

**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN****UNMIS**Media Monitoring Report, 27 September 2007

(By Public Information Office)

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Highlights

UN/ Agencies

Arab body urges UN to secure release of Sudanese opponents

(*SudanTribune.com* – 26 Sept. KHARTOUM) Sudan is illegally holding 25 opposition figures without charge, the Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR) said, urging the United Nations to take action to secure their immediate release.

Two months ago, national security forces took at gunpoint from their homes Mubarak al-Fadil and Abdel Jalil al-Basha, leaders of the opposition Umma Party for Reform and Renewal; Ali Mahmoud Hassanein from the opposition Democratic Unionist Party; and other retired army, police and security officers.

The men were accused of plotting to overthrow the government, but none of the detainees has been charged.

"AOHR wishes to bring before the Council the current situation concerning the arbitrary arrest and continued unlawful detention of some 25 persons," the pan-Arab group said in a written intervention to the U.N. Council for Human Rights obtained by Reuters on Wednesday.

"AOHR strongly believes that this is a clear example of absence of due process in the face of persons who the regime considers as political opponents and against whom the regime uses the machinery of justice to realize its political objectives," it added.

AOHR urged the U.N. council to work to secure the immediate release of the detainees. Rights group Amnesty International has said that some of those arrested had been tortured, hung from their wrists and beaten. Khartoum denies any torture and said it would take legal action against Amnesty.

AOHR quotes Sudan's Criminal Procedure Act, saying a suspect can be detained for a maximum of two weeks for investigation after which they must be released or charged. It said a court rejected an appeal on those grounds by lawyers "without adequate reason".

UN faces serious lack of funding for Darfur humanitarian aid

(*SudanTribune.com* – 26 Sept. GENEVA) The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) called on donors on Tuesday to provide immediate funding for the agency, otherwise it might have to scale down its operations to assist internally displaced people and refugees in Darfur, Sudan.

"We are seriously concerned that the lack of funding will soon have a direct impact on our operation to protect and assist some of the more than 2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and thousands of Chadian refugees in Darfur," UNHCR spokesperson Jennifer Pagonis told reporters in Geneva. "We are already facing difficulties in paying staff salaries for next month," she said.

UNHCR said that its operation for the troubled Sudanese region is facing a shortfall of 7.1 million U.S. dollars in its 2007 budget of 19.7 million U.S. dollars.

The agency said its Darfur operation mainly focuses on protection and humanitarian aid to assist the IDPs. This includes promoting access for IDPs to legal redress; the provision of relief items to vulnerable people; strengthening basic services; and efforts to avoid further displacement. But all of these activities could be curtailed if the funding situation does not improve, it said.

UN urges Darfur rebels to abide by ceasefire

(SudanTribune.com – 26 Sept. KHARTOUM) The United Nations urged on Wednesday rebels in the western Sudanese region of Darfur to abide by a ceasefire as preparations were undergoing for the resumption of peace negotiations.

"Both the UN and the African Union have been saying that a cessation of hostilities is an utmost priority and a key requirement not only to help improve situation of the people on the ground and alleviate the suffering of the people of Darfur, but to ensure a viable environment for the talks," said Radhia Achouri, the spokesperson of the UN Mission in Sudan.

"You can not negotiate and continue to fight on the ground. All parties have to abide by a cessation of hostilities," the spokesperson added.

She reiterated that the issue of Darfur could only be resolved around a negotiation table and one of the basic requirements of the negotiations was for all sitting at opposing ends of the table not to carry on with fighting.

We're concerned over threats over fresh Darfur clashes says UN, food robbed, aid workers attacked in Darfur

(The Citizen) In north Darfur, armed men helped up a warehouse in Rwanda IDP camp in Tawila and looted close to 0.5 tones of World Food Programme food at gunpoint.

Elsewhere in south Darfur, two carjacking incidents targeting the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and UNICEF where reported in Nyala town and Kalma Camp 15 km east of Nyala.

