

16 Sept 2008

www.unmis.org



# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

## Local News Headlines

- SRSG meets Umma Party leader (Akhbar Al Yom)
- UNAMID helicopter fired at in North Darfur (Al-Wifaq)
- SAF: combing operations do not contradict GoNU endeavors for peace in Darfur (Sudan Vision)
- US-Sudan dialogue facing difficulties – Fernandez (Al-Sahafa)
- SPLM to be assisted by British historian and sociologists for Abyei arbitration (Al-Sahafa)
- Illiteracy in Southern Sudan stands at 88% - UNICEF (Al-Wifaq)
- Malaysian police head for Darfur (Al-Ayyam)
- Political parties have no right to postpone elections – Atem Garang (Ray Al-Shaab)
- Prospective ministerial reshuffle (Ray Al-Shaab)

## Websites/International Headlines

- Human rights situation grim in Sudan - UN report (Reuters)
- Sudan presses Darfur offensive -- rebels (AFP)
- Sudan opens new camps for Chadian rebels – minister (Sudan Tribune)
- Tunisian diplomat appointed as deputy to Darfur peace mediator (UN News Centre)
- South Africa President arrives in Sudan for talks (ST)
- Sudan 2nd VP to address UN General Assembly (ST)

*NOTE: Reproduction here does not mean that the UNMIS PIO can vouch for the accuracy or veracity of the contents, nor does this report reflect the views of the United Nations Mission in Sudan. Furthermore, international copyright exists on some materials and this summary should not be disseminated beyond the intended list of recipients.*

Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN  
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

# Highlights

---

## Local Arabic and English Language Press

### *SRSG meets Umma party leader*

**Akhbar Al-Yom** reported that SRSG Ashraf Qazi said UNMIS views ICC as an issue outside its mandate adding that the political forces are required to work jointly to find a way out of Darfur crisis to end current suffering.

Qazi was speaking to journalists yesterday after meeting with the National Umma Party (NUP) chairman Sadiq Al Mahdi at the latter's residence in Omdurman.

The meeting discussed CPA implementation, Darfur and holding elections on schedule. Qazi said there was satisfaction with regard to CPA implementation. He cited the stability resulting from the two partners' to deal with the Abyei issue and their collaboration on several commissions. On Darfur, he said all the political forces should contribute towards the ongoing efforts, whether through internal or external initiatives.

However, responding to questions about the ICC, Qazi said this was not part of the UNMIS mandate.

For her part, NUP leader Mariam Al-Sadiq Al Mahdi said the meeting with Qazi tackled a range of issues including the situation in Darfur and how to address the crisis.

**Al-Intibaha** reported that Qazi said he and FVP Kiir discussed recent incidents in Rumbek when they met. He noted that Kiir and GoSS officials had deplored the incidents. Qazi commended SPLA JIU deployment. He described his meeting with Mahdi as useful and positive particularly with regard to the support to the GoNU to implement the CPA which is proceeding based on the two partners' understanding. Qazi also called for building a solid ground for elections.

**Ray Al-Shaab** stated that Qazi said UNMIS could assist in the demarcation of borders by providing computer programmes as well as submitting reports to the Presidency on situations on the ground. He said there was positive development on the Abyei issue despite some difficulties caused by rains.

**Akhir Lahza** stated that SRSG told journalists that his meeting with Mahdi came within the framework of consultations with leaders of the political forces. Al-Watan newspaper report said Qazi had stressed the need to hold elections on schedule in 2009 to ensure CPA implementation as well as the need for reenergizing the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile Protocols.

The SRSG statements to media persons after meeting with Mahdi received wide coverage in today's local dailies under various headings. It is covered by Akhbar Al Yom, Al-Sahafa, Al-Wifaq, Al-Sudani, Ray Al-Shaab, Al-Intibaha, Al-Watan, Khartoum Monitor, Al-Ahdath and Akhir Lahza under different headlines: SRSG and Mahdi discuss Darfur crisis, Qazi says ICC is not UNMIS's mandate; UN calls for elections on schedule; Ashraf Qazi and Mahdi discuss current issues; Umma Party calls for taking into consideration political forces' vision for resolving Darfur;

Qazi: there must be solid ground for elections; Mahdi and Qazi: elections on schedule ensure CPA implementation; NUP and UNMIS hold bilateral discussions over status quo; UN hopes elections on schedule and UN reiterates commitment for elections on schedule.

