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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

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Highlights

Local Arabic and English language press

Ashraf Qazi: CPA success model for Africa

Al-Meidan reports that SRSG Ashraf Qazi said success of CPA implementation might be a model for peace achievement all over Africa, citing the major successes made after three years from CPA conclusion. Qazi was speaking to Miraya FM about the International Day of Peace (The SRSG's Miraya interview).

Abyei Deputy Chief administrator says both parties to blame for delay

Sudan Vision reports that the Deputy Chairman of Abyei Administration, Rahama Abdulrahman Alnur, has denied NCP caused delays to setting up the Abyei administration stipulated by Abyei roadmap. Alnur said the fact that the chairman of the administration had been constantly on the move between Abyei and Juba, meant that there had been no chance to contact with the NCP.

The NCP and SPLM are jointly responsible for any delay, he said.

Akhbar Al Yom reports that the Presidency will receive today NCP and SPLM nominees for Abyei Area Legislative and Executive Councils.

Sudan Media Centre (**SMC**) reports that NCP leader, Al-Dirdiri Mohamed Ahmed, who handles Abyei Area dossier, has dismissed media reports that he has traveled to The Hague to join a Messeriya committee to settle Abyei issue outside the arbitration court.

AUPSC turns down Ocampo's request to attend meeting

Akhbar Al Yom carries a report stating that the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) yesterday rejected Ocampo's request to attend the Council's meetings in NY. Yesterday, VP Taha addressed the AUPSC and met with AU chair, Qatari Foreign Minister, AU Commission Chairman, UN-AU chief mediator Bassole and AUPSC Commissioner Ramadan Lamamre. He urged AUPSC to do the utmost to halt the ICC proceedings against President Bashir.

UNMIS Security guards filed criminal report against British Ambassador's body guards

Akhir Lahza reports that two UNMIS security guards recently injured by a British Embassy vehicle have filed a criminal claim against the British Ambassador's bodyguards involved in the incident.

Director of Protocol Ali Yousuf said he met the two UNMIS guards, listened to their complaint and received a copy of their report.

Rizakat & Missariya tribes reconciliation conference tomorrow

Sudan Media Centre (SMC) reports a reconciliation conference for the Misseriya and Rizeigat tribes will kick off tomorrow in Al-Obeid, northern Kordofan, under auspices of the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ahmed Ibrahim Al Tahir.

Minnawi says return depends on implementation of El Fasher's matrix

Al-Rai Al-Aam reported that Senior Presidential Assistant and Chairman of the Transitional Darfur Authority Minni Minnawi has said he could return to Khartoum within a month or less if implementation of the matrix concluded in El Fasher proceeds according to plan.

Tulus insurgents reach an accord with the Government

Al-Sahafa reports the authorities have reached an agreement with some 350 PDF fighters from Tulus, South Darfur, to integrate with the SAF.

Activity of IRC in Darfur suspended

Al-Sahafa reports that HAC in South Darfur has suspended IRC activity related to youth, women and children. HAC charges IRC fails to comply with Commission's technical agreements. It also seized more than 3500 condoms in the agency's stores.

Sudan's Muslim clerics say US report on religious freedoms "fabricated"

Akhir Lahzah reports that the Authority of Muslim Ulema in Sudan claims the US fabricated its recent report accusing the Government of Sudan of violating religious freedoms. Yesterday, the authority's secretary-general, Prof Muhammad Uthman Salih, challenged the USA to prove one case of religious freedoms violation in Sudan, adding that "those in glass houses should not throw stones." He urged the USA to silence the voices of discord that strove to incite the struggle between Muslims and Christians and warned of the consequences of what he called "the wrath of the Islamic nations" if the west persisted in attacking the Islamic faith.

Websites/International News Coverage

UN might consider deferring Bashir action: French official

NEW YORK, Sept 22, 2008 (**AFP**) - The UN Security Council could defer action by the ICC prosecutor against President Omar el-Bashir under certain conditions, a top French official said Monday.

Bashir must first "make some gestures of goodwill towards the ICC" by taking "steps" against two Sudanese leaders wanted by the court for their alleged role in massacres of civilians in Darfur province, a senior Elysee source said.

Bashir must also "cooperate more with the international community by really facilitating the deployment and mission of the hybrid UN-African Union" peacekeeping force for Darfur, the official said on condition of anonymity.

The Sudanese president must also back "a durable political agreement between the government and the various rebel factions" in Darfur, the official said.

Finally, Sudan must "stop interfering in the affairs of its neighbors, starting with Chad," the official told reporters.

"Only if all of these conditions were met, then, maybe, the UN Security Council could think about invoking Article 16 of the ICC," the official said, insisting "this is not a negotiation" but a "suggestion" to Beshir.