And last Thursday, two-vehicle NGO convoy was shot and near Bulbl Timbisco (South Darfur) hitting two staff members in the head and injuring others.

The security situation remains unstable in Darfur, with continued armed banditry and vehicles hijacking incidents targeting aid workers, according to a United Nations status report.

The latest round of insecurity comes ahead of the Darfur talks planned for Libya.

"Threats of renewed clashes between government and rebel groups are of concern, particularly in south eastern areas of El Fasher, and Morni in west Darfur" according to the report.

GoNU (CPA, DPA, ESPA)

Government Pledges to set up supreme body to follow up UNAMIS and UNAMID

(AlSahafa) President Omer Bashir will decree next week the assignment of his Deputy Ali Osman Mohamed Taha to preside over a special body to follow up procedures pertinent to the peace keeping operations of UNMIS and UNAMID.

Reliable sources told *(AlSahafa)* that the structure of the new body was tabled before the President to take the final decision saying that an agreement was reached for its establishment to meet the requirements of the two missions.

The sources noted that the body was a political committee comprising Ministers of Defense, Interior, Humanitarian Affairs, Labor and Chief of Security Apparatus. The sources added that the goal of the body was to facilitate customs implications and security issues regarding the administration of the peace keeping operations indicating that the post of the body's deputy would be assumed by the Foreign Minister.

SAF rejects any foreign intervention in Sudanese territory

(AlSudani) SAF described the unanimously adopted resolution of the UN SC stipulating the deployment of EU forces in East Chad and North of Central Africa under Chapter IV of the UN Charter.

SAF Spokesman Dr. Osman AlAgbash told *AlSudani* that:—"we reject any elements inside the border without the government approval and we will react in the same direction", adding that the general trend, in accordance with Tripoli agreement, was the deployment of joint troops to monitor the situation on the ground.

In the same context, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ali AlSadig said that the deployment of EU troops in Chad and Central Africa would harm the sovereignty of both states, stressing that the mission of the EU troops differs from the troops approved to be deployed in accordance with Tripoli agreement

Miseria leaderships resolve to reach settlement with rebels

(AlSahafa) The Miseria tribe's leadership has vowed to persuade their armed group to sit for negotiation with the authorities of South Kordofan government to meet their demands within one week.

The leadership agreed with South Kordofan State Wali and his Deputy to sign a charter of honor, according which the government, would oppress the rebellion with the consent of all the Miseria tribesmen in case the failure of the armed group to lay down arms.

The meeting recommended, among others, the formation of a mechanism to convene the general congress of Miseria tribe in a bid to solve the area issues through discussing papers on popular defense forces, security situations and the area share of the oil revenues.

Sudan central bank plans to convert dollar reserves to Euro

(*SudanTribune.com* – 26 Sept. KHARTOUM) Sudan's central bank said that it plans to convert all dollar reserves into Euro and other currencies by year end.

Hussein Yahya Jangoul, head of financial markets at Sudan's central bank said that the decision was taken to circumvent both current and future sanctions imposed by the US. Another Sudanese official speaking to Reuters said that the reserves covered three months of imports.

Jangoul said the Bank of Sudan had issued recommendations to commercial banks, government departments and private businesses to move their transactions abroad and balances to currencies other than U.S. dollars.

Sudan's Central Bank has issued a similar decree in 1997 following US sanctions imposed by former US president Bill Clinton. However the implementation of the decision has failed.

The Washington Post quoting CIA officials earlier this year said that Khartoum established a committee to look into ways of making the economy less dependent on the US dollars. The committee concluded that the proposal is not feasible.

Last May the US slapped sanctions on 31 companies, including oil exporters, blocking them from US trade and financial dealings. Sudanese officials dismissed sanctions saying that it will have little impact on their economy. However several reports have indicated that the Sudanese economy is beginning to feel the effects of the US financial sanctions.