### ***UNAMID helicopter fired at in North Darfur***

**Al-Wifaq** quoted UNAMID as saying that its helicopter came under fire near the town of Shengil Tobai. UNAMIS press release said the helicopter was fired at while en route from Tawila to Shengil Tobai town in North Darfur State. It was carrying 12 passengers and four crew on board but landed safely.

One of the helicopter's fuel tanks was damaged but repaired and flown back to El Fasher.

### ***SAF: combing operations do not contradict GoNU endeavors for peace in Darfur***

Sudan News Agency (**SUNA**) carried a report stating that SAF spokesperson Brig. Mohamed Ahmed Al Aghbash yesterday reaffirmed that the combing operations carried out by the Armed Forces in Darfur States do not contradict government ongoing efforts for negotiations or for the implementation of all arrangements relative to the peace process.

He said that the Armed Forces have to secure passages and reach areas that serve as hideouts for the groups that carry out looting and armed robberies and who have become weak and were resorting to attacking trucks and convoys to obtain fuel.

In response to a question by SUNA about the areas of the operations, the Spokesman stressed that these operations cover North and South Darfur states. He pointed out that the Armed Forces' movements depend on the developments on the ground.

### ***America-Sudan dialogue facing difficulties – Fernandez***

**Al-Sahafa** stated that the US Charge d'Affaires Alberto Fernandez has ruled out that his country would send any envoy during the coming period and described US-Sudan dialogue as difficult and complex. However, he said, there was always possibility to resume the dialogue.

Speaking after meeting with Foreign Minister Deng Alor and Presidential Advisor Ghazi Salah Al Din yesterday Fernandez said, "Civilians continue being targeted and there are victims on the ground", US is concerned about that.

### ***SPLM seeks help of British historians and sociologists for Abyei arbitration***

**Al-Sahafa** carried a report stating that SPLM entered into contract with a British historian specialized in Sudanese issues besides a sociologist for assistance on Abyei arbitration.

NCP and SPLM arbitrators are yet to reach an agreement on the fifth arbitrator who will preside over Abyei court.

GoSS Presidency Affairs Minister Luka Biong said NCP and SPLM four arbitrators are currently meeting in The Hague to agree on the fifth arbitrator to lead the tribunal.

### ***Illiteracy in Southern Sudan stands at 88% - UNICEF***

**Al-Wifaq** quoted UNICEF as saying yesterday that illiteracy rate in southern Sudan rose to 88%.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Education announced that eradication of illiteracy and adult

education was the only way to achieve sustainable development in Sudan.

### ***Malaysian police head for Darfur***

**Al-Ayyam** reported that 16 Malaysian police headed for Darfur to join UNAMID. The head of the team, Captain Azmi Wahid said they would serve for one year as part of UNAMID in Darfur.

### ***Political parties have no right to postpone elections – Atem Garang***

**Ray Al-Shaab** quoted the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Atem Garang as saying that the elections commission, yet to be formed, would be the only body authorized to decide whether elections should be postponed or take place on schedule.

He said the National Assembly has not received the list of names of the commission's members and has not been officially informed by the Presidency that the commission is formed.

### ***Prospective ministerial reshuffle in NCP portfolios in GoNU***

**Ray Al-Shaab** reported that informed sources said that ministerial reshuffle would be announced during the coming days. Gen.

Bakri Hassan Saleh, present Presidency Affairs Minister will take over as Defence minister and Gen. Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussain, present Defence Minister will move to the Presidency Affairs Ministry. Gen. Abdul Rahman Sir Al-Khatim will be appointed Minister of Agriculture and Prof. Al Zubair Beshir Taha will go to Gezira as governor. Omer Sulaiman Adam will move to the Ministry of Animal Wealth and Salman Sulaiman Al Safi as governor of Southern Kordofan.

## **Websites/International News Coverage**

### ***Human rights situation grim in Sudan - UN report***

**(Reuters)** - Sudan's human rights situation is grim with killings of civilians by government and rebel forces and arbitrary arrests and torture for political reasons, a United Nations investigator said on Monday.

Sima Samar, in a report for the U.N. Human Rights Council, said breaches of humanitarian law were being committed not only in the long-troubled Darfur region in the west but also in other parts of the country, including the south.

"Despite some steps by the government of Sudan, principally in the area of law reform, the human rights situation on the ground remains grim, with many interlocutors even reporting an overall deterioration," she wrote.

Samar, a former deputy prime minister of Afghanistan, said Sudanese government forces had attacked civilians by land and air in Darfur and other serious incidents had occurred in fighting between Darfuri rebel groups.