The African Union has said it will seek such a step this week at the UN General Assembly.

The issue was discussed on Monday in talks between French President Nicolas Sarkozy and

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

U.N. and African Union top officials review Darfur situations

(Sudan Tribune) September 22, 2008 (UNITED NATIONS) – The African Union and the United Nations reviewed in a joint meeting the political, humanitarian and security situations in the war torn of Darfur where they conduct joint efforts to end the five year conflict.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and AU Commission Chairperson Jean Ping, who jointly convened the gathering of senior officials from the two organizations, heard briefings on the latest developments on the ground in Darfur. However the meeting discussed mainly the deployment of the hybrid peacekeeping force.

Sunday's meeting, held at UN Headquarters, also focused on the recent decision of ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo – who is visiting New York this week for talks with international leaders – to seek an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir.

USG for Peacekeeping Operations Alain Le Roy and USG for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes discussed the deteriorating security situation and its impact on efforts to bring aid to those in need across Darfur, a region roughly the size of Spain on Sudan's western flank. Joint UN-AU Special Representative Rodolphe Adada noted that the situation has been relatively calm over the past few days, following the recent upsurge in violence, especially in North Darfur.

USG for Field Support Susana Malcorra told the meeting about the current challenges to the full deployment of UNAMID. The operation is slated to have about 26,000 troops and police officers when it reaches its peak, but currently has around only 10,000 uniformed personnel in the field.

The officials also reviewed Mr. Adada's activities, voiced the need for an early normalization of relations between Sudan and neighbouring Chad, and highlighted the importance of expediting the political process in Darfur.

In addition, they discussed the so-called Qatari initiative, which is aimed at furthering efforts to broker peace between rebels, the Government and the allied Janjaweed militiamen.

Taha urges African countries to act to suspend Bashir indictment

(Sudan Tribune) NEW YORK (22/9/08) — Sudanese Vice President called upon the AU and the Security Council today to take a strong stance for the suspension of the indictment of the Sudanese President by the ICC Prosecutor. In a meeting Monday evening on the sideline of the General Assembly meeting, Taha urged the regional body to strongly request the Security Council to defer the prosecution and the investigation by the ICC. "We hope that your meeting today comes out with strong and clear request to the Security Council to rectify the situation and overcome the request of the ICC Chief Prosecutor" Taha said today in New York.

"We also hope that the meeting of the General Assembly provides an opportunity for the Council to coordinate in this regard with all regional and international organizations that rejected the ICC prosecutor move, to work with it and the African countries members of the Security Council to achieve what is requested according to a clear mechanism and timeframe for action." Taha stressed.

Taha also urged the AU peace and Security Council to ensure the collaboration of "all the concerned parties" to bring rebels to the table of negotiations, saying government efforts to end

the crisis could not be successful without reaching a peaceful solution with them. He also spoke about Khartoum efforts to implement Abuja peace agreement particularly the deal reached with the former rebel leader who returned to Darfur to protest the ill implementation of the 2006 peace deal.

President “most responsible” official for Darfur war crimes - ICC prosecutor

(Sudan Tribune) September 22, 2008 (NEW YORK) — ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo today denied speculation that he requested secret arrest warrants issued for Sudanese officials other than President Al-Bashir in connection with Darfur war crimes.

Last week the ICC released a 113-page heavily redacted version of the application containing the request for an arrest warrant for Sudan president Al-Bashir. The documents showed that Sudan 2nd Vice president Ali Osman Taha played a key role in mobilizing the notorious Janjaweed militias during the Darfur conflict.

Ocampo told **Sudan Tribune** in an interview today that he did not press charges against any other Sudanese official in this July 14 application. “We have strong evidence showing how Al-Bashir was at the top of the chain of command controlling all the aspects of the state not just recruitment of Janjaweed militias. Al-Bashir had control over those who committed the attacks, the judicial bodies, international relations and the media” he said.

Asked why he did not pursue 2nd VP Ali Osman Taha, Ocampo said his investigation “focuses on those most responsible”. “I have no other people indicted nor do we have anyone else in the pipeline. The list of 51 created by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Darfur is not my list” the ICC prosecutor said.

He said his office had identified the rebel commanders responsible for the attack on peacekeepers last year in Haskanita that left 10 peacekeepers dead and 25 missing. Ocampo said that he will present his case against the implicated rebel figures within the next couple of months saying it is yet to be seen whether they will cooperate with the ICC as they pledged before by appearing voluntarily.

He further rejected accusations that his case against the rebels was to create an appearance of impartiality after all his investigations focused on the Sudanese government role in Darfur crimes.

