Sudan village she abandoned in 1998 when two of her children were killed in fighting and the settlement burnt.

Ngerjebi, a small farming community in lush countryside some 30 miles (50 kilometres) from Juba, the capital of semi-autonomous southern Sudan, is typical of many villages across this grossly under-developed region.

Four million people were displaced from or within south Sudan, according to assessments made after the 2005 peace that ended 21 years of civil war by joining the southern rebel leadership with the Arab-led north in government.

The displaced are now coming home. Around 1.7 million have returned, according to an October report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and life is far from easy. Many complain of insecurity in a region awash with guns and militia remnants and -- three years after the peace deal was signed -- an exhausting lack of services despite the south's sizeable oil revenue.

It's a situation worrying some deeply. A British think tank, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), recently warned of "growing concern" about the need to support the returnees. "The challenge lies not simply in avoiding fresh violence, but in preventing the emergence of a future failing state", a report said.

While acknowledging that peace has held despite the challenges of coping with a giant influx of people, most have been left "extremely vulnerable" to disturbances or shocks, the ODI said. "Opportunities for citizens to be economically independent have been slow to develop and large numbers have not yet benefited from economic growth."

The same complaints are heard repeatedly on the ground. "We are lacking basic services -- health services, water, a proper school," said Albano Tombek, the 45-year-old Ngerjebi chief, who returned to an empty village in March.

Peace has brought changes for some as the region opens up to trade, but much of south Sudan -- an area bigger than Spain and Portugal combined but with few miles (kilometres) of paved roads -- remains extremely remote.

"I'm happy to be home but there are big challenges ahead," Josephine said. She talked wearily about caring for 20 relatives, including her children and those of family members killed in the war.

"There is not enough food. We could not plant many crops because we had to build our homes, and we also had few tools and seeds," she added, waving at the scattered collection of thatch huts and small patches of crops.

Most of those returning are also the poorest. The IOM estimates 60 percent are families headed

by single women and that 59 percent are children aged between five and 17 -- many going to ancestral homes for the first time.

Those who built a successful life outside, during the long years of war, are those with the education and skills most needed to develop this damaged region. But many of them are reluctant to return with families to a land without health services and education, fearing instability ahead of a 2011 referendum that could see the south of Africa's largest country secede.

"I'm just visiting relatives but I'm still based in Kenya," said businessman Joseph Achak. "Some businessmen are back, but there are not the schools for my children like they have in Nairobi ... After independence I'll return for good."

Some of those who have come back say they were deeply disappointed when they arrived. Many prefer to remain in the city. "I heard that there were would be health services and electricity, but there was nothing," said William Lado, 26, who grew up in a camp in northern Sudan. Now Lado drives a motorbike taxi in Juba. "There are no jobs in the countryside, nothing to do," he said.

Some are bitter at what they complain is gross corruption by government officials, newly savouring the taste of power. Others fume that social spending is docked in favour of the military. Last month southern lawmakers approved a 980-million-dollar top-up to the 1.5-billion-dollar annual budget, blamed largely on massive military overspending.

"Reintegration has as a result put additional pressure on an already under-served and economically poor resident population," the ODI said. "It has also exposed fundamental weaknesses in the fledgling regional government, and in the work of international agencies."

Government authorities say they are working hard to support those returning, but that they face a giant task. "People have high expectations, but we have been frank with them about the situation," said Stans Yatta, state director of the South Sudan Refugee and Rehabilitation Commission for Central Equatoria state. "No one is forcing anyone to stay or to go; it is their decision."

Yatta said it was hard to provide all services before people arrived, since it was only then that the needs were clear. "The war is over and we are rebuilding the country, and people need to come back to their lands and participate in that," Yatta added. "How can you start schools when there is no one there, or build water boreholes if there is no one to drink from them but the monkeys?"