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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

Local News Headlines

- WFP “fabricating facts” about situation in Darfur (Al-Intibaha)
- SPLM submits documents to its counsels on Abyei arbitration (Al-Watan)
- Justice Minister warns of “Tsunami” if arrest warrant is issued for Bashir (Al-Sahafa)
- DDR National Council to meet Tuesday (SUNA)
- Jakaya: UN decides to handle ICC with Sudan (Sudan Vision)
- Consultations on American proposals to overcome ICC crisis, Khartoum agrees to French initiative to restore ties with Chad (Al-Rai Al-Aam)
- Presidential Assistant Nafie reveals Government’s plan to resolve Darfur crisis (Al-Khartoum)
- Commissioner of Tulus objects to UNAMID deployment (Al-Sudani)
- Sudan is amending its laws to prosecute perpetrators of crimes in Darfur – Arab League SG (Al-Sudani)
- Western Darfur State government receives 59 of Omdurman attack children (Al-Sudani)
- Joint political executive committee of two partners to meet in Juba (SUNA)
- SPLA and civilians in Rumbek clash, casualties reported (Al-Intibaha)

Websites/International Headlines

- Sudan's president praises AU position over Darfur (Xinhua)
- Tanzania pushes for deferral of Sudan president indictment (ST)
- Jordan monarch discusses ICC issue with Sudanese envoy (ST)
- Dutch human rights envoy to visit Sudan (ST)
- Darfur rebels claim capture of Sudanese soldiers during recent attack (ST)
- Darfur rebels say Sudan controls towns after battles (AFP)
- INTERVIEW: Sudan FM says his role should reflect views of NCP & SPLM (ST)
- Heavy rains affects more than 2000 families in southern Sudan (ST)
- Uganda president promises to build road to Southern Sudan (APA-Kampala)
- MPs want South Sudan to stop using Uganda’s dial code (The Daily Monitor)

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Highlights

Local Arabic and English Language Press

WFP “fabricating facts” about situation in Darfur

Al-Intibaha reported that the Sudan Government yesterday vehemently reacted to WFP threat to suspend delivery of relief to large areas of Darfur because of insecurity. It said WFP claims were inaccurate.

HAC Commissioner Hasabo Mohamed Abdul Rahman said what was released by the Agency about situation in Darfur was inaccurate and would not advance Darfur issue. He said the Government devised a plan to secure relief and humanitarian assistance convoys for IDPs in the region besides it set up protection points along the main roads between Kordofan and Darfur, manned them with forces and 120 vehicles for the purpose.

He said the governor of Western Darfur and authorities there informed him that only one robbery incident took place in the area since three months and the same thing applies to North Darfur State where only one incident took place in the area of Kutum.

He said Government authorities were stepping up efforts to ensure delivery of relief but UN is not reflecting that fact. He accused the organization of not been impartial in its report on humanitarian and security situation in Darfur particularly that the armed movements are the ones which impede humanitarian efforts. He regretted that UN failed to highlight these facts; instead it relies on misleading reports.

He called on UN Agencies to be accurate and transparent and not to use humanitarian assistances to exercise political pressure.

SPLM submits documents to its counsels on Abyei arbitration

Al-Watan carried a report stating that SPLM submitted to its counsels for Abyei arbitration documents and papers and its arbitrators have also intensified direct meetings with UNMIS, JIU and Dinka Ngok chiefs in Abyei area.

Meanwhile NCP representative left for The Hague yesterday to meet with their arbitrators and the counsels are also expected to visit Khartoum for consultations during the two coming days.

Abyei administration is expected to finalize during the coming days formulation of regulations and laws to govern work of the Locality.

According to sources, as soon as the laws are finalized, they will be approved by the joint committee and then submitted to the Presidency so Abyei administration membership would be completed.

Justice Minister warns of “Tsunami” if arrest warrant is issued for Bashir

Al-Sahafa reported that the Justice Minister Abdul Basit Sabdarat has warned of a “devastating Tsunami” if ICC issued arrest warrant for Bashir. “The Sudanese people who are united behind the President will not allow the President’s authority, prestige and dignity to be derogated,” he said. “The fire will also burn those who have taken the decision,” he added.

The Minister who was speaking at press conference at the residence of the Sudanese Ambassador to Jordan said he conveyed a message to the Jordanian Monarch and the meeting was fruitful and useful.

He said the People of Sudan's Initiative which is backed by all the Sudanese would be announced today and would be presented to the armed movements in Darfur for approval. He said rebels are not controlling any part of Darfur.