“In terms of quantity there is no comparison. Twelve killed in Haskanita versus 2.5 million attacked in the camps. Of course attacking peacekeepers is affecting those displaced. Our message is that you cannot be allowed to target peacekeepers. We will investigate those who carry out these kinds of attacks”

The ICC prosecutor declined to say whether he had contacts with rebel groups saying that his upcoming application will reveal all the details.

Ocampo said his office is monitoring the developments related to the attack by Sudanese government soldiers and security officers on Kalma camp in South Darfur. Last week he requested information from Sudan and the Arab League and Sudan on the incident. The latter refused to furnish any information to the ICC.

“The Arab League said they are monitoring national proceedings in Sudan so we wanted to be sure that if they have information they share with us” Ocampo said. “The Kalma camp attack shows a different pattern than what we have seen before. It is a direct assault against civilians.

So we are trying to see whether this was an isolated incident or if it was planned” he added.

Ocampo said that depending on the information he receives the Kalma camp attack might be added to the case against Al-Bashir.

In reference to the ICC judges request for more information on his case against Al-Bashir scheduled for October 1st Ocampo said that “this is normal process by which judges start to review documents and in most instances they call more than one hearing asking questions” “This means that they started to review the case. It confirms to me that they [Pre-Trial Chamber I] were working on the Katanga case and now they are looking into the Al-Bashir case” he said.

The ICC prosecutor also reiterated that his case is not a maneuver to secure the surrender of the other two Darfur war crimes suspects and expressed surprise that some diplomats quoted him as saying that he offered a tradeoff between Al-Bashir on one side and Haroun and Kushayb on the other side.

“I never said anything like that. I have no idea where they got this from” he said smiling

“I said it in December very clearly. I tried to be predictable. I said Haroun is responsible but he was not acting alone. Someone is instructing and protecting him. Of course there are very few who have that kind of authority over him” Ocampo said.

The ICC prosecutor said that one diplomat approached him asking why he did not inform them in advance of his plans to indict Al-Bashir. “I told him that it was clear in my report where I was going. The diplomat said that he never believed that I will actually do it” Ocampo said.

“I have the evidence. The case is very clear. It is not coincident. There are direct attacks against people in the villages using the air force, removing civilians from their homes and giving it to other people. Then they put them in camps, not providing them with aid and even blocking assistance. Al-Bashir is the head of the country. This cannot happen without his consent. Al-Bashir made public remarks saying that he gave instructions to Haroun” he added.

The ICC prosecutor further said that Sudan has to challenge the ICC moves in court and not somewhere else. “To change the situation of Haroun and Kushayb, Sudan has to deal with the court. A law firm representing Haroun and Kushayb is possible but someone must engage with the court” he said.

Ocampo said that he met with the Qatari foreign minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jabr al-Thani in New York to brief on the work of his office and that he continues to engage with other diplomats and UN officials. “My specific job per the UN Security Council was to investigate the Darfur case. I brief those who handle the political aspects on how I am handling the judicial part. It is a challenge to stop crimes against 2.5 million people”.

Torit Interim Assembly closed indefinitely

(Sudan Tribune) The state authority that barred lawmakers from leaving Torit capital recently has closed Eastern Equatoria’s Interim Assembly indefinitely, according to a report from Nairobi on the Sudan Tribune website. Lawmakers reportedly were seeking to impeach Speaker Sabina Darios.

Darfur IDPs express concern over camps security

(Sudan Tribune) September 22, 2008 (ELFASHER) — Leaders from two Darfur IDP camps met with a senior official from UNAMID on Sunday to express concern at the deteriorating

security situation in their camps.

IDP representatives from Abu Shouk and El-Salam camps in North Darfur state asked Deputy Joint Special Representative Henry Anyidoho why it was taking so long to deploy UNAMID forces and police on a 24-hour basis. The forces are meant to check military activities and other security threats in the camps.

Anyido said that UNAMID is facing problems with logistics and deployment of troops and "Formed Police Units." The two IDP camps in question are close to El-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur.

"The Deputy Joint Special Representative reaffirmed UNAMID's commitment to working together with the IDPs towards a lasting peace in Darfur so that the IDPs can return to their original homes," said UNAMID.

Bandits take kidnapped tourists from Egypt to Sudan

CAIRO (AFP) - Masked bandits kidnapped a group of 19 foreign tourists and Egyptians at gunpoint as they were on a desert safari in a remote corner of southwestern Egypt and took them to Sudan, officials said Monday. "This is an act of banditry not of terrorism," the tourism ministry said in a statement, adding that those responsible have asked for an undisclosed sum of money as a ransom.

"Four masked gunmen attacked the four cars they were riding and led them towards Sudanese territory at gunpoint," the state MENA news agency quoted an unnamed official as saying.