Serious rights violations had also occurred when one insurgent group in Darfur attacked the city of Omdurman in May, and in fighting the same month between the Sudanese national armed forces and troops of the government of south Sudan.

Similar abuses had occurred in clashes between troops of the south, whose dominant Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) is part of a coalition government in Khartoum, and villagers in the Eastern Equatorial region, Samar said.

The SPLM joined a coalition national unity government with the north's dominant National Congress Party under a 2005 peace deal ending a long civil war, but relations between the two sides have remained strained. Samar's report, to be discussed in the 47-member Rights Council on Tuesday, said it was essential that impartial, transparent and comprehensive investigations be held into all allegations of rights abuses.

She said concerns were mounting over violations not only of general human rights but also of civil and political rights in different parts of the country as preparations for general elections get under way.

"There have been widespread allegations of arbitrary arrests and detention, torture, incommunicado detention and serious violations of the right to a fair trial" since the start of the year, she said.

Samar said one of her principal concerns about the situation in Sudan, for which she has been special investigator for the U.N. since 2005, was impunity, or the failure to punish people responsible for rights abuse.

### ***Sudan presses Darfur offensive -- rebels***

**(AFP)** - Darfur rebels said on Monday they are fighting back against attacking government troops for a fourth day, the latest in a series of battles in Sudan's war-torn western region.

Villages have been burnt and insurgents bombed by Antonov aircraft since fighting erupted on Friday southwest of El-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur state, rebels from the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) said.

A helicopter belonging to the joint UN-African Union mission in Darfur (UNAMID) was forced to land after being fired at on Sunday close to the area of reported fighting, UNAMID said.

"The fighting began again early this morning at Khazan Tungur, soon after dawn," said Abu Bakr Kadu, a commander from the SLA-Unity faction.

He said approximately 70 government vehicles packed with troops were involved.

"There are government troops and Antonov aeroplanes, and we are fighting," he said, speaking from close to Khazan Tungur.

The information could not be independently verified, but UNAMID said their reports suggested clashes were continuing. "There appears to be sporadic fighting," said UNAMID spokesman Kemal Saiki. "Due to the difficulties of access to this area, we cannot confirm this directly, but it's based on various sources, including reports of the movement of troops and aircraft."

A UNAMID helicopter carrying 16 staff was forced to land after being fired at on Sunday close to the area of reported fighting, damaging a fuel tank. The helicopter returned safely to base after emergency repairs, but it was the third time the force's aircraft have come under attack, a statement issued Monday said.

Peacekeepers are planning to deploy to the area but logistical and safety concerns are hampering their movement. "There is a severe limitation of resources on a massive scale, including a shortage of aircraft," added Saiki.

Barely a third of the UNAMID force has been deployed to Sudan, and the peacekeepers have repeatedly called for more helicopters.

Other rebels said government forces were helping militias loot villages and animals around the villages of Disa and Birmaza, some 140 kilometres (90 miles) northwest of El-Fasher. Heavy fighting was reported in the area last week, but the rebels now say militia forces are stripping settlements of valuables.

"People fled into hiding during the fighting, and now the militias are taking their cattle and camels, looting everything from their houses," said Ibrahim al-Hillo, a commander from the SLA faction led by Paris-based exile Abdel Wahid Mohammed Nur. "They are taking even the water pumps from the villages away, everything of value, and the government trucks are helping them," added Hillo, who said he was speaking from close to Birmaza.

Recent attacks have threatened to scupper a fragile alliance with the one rebel faction to have signed a peace deal with Khartoum, after claims that government soldiers attacked SLA troops loyal to leader Minni Minnawi on Saturday and Sunday.

However Minnawi, an ex-rebel turned presidential advisor after signing a 2006 peace agreement, said areas around his base now appeared calm. "It seems peaceful now," Minnawi told AFP by satellite telephone from near Tabit, south of El-Fasher. "There are no reports of new developments."

There was no immediate response from the military. However, a Sudanese army spokesman has repeatedly insisted that the only military action under way is against bandits responsible for a spate of attacks on aid convoys.

The Sudanese Media Centre, a news website close to the security services, quoted army spokesman Osman al-Aghbash as saying troops had moved to control Khazan Tungur, as well as Tabit. The army will "keep chasing outlaws and thieves wherever they exist in Darfur", the spokesman warned, according to a report posted on Sunday.