DDR National Council to meet Tuesday

SUNA said the Minister of the Presidency Gen. Bakri Hassan Salih, Chairman of the National Council of Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration will preside over the fifth session of the Council at the Republican Palace Tuesday.

The meeting will deliberate reports of DDR commissions of the north and the south as well as the agreement aiming at unifying work at the three areas of Abyei, the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile, said the Executive Secretary of the Council, Brig. Osman Nouri.

Jakaya: UN Decides to Handle ICC with Sudan

Sudan Vision reported that the Chairman of the African Union, President of Tanzania, Jakaya Kikwete, declared that AU Peace and Security Council has decided to hold the responsibility of handling ICC's issue with Sudan in UN, affirming that both Tanzania and Nigeria have been informed to assume this role.

In a joint press conference he held with the President of the Republic Field Marshal Omer Al-Bashir yesterday in conclusion of his talks with the officials of the government of Sudan, Jakaya said that their ambassadors are currently playing this role in New York.

He affirmed that the AU and UN will work with the government of Sudan to realize peace and justice in Darfur and to handle the humanitarian crisis in the region. Jakaya expressed his appreciation for the commitment made by Sudan and President Al-Bashir personally to endeavor to solve the issue of Darfur, stressing that UN does not undermine the importance of justice in Darfur. AU believes that it's an important issue, but priority should be given to peace, humanitarian issues, protection of lives and alleviation of suffering in Darfur.

He affirmed that AU is trying to secure its previous stance through AU Peace and Security Council to freeze the movements of ICC and through UN to secure this stance. Also, he affirmed that the difficulties facing deployment of the hybrid forces will be discussed with AU and UN, surmounting the stance of the government of Sudan and its commitment to protect the humanitarian convoys and humanitarian workers. Jakaya said that his talks with the officials of the government of Sudan and the chief of the joint mission focused on the peace process in Darfur and the difficulties that face deployment of the hybrid forces in Darfur.

For his part, President Omer Al-Bashir said that security and stability in Sudan are crucial for Africa, pointing out the efforts made by the government to realize peace at all levels, affirming that his talks with the chairman of the AU have been comprehensive, productive and constructive and forms a framework for solution of issues. Al-Bashir added that Jakaya would participate in the activities of UN general assembly and would meet with a number of leaders and we are quite convinced that he would express our stance clearly and would support Sudan.

Consultations on American proposals to overcome ICC crisis, Khartoum agrees

to French initiative to restore ties with Chad

Al-Rai Al-Aam carried a report stating that the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mutrif Siddiq has described as inaccurate the Los Angeles report about a deal between Sudan and US on ICC whereby Sudan agrees to speedy deployment of UNAMID in return for not resisting Sudan's bid to block ICC move besides cooperation on anti-terror fight.

However, he said dialogue was continuing on those issues between the two sides. He said Sudan was committed to facilitate humanitarian operations and the deployment of the hybrid force.

On the other hand, Sudan Government agreed to French proposal for a Sudanese-Chadian summit in Paris under international sponsorship. However, Sudan government cited as a precondition discontinuation of Chad support to armed movements in Darfur. He said the initiative was conveyed by the French envoy who visited Khartoum recently. He added that Sudan had no objection to restore relations with Chad.

Presidential Assistant Nafie reveals Government's plan to resolve Darfur crisis

Al-Khartoum reported that the Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie revealed the details of the government's plan to address Darfur crisis.

Nafie said the state plan to resolve the problem was based on four axis: First, to change life in Darfur by establishing security as it is a priority for the state at this stage; second, to reconcile tribes; third, development and peace by providing services to stable areas and especial services to war-affected areas with the help of friendly countries; fourth, to hold special conference on Darfur.

Nafie was speaking at Iftar of Ramadan on Sunday organized annually by NCP office in Cairo. He said Darfur was now priority issue for which the People of Sudan's Initiative was launched.

Commissioner of Tulus objects to UNAMID deployment in his Locality

Al-Sudani reported that the commissioner of Tulus Siddiq Abdul Nabi objected to UNAMID deployment in the Locality and refused to sanction them land saying it violates the agreement determining UNAMID deployment areas in Darfur.

At a meeting with UNAMID delegation yesterday he said Tulus Locality was not a war-affected area adding that UNAMID deployment in the Locality violates the agreement.

He said a delegation from UNAMID visited the Locality to request allotment of land for deployment purposes.