"According to the information we have the hostages are in Sudanese territory but we don't know where," Tourism Minister Zuhair Garana told AFP. "The Egyptian government doesn't negotiate but the security services are trying to locate the hostages."

MENA said the group was on a safari in Karak Talh near Gilf el-Kabir, a rugged and largely uninhabited region near the border with Sudan. Cabinet spokesman Magdi Radi said the Egyptian authorities were "in contact with the Sudanese side to release the tourists."

The tourism ministry said those snatched included five Germans, five Italians and a Romanian, while MENA said two Egyptian guides, four drivers, a guard and the tour company owner were also abducted. Egyptian sources said the kidnappers had asked for between four and six million dollars in ransom, although it was not possible to confirm this.

A spokesman for Sudan's Northern State, told AFP that "until now we have no information about this" abduction.

Rebels from the Darfur region, some 300 kms south of the Egypt-Sudan border, were quick to deny involvement. "We have nothing to do with any kidnap," said Ahmed Hussein Adam, a London-based spokesman for JEM. "It is absolute nonsense and we condemn it in the strongest of terms." Mahgoub Hussein, also London-based, spokesman for the SLA, said none of his fighters was involved. "This is a bandit act. We are fighting against the government, not against tourists."

Sudan News Agency to set up offices in southern cities

(SUNA) Suna Director-General Awad Jadayn has announced an agreement with GoSS to open Suna offices in Juba, Wau and Malakal next October. According to Jadayn, the agreement was reached with the GoSS Information and Broadcasting Ministry days ago in Juba. The agreement

stipulated opening ten Suna offices in the southern states. The first three will open next month. The rest will follow next year.

Jadayn urged GoSS to issue licenses allocating lands for the Suna offices in the ten southern Sudan states, for which the GNU will provide finance for building and furnishing and equipping the offices. Suna would provide a special news service to southern Sudan in addition to its national and international services, he said.

Ugandan army ready to strike back following LRA attacks

(**New Vision**) (Ugandan daily paper) website (22/9/08) -- The Uganda People's Defence Forces are ready to strike back in case of any fresh incursion by LRA rebels army spokesman Maj Paddy Ankunda said yesterday. "Our forces are on the alert and we have the means to protect the Ugandan border," he said. "Should Kony and the LRA dare come near our border and threaten the security of our people, we shall attack them."

Commentaries

World leaders gather at UN

Laura Trevelyan, **BBC News**, United Nations -- More than 100 heads of state and government are gathering at the United Nations in New York ahead of the General Assembly's General Debate, which gets under way on Tuesday.

They are gathering against a backdrop of global financial turbulence and high tension between Russia and the West in the wake of the Georgian crisis. The talk in the corridors is of the new Cold War, and the political animosity between Russia and the US can be felt.

A test of Russia's relations with the West post Georgia will come when foreign ministers from six major powers meet on the sidelines of the General Debate to discuss Iran. Russia has previously supported UN Security Council sanctions against Iran for its failure to stop enriching uranium, not wanting to see its near neighbour with a nuclear bomb, but now Russia rejects US calls for additional sanctions against Iran. The White House has already signalled that President George W Bush will use his speech here on Tuesday to urge Russia to honour its commitments to fully withdraw its troops from Georgia.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon wants to focus this week on getting world leaders to agree on how to meet the Millennium Development Goals, the ambitious set of targets aimed at halving world poverty by 2015. The issue of Sudan's efforts to give President Bashir a get-out-of-jail-free card will permeate both the general debate and the ministerial consultations

However, with market mayhem and rising food prices, persuading politicians to focus on the plight of the world's poorest rather than their own domestic constituencies could be a tough sell.

An underlying theme of this week will be Sudan's attempts to stave off a possible prosecution of President Omar al-Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed in Darfur. The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno Ocampo, asked the judges for an arrest warrant for Sudan's president in July and the judges have not yet come back with a response.

The African Union wants the UN Security Council to use its power under article 16 of the Rome Treaty to suspend the investigation of President Bashir for a year, arguing that it is undermining

the search for peace in Darfur. Leaders from Africa and the Middle East are expected to use their speeches here to underline that call.

Behind the scenes South Africa and Libya are considering whether to put forward a draft Security Council resolution calling for an Article 16 deferral.

Links

U.S. Backed U.N. General Despite Evidence of Abuses. [News Story]. By Colum Lynch. *The Washington Post*. 21/09/2008. (Noon).
<http://unhq-apps-01.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2008-09-22DSIA-7JQMAP>

Deferral of ICC indictment is against justice in Darfur. [Commentary]. By Mahmoud A. Suleiman. *Sudan Tribune*. 21/09/2008. (Noon).
<http://unhq-apps-01.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2008-09-22DSIA-7JQPHA>