### ***Sudan opens new camps for Chadian rebels – minister***

(ST) — Chad accused Sudan of renewing its support to rebel groups, raising fears about Khartoum seriousness to implement steps reached last week in Asmara aiming at restoration of bilateral relations between the two countries.

A contact group tasked with the implementation of Dakar Agreement held its fifth meeting in Asmara and agreed the two countries should resume diplomatic relations. It also approved the deployment of more than one thousand troops to monitor the joint border.

Mahamat Hissene, the Chadian minister of communication and government spokesperson said his government has reports about new training camps opened by the Sudanese government for rebels opposed to President Idriss Deby.

In a statement to the pan-Arab daily, Asharq Alawsat, Hissene said these camps raise serious concerns over Sudan's commitment to implement the deal reached last week in Asmara. However, the minister expressed hopes that Sudanese government "works with us in good faith and we are ready to normalize relations." Hissene also disclosed that his government informed the member of the contact group, last week.

### ***South Africa president arrives in Sudan for talks***

(Sudan Tribune) – The South African President Thabo Mbeki arrived in Khartoum yesterday and immediately held talks with his Sudanese counterpart Omer Hassan Al-Bashir.

Sudan official news agency (SUNA) said that both sides discussed the Darfur crisis, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issue and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Mbeki is one of the first African leaders to criticize the ICC move to indict Al-Bashir despite his country's membership in the Hague based court.

The South African leader called on the UN Security Council (UNSC) to invoke Article 16 of the Rome Statute which allows the council to suspend the ICC prosecutions in any case for a period of 12 months that can be renewed indefinitely.

Libya and South Africa sought to force a suspension in the UNAMID resolution but failed to get the required number of votes and instead accepted a watered down paragraph taking note of the AU concern on the ICC move to seek an arrest warrant for Al-Bashir.

Sudan foreign minister told SUNA that South Africa as a leading country regionally can “play an active role” in supporting Sudan.

Mbeki is also scheduled to meet the First Vice president Salva Kiir Mayadrit to discuss the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with him.

### ***Tunisian diplomat appointed as deputy to Darfur peace mediator***

**(UN News Centre)** — U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and A.U. Chairperson Jean Ping have announced that Tunisia's Azouz Ennifar has been appointed Deputy Joint AU-UN Chief Mediator for Darfur.

Azouz Ennifar will assist the Joint AU-UN Chief Mediator, Djibril Yipènè Bassolé of Burkina Faso to end the five year conflict in western Sudan region of Darfur. He will be based in Al-Fasher and conducts his duties on full time basis.

The deputy served as the Secretary-General's Acting Special Representative and as the head of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) from July 2005 to July this year.

The Tunisian diplomat worked also in Kinshasa and Brazzaville as Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo with accreditation to the Republic of Congo in 2002 for three years.

### ***Sudan 2nd VP to address UN General Assembly***

**(Sudan Tribune)** – The 2nd Vice president Ali Osman Taha will lead Sudan's delegation to the UN general assembly meetings that start this week in New York.

Sudan's foreign minister Deng Alor was originally going to be heading the delegation. It was not clear what prompted the change.

However a source in Khartoum said that differences between Alor and the NCP over the contents of the address to the UN General Assembly brought about the last minute shuffle.

According to the source Alor wanted the statement at the UN to reflect the views of both the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM).

Alor has angered NCP officials when he said in an interview that the NCP must deal with the International Criminal Court (ICC) following its move to indict president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir.

But the NCP has dismissed any plans to deal with the ICC and accused Alor of deviating the government's consensus.

Alor defended his position saying that the SPLM must have a say in foreign affairs despite NCP dominance over the coalition government.

Sudan state media said that Taha will explain the dangers posed by the ICC move in light of the renewed peace efforts spearheaded by Qatar.

Last week the Guardian newspaper reported that France and Britain will support initiatives by Arab and African countries to suspend Al-Bashir's indictment during the UN sessions.

Libya and South Africa sought to force a suspension in the UNAMID extension resolution last July but failed to get the required number of votes and instead accepted a watered down paragraph taking note of the AU concern on the ICC move to seek an arrest warrant for Al-Bashir.

None of Sudan allies in the UNSC have tabled down a formal resolution nor has any council member signaled its intention to do so.

## Links

**Khartoum's patterns of violence in Darfur, 2008.** [Analysis]. By Eric Reeves. *Sudan Tribune*. 26/09/2008. (Noon).

<http://unhq-apps-01.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2008-09-15DNMU-7JHQEE>