Sudan is amending its laws to prosecute perpetrators of crimes in Darfur – Arab League SG

Al-Sudani carried a report stating that the Arab League Secretary General Amr Musa said Darfur is Sudan's most complex problem and that there were foundations for solution being discussed between the Arab League, UN and AU. He told SUNA that he was informed by the Sudanese government that it was amending the laws to allow trials of perpetrators of crimes in Darfur if proved.

Western Darfur State government receives 59 of Omdurman attack children

Al-Sudani stated that the government of West Darfur State received yesterday 59 of the children who participated in the attack on Omdurman who were pardoned by the President.

Commissioner of Guneina said the state government would reunite the children with their families in coordination with HAC.

Joint political executive committee of two Partners to meet in Juba

SUNA reported that the Joint Political Executive Committee of the two partners, co-chaired by Vice-President of the Republic, Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, and the Vice - President of the Government of Southern Sudan, Dr. Riek Machar, has affirmed convocation of its coming meeting and the meeting of the National Affairs Committee in Juba.

Member of the committee for the National Congress, Dr. Kamal Obeid, said that the meeting of the Joint Political Executive Committee of the Two Partners Monday discussed a number of reports of sub-committees on the situation of Abyei, South Kordofan State, southern Blue Nile State, the Committee of Parties, freedoms, besides a report on the National Capital. He said that the committee also heard a detailed report on the preparatory meeting for establishment of the Entity of Muslims in South Sudan within the framework of implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

Dr. Obeid indicated that the joint committee agreed on holding the meeting of the National Affairs Committee in Juba during September 18 - 19 to review its performance. He said that the meeting appreciated the progress achieved in the performance of the Committees for Abyei and South Kordofan and the Blue Nile as well as the stability that was reached due to the joint work.

Meanwhile, the member of the Joint Committee of Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), Peter Bashir, referred to the progress realized in implementing the Road Map Agreement on Abyei, a matter that emphasized the commitment of the two parties to the realization of peace. He indicated that agreement was reached on delivery of the branch committees to their reports to the coming meeting of the Joint Political Executive Committee of the Two Partners in Juba toward boosting the cooperation between the two partners.

SPLA and civilians clash in Rumbek, casualties reported

Al-Intibaha reported that fierce confrontations broke out yesterday between civilians and SPLA in the town of Rumbek in the Lakes State due to differences between the civilians and authorities in the State over disarmament campaign that GoSS decided to carry out in the ten southern States in the wake of increased insecurity in most of the southern States besides the demobilization of a large number of SPLA fighters.

Eyewitnesses said the clashes broke out yesterday noon and continued until late in the evening the same day. They said tens were killed and wounded on both sides. They added that the reason for the clash was that GoSS is insisting to disarm the civilians who have refused to hand over their arms arguing that their lives and property would be in danger particularly that the disarmament programme exclude some influential tribes.

The eyewitness said the town appeared vacant as most of residents remained indoors. However, they said heavy deployment of SPLA was seen on the streets and the governor of the State imposed state of emergency and curfew in a bid to restore security and stability in the town.

Websites/International News Coverage

Sudan's president praises AU position over Darfur

(Xinhua) On Monday, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir praised the AU position to support peace and stability of Darfur.

In a joint press conference with visiting Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete, the incumbent chairman of the AU, the Sudanese president appreciated the AU's support of Sudan on various issues.

"The visit of President Kikwete is an opportunity for exchanging views on all the issues, especially the situation in Darfur, the peace agreement and the developments in the International Criminal Courts (ICC)," Bashir said.

Terming his talks with the Tanzanian president as "comprehensive, fruitful and constructive," the Sudanese president noted that the outcomes of the talks would be a framework for resolving the problems in Sudan.

Al-Bashir affirmed his confidence that Kikwete would clarify Sudan's position and support it during his participation in the UN General Assembly and the sideline meetings.

Kikwete, for his part, said that he was familiar with the real situation in Sudan as a result of his talks with the Sudanese leaders, including the president, Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha and Ahmed Ibrahim al-Tahir, speaker of the parliament.

Their "intensive and constructive talks" had dealt with the impact of the ICC allegations, the Darfur problem, and bilateral relations, he said

Kikwete arrived in Khartoum on Sunday, after a visit to Washington where he met with President Bush, and consulted with a number of leaders and officials of the African states.

According to Sudanese officials, Kikwete's visit was in the framework of AU efforts to get the UN Security Council to prevent the ICC from issuing an arrest warrant against the Sudanese president.