Sudan threatens delaying UN-AU force deployment in Darfur

(*SudanTribune.com* – 26 Sept. UNITED NATIONS) The deployment of the UN-AU force in Darfur would be delayed because of differences over nationalities of the troops, a senior Sudanese official said.

Sudan's UN Ambassador Abdelmahmood Abdelhaleem told the Inner City Press newspaper published in New York that the UN Department of Peacekeeping (DPK) has been rejecting offers of African troops.

Last Friday UN chief Ban Ki-moon opened a one-day ministerial in New York with the African Union (AU) to discuss a roadmap for ending the Darfur crisis. One of the items discussed was speeding the deployment of Un-AU hybrid force in Darfur.

However the UN & the AU were deadlocked over the nationalities of the troops that were offered. The AU and the Sudanese government rejected non-African forces saying that the continent has offered more than enough forces. But the UN contends that not all of the African forces offered meet the UN standards.

Ambassador Abdelhaleem said that UN peacekeeping chief Jean-Marie Guehenno has most recently rejected 3,000 Egyptian soldiers offered by Cairo last week. However he did not elaborate on the reasons behind Guehenno's decision.

US envoy in Sudan to discuss progress on Darfur resolution

(*SudanTribune.com* – 26 Sept. KHARTOUM) U.S. President George W. Bush's envoy to Sudan arrived in Khartoum on Wednesday for a 10 day visit, saying he wanted to review the progress made at resolving the 4½-year-old conflict in Darfur.

During his visit, Andrew Natsios also will meet with officials in southern Sudan and in the capital, Khartoum.

We «want to review the good progress that has been made in the peace process in Darfur,» Natsios said in a brief statement at the Khartoum airport. He said he will discuss the hybrid African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force that is to deploy in Darfur later this year and a peace conference next month in Libya between the Sudanese government and Darfur rebel factions.

Upon his arrival to Khartoum airport Wednesday evening the US diplomat said he would also discuss with the Sudanese officials the implementation of the the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in January 2005 with the former Sudan People's Liberation Movement.

GoSS

GoSS expects occurrence of obstacles in border demarcation

(*AlSahafa*) GoSS has decided to work out a temporarily map for the South Sudan region in accordance with scientific and historical facts documented by the British historian Douglas Johnson.

Close sources to GoSS said that many disputes might arise in the coming demarcation on some sectors bordering the North. The Cabinet of GoSS discussed on Wednesday the issue of borders demarcation between the North and the South in accordance of 1956 borders.

GoSS Affairs Minister Dr. Luca Biong said that GoSS President Silva Kiir had entrusted Johnson, one of Abyie experts, to file a scientific paper based on facts which were deeply-rooted in the Sudanese history to identify the South borders. He pointed out that the meeting focused on borders between South Darfur with West Bahr-ElGhazal, North Bahr-ElGhazal with Abyie, South Kordofan with Unity State Upper Nile with Blue and White Nile States.

Biong noted that the report, prepared by Johnson, could be considered as a basis for identifying the South-North borders and institutionalizing scientific vision that would assist in overcoming any obstacles confronting borders demarcation.

158, 576 refugees return to Southern Sudan

(*SudanTribune.com* – 26 Sept. JUBA) A total of 158,576 Sudanese refugees from Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Egypt have returned to southern Sudanese since the signing of Comprehensive peace agreement in January

2005 to September 22nd 2007, the UNHCR Mass Information Office Peter Butili has disclosed.

By September 22nd this year, repatriation of Sudanese refugees to southern Sudan and Blue Nile states has reached a cumulative total of 158,576 out of which 68,060 were organized and assisted self repatriation.

From January 1st to September 2007 returnees repatriation figures has reached 56,402 and out of which total of 37,575 organized returnees the 4,462 persons were assisted by UNHCR for self repatriation meanwhile a total of 14,365 returned spontaneously.

Briefing member of the press at UNHCR Juba office, today afternoon, Mr. Butili say this week has witness arrival of 206 returnees from Uganda to Eastern Equatoria state who were transported under organized voluntary repatriation.

Meanwhile those who were assisted under voluntary self repatriation programme were 40 returnees out of which 15 came from Ethiopia to Upper Nile state and 25 from Egypt to Central Equatoria, Khartoum, Southern Kordofan, Upper Nile, Warrab and Western Bahr el Ghazal states respectively.

This year UNHCR has targeted to repatriate 102,000 and so far it has repatriated 56,402 and hopefully by end of this year a total of 14,000 would have been repatriated to southern Sudan.

Responding to question on how many returnees reception stations are set by UNHCR, the senior UNHCR protection officer in Juba, Milagros Leynes said there are seven functional way stations for Sudanese's returnees in southern Sudan and would be increase as repatriation intensify.

We have to remind our self that the war in southern Sudan took more than 21 years and you cannot expect all the facilities to be there in two years times as infrastructures have been damaged. so repatriation is a process not an event which will happen overnight and you also need efforts of everybody including returnees.

The senior protection officer, Milagros Leynes says there is a need for additional food ration for returnee's families in southern Sudan as they are obliged to start from nothing because the 21 years of civil war has destroyed all infrastructure including basic livelihood facilities.

Meanwhile Kmalid Malim says the UNHCR has recently conducted survey on the status and knowledge about HIV/AIDS among the refugees and it revealed that returnees have adequate knowledge and protection about HIV/AIDS therefore there should be no any fears that returnees are carrier rather they should freely integrate in the society.

Regarding complaints that some southern Sudanese returnees have decided to return back to their country of asylum because they could not find any basic services nor get UNHCR support, Mr. Kenneth Conteh say returning to one country is entirely voluntary and those who have decided to return to their original home country automatically loses the protection of UNHCR. But as for some southern Sudanese

alleged to have return to Kakuma camp in Kenya, they might have not surrendered their ration cards nor fills a form indicating that they have willingly decided to return to Sudan so if they go back, they can still receive their normal ration in their previous camps.

Disarmament in Bor town lead to lost of property and torturing of civilians

(Juba Post) An estimated hundreds of the SPLA soldiers stormed the Jonglie state capital for Bor last Monday's morning disarm and confiscate the entire illegal and unlicensed military weapons in the possession of civilian following the clashes between the riot police and the civilians that cost one persons live.

Almost every house was checked including the shops and offices leaving no mattress in the houses unturned, but instead of doing it peacefully, some of them used the exercise for looting civilian's property and tortured any one who resist which was not the aim of disarmament.

Khartoum takes \$6.5 mln customs for aid goods in South Sudan

(SudanTribune.com – 26 Sept. JUBA) Sudan's northern government has taken \$6.51 million from the south's oil revenues, saying it was for custom exemptions granted to vital aid to rebuild the war-torn region, a southern official said.

The semi-autonomous southern government, created after a north-south 2005 peace deal, had granted customs exemptions for medicine, food, school supplies, emergency equipment and other materials needed for development and aid for the past two years.

"It doesn't make sense to impose custom duties on such imports as donor funded and for humanitarian services," Aggrey Tisa, acting undersecretary for the southern Finance Ministry, told Reuters on Wednesday.

He said the timing of the move — as flooding continues to affect hundreds of thousands of southerners — was bad. There was no immediate comment available from the government.

Khartoum gives the south oil revenues monthly and Tisa said the customs money was subtracted from July's payment. "They have subtracted a sum of \$6.51 million as being the value of such exempted imports," Tisa told Reuters, adding it was unclear how exactly the sum had been calculated.

Under the 2005 peace deal the national government in Khartoum is to control all of Sudan's international custom tax.

Sudan makes millions of dollars from customs, visas and other fees levied on the world's largest humanitarian operation in Darfur and a massive post-war development effort in south Sudan.