Tanzania pushes for deferral of Sudan president indictment

(Sudan Tribune) —Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete, who holds the rotating chair of the AU, announced that the regional organization will seek the suspension of a possible arrest warrant against the Sudanese president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir. Kikwete said he would raise the issue during the UN General Assembly meeting in New York next week. "Peace and settling the humanitarian crisis in Darfur is the number one priority now," Kikwete told reporters in a press conference with Al-Bashir in Khartoum today.

The Tanzanian president appeared hopeful that a resolution can be tabled soon. "The AU is pursuing the implementation of that matter within the United Nations system" he said. However Kikwete warned that war crime suspects in Darfur must ultimately be held accountable. "Justice is critical, and we do not in any way want to be perceived as sending the wrong signals of condoning impunity" the Tanzanian leader told reporters. "Justice must be done, (and) justice, as the lawyers say, must be seen to be done" he added.

Kikwete also praised the government's commitment to negotiating a peace settlement in Darfur and protecting humanitarian convoys

The Sudanese president welcomed the statements. "President Kikwete is on his way to New York soon, and we believe that he is going to meet the dignitaries of the world....We are hopeful

that he will support Sudan”, Al-Bashir said.

Jordan monarch discusses ICC issue with Sudanese envoy

(Sudan Tribune) — Jordan’s King Abdullah II received Sudanese Justice Minister Abdel-Baset Sabdarat on Monday. According to PETRA, the Jordanian news agency, a letter delivered by Abdel-Baset Sabdar contained Khartoum’s view about the latest developments of its row with the ICC.

King Abdullah told the Sudanese official that Jordan is “keen on preserving the security and stability of Sudan as well as achieving national reconciliation and strengthening peace all over Sudan” PETRA reported.

Jordan is one of three Arab states which are party to the ICC Statute. Jordan supported the resolution issued by the Arab League foreign ministers last July criticizing the move by the ICC prosecutor.

Dutch human rights envoy to visit Sudan

(Sudan Tribune) — The Dutch human rights ambassador, Arjan Hamburger, will pay a visit to Sudan in October to discuss specific measures to improve the human rights situation in the country.

Dutch foreign minister Maxime Verhagen agreed about this trip with his Sudanese counterpart Deng Alor who was in The Hague last week

"I remain greatly concerned about human rights in Sudan, especially the tragic situation in Darfur," said Verhagen. "The Sudanese government needs to ensure that humanitarian aid workers are given free access to people in need" he added.

Verhagen urged Alor to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC, which is investigating war crimes in Darfur, has issued arrest warrants against a minister and a government-backed militia leader in a first case earlier this year. Alos, the ICC chief prosecutor recently filled a request for an arrest warrant against Sudanese President Omer Al-Bashir.

'The work of the International Criminal Court contributes to more stability and security in the world over the long term,' said Verhagen.

"Justice is indispensable to a lasting peace, in Sudan and elsewhere. War crimes must be investigated and the perpetrators punished. This is non-negotiable," he stressed.

Darfur rebels claim capture of Sudanese soldiers during recent attack

(Sudan Tribune) — A Darfur rebel group said they have managed to capture six Sudanese soldiers during recent clashes that in North Darfur this weekend. SLM leader Abdel-Wahid Al-Nur told Sudan Tribune that the head of the army attack was Brigadier General Abdel-Salam Mohamed though he was not held captive by his forces. He named two of the POW's as Corporal Mubarak Rahma Gabir Kuwa 21 years, military ID 0075996 and Corporal Abdel-Moniem Mohamed Khamis 25 years military ID 878457. He said the names of the remaining POWs were not immediately available. The SLM leader called on the Red Cross to contact his group immediately for more information on the captives.

Darfur rebels say Sudan controls towns after battles

(AFP) - Sudanese government forces have moved in to control rebel strongholds in North

Darfur state after two days of heavy clashes, fighters from the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) said on Monday.

Rebels said assaults on insurgent positions began on Saturday, launched by government and militia forces backed by attack helicopters and Antonov planes around the North Darfur towns of Disa, Birmaza and Tawila.

"The government is in Disa and Birmaza now," said Ibrahim al-Hillo, a commander from the SLA faction headed by exiled leader Abdel Wahid Mohammed Nur.

"There is isolated shooting, but the Antonov planes are overhead many times in the day and they have been bombing," he added, declining to say how many casualties there might be.