Tisa said Khartoum maintained the exemptions were a violation of the peace deal, which also granted the south 50 percent of revenues generated from southern oil fields. Tisa said his government wanted to reclaim the subtracted money and was in

dialogue with Khartoum officials on how to find a solution to the problem. He added his office had almost stopped issuing exemptions.

Under the deal the southern government should receive half the customs revenues generated in the south, but Tisa said they only received their first payment in July. "We have not received our 50 percent. (But) they have agreed to provide our share — a substantial figure," he said.

South Sudan alliance denies taking part in the new front

(*SudanTribune.com* – 26 Sept. KHARTOUM) Another political force, the South Sudan United Democratic Alliance (SSUDA), has denied taking part in the formation of a new political party announced in Khartoum last Sunday.

James Miak kur, SSUDA acting General Secretary, dismissed in a press statement the merger of the party in the new South Sudan Democratic Front. He accused what he described as the “group of six” of usurping the name of the alliance.

“SSUDA Executive Political Bureau (EPB) would like to inform the Sudanese public, the readers, particularly Southern Sudanese to know that SSUDA is not a part of the new political party formed by six individuals known as “group of six”.” He said.

The statement said that David de Chand and Peter Chuol Gatluak had been sacked from the SSUA leadership and had no authority to act in its name.

Yesterday, the office of South Sudan Democratic Forum in the USA denied taking part in the new party. The SSDF US said this new front aims" to undermine the Government of South Sudan.

In a press conference held in Khartoum on Sunday 23 September, it was announced the creation of South Sudan Democratic Front (SSDF). The leadership of the newly formed front said the South Sudan Defence Force (SSDF) and the South Sudan United Democratic Alliance (SSUDA), with some prominent figures have merged to answer hope and aspirations of the southerners and go ahead with peace and development.

Darfur

France denies granting Nur political asylum

(*AlRai AlAam*) France has denied offering SLM Leader Abdul Wahid Mohamed Nur, who is currently in Paris, the right of political refuge, pledging to exercise pressure on him to join Tripoli talks.

French Ambassador to Khartoum told Al-Rai AlAam that Nur has been to Paris on temporarily residence and was not granted the political asylum saying that France exerted intensive efforts to convince Nur to take part in the peace process, categorically dismissing France’s role in Nur’ stance from participating in the peace talks.

World Vision suspends its activities in south Darfur

(*AlSudani*) World Vision Organization suspended its operations in South Darfur following a carjacking and its driver two days ago by five gunmen in Nyala town. The Liaison Officer of the organization said the organization was forced to suspend its humanitarian works after the assault on the organization's property and personnel amounted to 20 attacks.

JEM contacts UN-AU Mediators to approve its negotiating delegation

(*AlWihda*) Intensive contacts are currently underway with the UN-AU mediators to approve the JEM's negotiating delegation to Tripoli talks.

JEM leading figure Gamali Hassan Galal said that JEM was committed to join the talks in line with the decision it had earlier taken, explaining the peace process was inevitable. He called on the rebel groups and the government to be equipped with "free will" during the talks, describing the movements' leadership as having personal interests.

Libya wants US Rice in Darfur peace talks

(*SudanTribune.com* – 26 Sept. NEW YORK) Libya has made clear it wants U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to attend an October meeting it will host on Darfur but she was noncommittal because of a heavy travel schedule, a U.S. official said on Wednesday.

U.S.-Libyan ties have warmed since Libya gave up weapons of mass destruction in 2003 but have been held back by the absence of final settlements resolving the 1986 bombing of a German disco and the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Libya, implicated in both incidents, agreed to pay the families of the Lockerbie victims \$10 million per victim but has not made the final payment. It has not paid compensation for U.S. victims of the La Belle disco bombing.

The U.S. official said Washington had not set any conditions but would like to see some progress on these issues ahead of a visit by Rice, who would be the highest-level U.S. visitor to the country since 1953. "They made very clear she'd be very welcome there," said the U.S. official of the late October meeting that Libya is hosting on the humanitarian crisis in Darfur in Western Sudan.