Fighters from the SLA remained close to the towns but government forces now controlled them, with civilians fleeing into the surrounding desert, he said.

It was not immediately possible to check his account with other sources.

"The civilians have run away into the desert or are hiding in the trees," he added, speaking from close to Disa. "The situation is very bad, it's raining and the people are suffering very much."

Fighting around Tawila -- where rebels reported heavy clashes on Saturday and Sunday -- has also ceased, according to field commanders Hillo had spoken to. Government forces were now encamped there, he said.

There was no response from the military. However, in comments made to Sudanese media on Monday, an army spokesman said troops were in control of areas in eastern Jebel Marra, south of Tawila in West Darfur state. No mention was made of fighting elsewhere.

INTERVIEW (part II): Sudan FM says his role should reflect views of NCP & SPLM

(Sudan Tribune) In the second part of his interview with Al-Sahafa newspaper Foreign Minister Deng Alor Alor acknowledged the failure to normalize ties with Washington, citing the Darfur crisis and time constraints due to the US presidential elections. He stressed the need to hold Sudan's elections on time in order to speed up the democratic transformation that will enable free and open dialogue about the country's problems. The SPLM official denied that any decision has been made about having Salva Kiir run for the presidential elections.

Text follows:

Q. What is the update on the Sudanese-American dialogue to normalize relations?

Alor: When I assumed office in the Foreign Ministry our goal was to reform the Sudanese-American relations. This was the goal for all of us in Foreign Affairs ministry, the Presidency and the Government of National Unity (GONU) in general. We started the dialogue with the Americans in a good fashion but unfortunately it did not progress because there is still the fundamental issue of Darfur which has had three aspects; a political solution to political crisis, engaging in a genuine dialogue with the rebels. The second aspect is the tension with Chad and the need for both sides to end arguments and mutual accusations of harboring opposition in both countries and proceeding immediately to restoring diplomatic ties.

The third aspect was the hybrid force and there were accusations for the government that are dealing in transparency with the obligations that they have undertaken and that they are putting obstacles in the way of the deployment for these forces and objecting to certain nationalities.

The other issue raised by the US relates to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), especially the issue of Abyei. These issues did not allow the dialogue between the two countries to move forward until we ended up have losing the time factor since the US elections got closer and the U.S. administration is preoccupied with the transition arrangements and now there is nothing we can do but to maintain relations at this level until there is a new President next November who will swear oath in January of the new year then we will wait and see who are newcomers to the White House. Are they Republicans or Democrats, and what is their plan in terms of their relations with Sudan?

Q. There are also elections supposed to be held in Sudan which may create a new reality?

Alor: Yes, there are elections ahead. But in my opinion we can do something with the new administration to improve relations with Washington.

Q. There are also developments expected to occur that may lead to a confrontation between Khartoum and the international community. Would this result in the postponement of the 2009 elections?

Alor: In my opinion the elections must be held for three reasons. The first reason is that elections date is set by the constitution and there is agreement on conducting it. The second reason is the fact that elections are an instrument of democratic transformation in order to entrench the principle of peaceful transfer of power. The third reason is that the problems of Sudan will be resolved only in a democratic system. The government that exists now is neither an authoritarian one neither is it a democracy. This is a hybrid government which was the outcome of compromises and adjustments in the peace agreement to pave the road to democratization.

After the elections we will have a government elected by the people that can manage a dialogue on various issues of the country's democratically to reach solutions that are acceptable to all people. The usage of gun power has failed and only gave us poverty, disease and problems that we are in now.

Neither the armed movements in Southern Sudan for a period of 40 years had achieved their objectives nor have the central governments nor the armed movements in Darfur achieved theirs. So ultimately there is no solution except through negotiation and dialogue. A dialogue in a democratic system is the best thing that will inevitably lead to solutions, because it would enhance free dialogue without censoring like it is happening now.

I personally made statements condemning the incidents at the Kalma camp that was blocked by the security services. I told the brothers in the National Congress Party (NCP) about this and told them that I cannot be part of a government censoring what I say when I am the Minister for Foreign Affairs. I cannot accept such behavior and in order for these things not to occur again we better have a democratic system.

Q. Is there a possibility to resolve the crisis between the government and the international community under the table?

Alor: There are solutions on the table.

Q. But it appears that the solutions on the table are not acceptable by the NCP. I have learned that there are officials carrying suitcases full of money and travelling worldwide in search of solutions?