"She didn't react specifically to that because ... our schedule is sort of pressed," added the official, who asked not to be identified because he was not authorized to speak about the matter in public.

Rice is expected to travel heavily as she seeks to lay the ground work for a Middle East peace conference the United States plans to host later this year, making attendance at the Libya meeting in late October difficult.

Darfur peace talks face "tremendous challenge" - US

(*SudanTribune.com* – 26 Sept. KHARTOUM) Darfur peace talks will be a "tremendous challenge" requiring all sides to make compromises to settle the conflict in Sudan's remote west, the top U.S. diplomat in Sudan said on Wednesday.

Charge D'affaires Alberto Fernandez said U.S. envoy Andrew Natsios would begin his longest visit to Sudan this week with a trip to Darfur and also to push a separate north-south peace process where rising tensions are worrying Washington.

Talks are due to start in Libya on October 27 to end the violence Washington calls genocide. International experts estimate 200,000 people have died and 2.5 million driven from their homes since mostly non-Arabs took up arms in early 2003 accusing Khartoum of neglect.

Khartoum rejects the term and blames the West for exaggerating the fighting, putting the death toll at 9,000. Fernandez said to make the talks successful rebels had to unify and agree on a clear negotiating position and the government had to be flexible. "It's a tremendous challenge," he told Reuters. "If one is sincere about peace in Darfur then a lot of people have to compromise."

Since a May 2006 peace deal, signed by only one of three negotiating insurgent movements, the rebels have split into more than a dozen factions.

Fernandez said the U.N. and African Union mediators needed to go into the talks with "eyes wide open" and be aware of the shortcomings of last year's deal. "To have an agreement that is not inclusive risks a flawed and failed agreement," he said.

He said the United States was concerned by the slow progress in getting a joint U.N.-AU peacekeeping force on the ground, despite Khartoum's agreement to the 26,000-strong mission. "The mechanics of it, the implementation and the speed of implementation — those are all issues of concern," he said.

U.N. officials have said the AU has rejected non-African battalions for the force, preferring all African troops, a move the rebels have criticised. The force deployment has also been slowed by a lack of commitments from western countries for technical and logistical support units.

Fernandez said Natsios will also address the north-south peace deal signed in January 2005, which he said is at a turning point. "We are at a juncture where things could improve or they could further deteriorate," he said.

A military standoff in South Kordofan and raids by northern police on their southern junior coalition partners' offices in Khartoum prompted South Sudan President Salva Kiir to say a return to war was possible. Fernandez said an agreement on demarcating the borders of Abyei, a central, disputed oil-rich region, would build confidence between the two sides.

China calls for pressing non-signatories to join Tripoli talks

(Sudan Vision) China said it is striving to push forth the peace process in Darfur through the channels of the peacekeeping operation and political negotiations with the rebel factions, inviting the international community to play a more operative role for realizing a speedy resolution for the crisis. China's Ambassador to Khartoum, Li Chenguen, said at a press conference held yesterday in the Chinese Embassy in Khartoum that his country's efforts to solve the Darfur problem are embodied in the implementation of the peacekeeping operation.

He further attributed Darfur crisis to such factors as poverty and lack of developing, stressing that China's policies seek to establish peace all over the parts of the globe.

Chenguen further underscored that establishment of peace in Sudan will serve the common interests of the two countries, affirming that China is committed to the pledges it has previously made regarding development projects in southern Sudan, and that he will personally exert his utmost to promote Sudan-China relations.

China's Ambassador to Sudan revealed that his country has pledged to extend 30 million Yuans in humanitarian aid to Darfur, of which 250 tons are medical equipments and electric generators. He stated that a batch worth 60 million Yuans of that aid is presently on its way to Sudan, including 139 medical-equipment containers, prefabs for the construction of 120 schools and hospitals in Darfur as well as offices for encouraging voluntary return.