Alor: (Laughing) Do you have proof of what you are saying? As I previously stated that any tendency for that is the nothing more than public relations that will not solve the problem. This technique used may help in dealing with the African Union (AU), the Arab League (AL) and Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) but it will certainly not help in dealing with the United Nations and the Security Council or the European Union (EU).

I have not lost hope yet that we can solve the crisis here between now and mid-October before the issuance of arrest warrant for the President after which we can contain the crisis later but this requires from us that we do the right thing. If we agree on that then we can resolve this today before tomorrow to make a real breakthrough in this crisis. The (case) is very clear but needs courageous decisions.

Q. Why are not facing the NCP with this within the committee for the management of the crisis?

Alor: The discussions within the committee are marked by a high degree of transparency and clarity. Each party in the committee expresses his vision in utmost transparency and if the committee meets again soon I'm hopeful that there will be a positive outcome supporting the line of dealing with the ICC. This is my hope.

Q. Are there factions within the NCP convinced with the point of view calling for dealing with the ICC?

Alor: There are considerable numbers supporting it but this line did not find sufficient support within the NCP to influence its public position.

Q. We have learned that one of the legal options for the government is to request an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the legality of the resolution by the UNSC referring Darfur case to the ICC. Is this the direction of the committee?

Alor: The appeal was not a political challenge but a legal (one) and it requires the cooperation first with the ICC. This what the ICC prosecutor said; that Sudan must challenge the jurisdiction in court which is what we in the SPLM said. This talk should not be made in the media or in the pulpits of regional organizations but engagement with the ICC within its space provides us with a considerable time to find solutions to the Darfur crisis because it delays the issuance of arrest warrant from the judges.

Q. What other options is the NCP pursuing after insisting on ignoring the ICC given the pressure by the international community and the lack of time?

Alor: In my opinion they don't have any options, because the next best option is for an arrest warrant to be issued for the president. Do they want this option? If they do then they need to declare this openly. If the NCP was keen on the safety of the president and its chief then they must accept the principle of cooperation with the ICC.

Q. What happened regarding the restoration of diplomatic relations with Chad as we learned that this was on the agenda of the visiting French delegation to Khartoum?

Alor: Two weeks ago I met with our ambassador in Chad, and asked him to prepare himself to return to N'Djamena and to re-open the embassy to mark the resumption of relations with Chad and we began the implementation of this practice.

There are no problems in terms of diplomatic representation, but what is left is restoring political relations and this requires them to enter into a dialogue to remove the reasons for disagreement and misunderstanding.

I met with President Deby in Paris last July and he handed me an invitation for Vice president Salva Kiir to visit N'djamena and Kiir accepted it. Deby told me that after he meets Kiir he will visit Juba afterwards.

I told him why not visit Juba via Khartoum. He replied that he would visit Khartoum through Juba at this time and laughed loudly. He felt puzzled when he was talking about the reasons that got him into a dispute with Sudan, particularly with President al-Bashir because according to what he told me that they have a personal relationship, and that he [Al-Bashir] is the closest official on the African continent to him. This made me feel that there is a seriousness on his part to reach an understanding on the reasons for the recent disagreements, and we on our end are seriousness in restoring relations with Chad to the previous level because we believe that we cannot reach a solution in Darfur without having relations with Chad.

Q. When will Kiir visit N'Djamena?

Alor: Probably in October

Q. If Deby is serious in restoring relations why did he not reopen his embassy in Khartoum?

Alor: We must do our end of the deal to test his seriousness. Perhaps if we opened our embassy in N'Djamena this will speed up his decision to open the embassy in Khartoum. We have made the political decision to restore relations with Chad.

Q.You came as a Foreign Minister after considerable debate within the SPLM on the performance of former Minister Dr Lam Akol, what is the difference in performance you and your predecessor?

Alor: Assessment of the difference is up to others to determine, but the minister who preceded me, Dr. Lam Akol who is also a leading figure in the SPLM and performed his duties in the ministry. He interpreted the role of the foreign ministry as dealing directly with the head of the state and the minister should therefore not deviate from the president's guidelines given by virtue of that.

I have a different vision however that recognizes that the foreign ministry maintains direct relationship with the president but in the presence of coalition government like now if we had no disagreement at the presidency on pivotal issues that surely will affect the work of the minister and if the minister adopts one line this will be negligence on his part.

The foreign minister must take into account the viewpoint of both partners. For example if the president and his Vice President disagree on a specific issue then I as the foreign minister must reflect this difference. I cannot broadcast the position of the president, which is often the opinion of his party, as an opinion of the GONU and vice versa I cannot adopt the view of the First Vice president as the GONU point of view. Either you find middle ground and try to diplomatically express yourself despite the fact that this method is detrimental to diplomatic work because this

will reflect negatively on our missions abroad because they will be in confusion due to lack of clarity on vision in Khartoum.

Q. Are your partners convinced with your point of view?

Alor: I am always blamed by our brothers in the NCP because I do not reflect their views on foreign policy. I was clear with them that I will only reflect your point of view when it conforms to that of the GONU and not the view of one party.

Q. There is a great deal of controversy in the press these days about the nomination of the Kiir for the presidential elections. What is the position of the SPLM specifically on this issue?

Alor: We should be very accurate particularly on our part at the SPLM. I did not attend the last meeting of the political bureau but the decision issued by the meeting was that the SPLM would run the elections at all levels, and this means we did not rule out running in the presidential elections but we did not identify the person yet.

Q. I was present for the meeting and Yasser Arman, announced the news of the SPLM contesting at the presidential elections. When he was asked about the SPLM nominee he said Salva Kiir?

Alor: Well you did not ask him for the decisions of the meeting that states that the SPLM is running for elections at all levels and everything else is personal interpretation. The nomination of Kiir will have a big impact on the South. If Kiir lost the presidential election who will fill the office of the President of the Government of South Sudan (GoSS)? Those are things that must be resolved before determining a person who will run in the presidential elections. I stress that there is no decisions nominating Kiir personally for the presidential elections, but there is the principle of having the SPLM present different nominees at all levels of elections.

Q. Don't you think that controversy over this issue only provides proof that there are different factions struggling within the SPLM?

Alor: Absolutely not. This is proof of the vibrant democracy and within the SPLM there are many people who want Kiir to run for elections while others don't. Perhaps those who confirmed that the candidate for the SPLM is Kiir was a reflection of their personal desire. Kiir himself must have a view on the acceptance or rejection of the candidacy.

Q. Is there any communication between the NCP and the SPLM on its decision to freeze participation in the regional governments of Darfur?

Alor: As of now no meeting took place between the First Vice president with the president to discuss with him the repercussions of the Kalma camp events. The Darfurians in the SPLM have decided that they will not return to the government until there a clear roadmap to resolve the crisis in the region. This is their position and was endorsed by the SPLM. But the question also should be directed to the NCP regarding their Darfuri members who resigned. Even though the NCP refused to accept their resignation they are still locking themselves up in their own homes.

Q. What are the other issues expected to be discussed by the First Vice president in his meeting with the president?

Alor: Certainly the ICC crisis because we have a real concern on how to deal with the court and

its consequences, unless the NCP has magic wand that we are unaware of or traditional chieftains holding rosary. If it is the same position then we are concerned about this and we want to move quickly to contain the crisis.

Heavy rains affects more than 2000 families in southern Sudan

(Sudan Tribune) — Heavy floods have affected more than 2000 families in southern Sudan, while many cases of cholera have been reported due to the bad hygienic conditions in the region, an official said on Monday.

Thousands of people have been affected by heavy rains in large areas of North Bahr El Gazal state. The overflow of rivers in the region, particularly the river Lol, devastated the town of Awiel and six surrounding villages.

A total of 2,050 households have been hit and about 10,000 acres of fertile farm lands which grow essential crops are submerged, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said in a statement issued today in Khartoum.

"The health and hygiene situation is extremely precarious," warns George Gigibeira, the IFRC's representative in Sudan. "More than 140 cases of acute watery diarrhoea have been recently reported. The number of malaria cases is also on the rise and is expected to increase further," he added.

Sudanese Red Crescent volunteers are working hard to bring assistance directly to the most vulnerable people, while its headquarters in Khartoum, in partnership with the IFRC and ICRC missions in Sudan, has sent shelter materials to meet the immediate needs of 2,000 households.

Also, the Sudanese Red Crescent supported by the IFRC had put in place contingency stocks and conducted volunteer trainings to ensure rapid response in case of emergencies. Contingency stocks contained cooking sets, water tanks, tents, sand bags, latrine slabs and mosquito nets.

Uganda president promises to build road to Southern Sudan

(APA-Kampala) President Yoweri Museveni has assured the people of northern Uganda that his government is determined to build the road linking the region to Juba in Southern Sudan.

A release from State House in Kampala on Monday indicated that Museveni said this on his return from Swaziland where he attended the independence anniversary and King Mswati's 40th birthday in Mbabane.

He was speaking at the handing over ceremony for houses constructed by the army for the families of fallen fighters during the two-decade insurgency in the northern Uganda.

He assured the residents of the area that he is committed to serving them and apologized for the delay because, he said, he had to deal first with insecurity in order to be able to turn to development.

He said peace will now reign in the region since the main rebel leader Joseph Kony has been defeated.

He said that among the government priorities are re-building northern Uganda. "Now that we

have peace and we are more organized, we are able to look back and help the people," he said.

MPs want South Sudan to stop using Uganda's dial code

(The Daily Monitor) Uganda's Parliament has ordered the government to stop Southern Sudan from using Uganda's country code (+256) as a matter of urgency, according to a report in the Daily Monitor. The Parliamentary Committee on Commissions, State Enterprises and Statutory Authorities, which investigated the issue, has recommended that the deal between Uganda and Southern Sudan was "dubious" and that it should be cancelled immediately.

Dr Ham Muliira, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Minister, recently told the committee that use of Uganda's country code by Southern Sudan was a temporary measure.

Uganda Telecommunications official Donald Nyakairu told the Daily Monitor recently that his company made an interconnection agreement with Gemtel Ltd in September 2006 on the basis of a bilateral agreement between Sudan and Uganda that gave the green light for the UTL code to be used by Gemtel.

COMMENTARY

Now Sudan is attacking Darfur refugee camps

(SudanTribune.com., Commentary, Mia Farrow and Eric Reeves, 7/9/08)

At 6 a.m. on the morning of Aug. 25, Kalma camp, home to 90,000 displaced Darfuris, was surrounded by Sudanese government forces. By 7 a.m., 60 heavily armed military vehicles had entered the camp, shooting and setting straw huts ablaze. Terrified civilians — who had previously fled their burning villages when they were attacked by this same government and its proxy killers the Janjaweed — hastily armed themselves with sticks, spears and knives. Of course, these were no match for machine guns and automatic weapons. By 9 a.m., the worst of the brutal assault was over. The vehicles rolled out leaving scores dead and over 100 wounded. Most were women and children.

The early morning attack ensured that no aid workers were present as witnesses. Doctors Without Borders did manage to negotiate the transportation of 49 of the most severely wounded to a hospital in the nearby town of Nyala. But beyond this, aid workers have been blocked from entering the camp. Military vehicles have now increased in number and massed around Kalma. They have permitted no humanitarian assistance to reach the wounded. People already hard hit by recent floods and deteriorating sanitary conditions have received no food, water or medicine since Monday. The dead cannot even be buried with the white shrouds requested by the families of the victims.

How can such brazen cruelty be inflicted upon our fellow human beings? How is it that a military assault on displaced civilians in a refugee camp creates barely a ripple in the news cycle? How does such outrageous human destruction prompt so little outrage? How is it that those who have been tasked with protecting the world's most vulnerable population have failed — and failed, and then failed yet again — in their central responsibility? What does this say about the United Nations and the powerful member states? How have we come to such a moment?

Such questions can be answered by looking at our response to Darfur's agony over the past six

years. Any honest assessment would be as shocking and dispiriting as the assault on Kalma itself. The international response to massive crimes by Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir and his cabal has been simply this: We accommodate and acquiesce, with the contrived hope that these tyrants might grow weary of their task, or that paper agreements can somehow have meaning without a sustained and powerful international commitment backing them.

The Kalma massacre is a part of Khartoum's larger genocidal campaign. Since 2003, 80%-90% of Darfur's African villages have been destroyed, and more than 2.5 million survivors have fled to squalid camps across Darfur, eastern Chad and the Central African Republic. Hundreds of thousands have died. Khartoum's next goal is to shut down camps in Darfur, and force people out into the desert where they cannot survive. The homes and fields that once sustained so many of Darfur's people are ashes now, or they have new occupants — Arab tribes from Darfur and as far away as Chad, Niger and Mali.

The message of the Kalma massacre is chillingly clear for Darfuris. But this assault on civilians in full view of the international community raises the question of what the massacre says about the rest of us. The only message we have sent to the Sudanese government is that they can now attack the camps and the world will watch and do nothing.

[Ms. Farrow has just returned from her 10th trip to the Darfur region. Mr. Reeves is author of "A Long Day's Dying: Critical Moments in the Darfur Genocide" (The Key Publishing House, 2007)]

