

**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN
UNMIS**Media Monitoring Report, 3 April 2007

(By Public Information Office)

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HIGHLIGHTS :

UN/ Agencies

Gunmen kill five African peacekeepers in Darfur

(*SudanTribune.com*) Unidentified gunmen killed five African Union peacekeepers in the Darfur region of western Sudan, the deadliest single attack against the force since late 2004, the AU said on Monday.

The five were guarding a water point near the Sudanese border with Chad when they came under fire on Sunday, an AU spokesman said. Four soldiers were killed in the shooting and the fifth died of his wounds on Monday morning.

Three gunmen were also killed, he said.

The chairman of the African Union Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, warned in a statement that continued violence raised the possibility "for a catastrophic and tragic breakdown of the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur" and that the peacekeeping operation in Darfur will be in serious jeopardy if the trend continues.

An AU spokesman said the attack had brought the biggest number of casualties for the force in one day since the operation started.

The attack on AU forces came a day after a helicopter carrying the AU deputy force commander came under fire.

The AU statement* noted that the attack that killed five AU troops was carried out in SLA-held territory while the shooting of the helicopter took place in a stronghold of a SLA faction led by Abdelwahid al-Nur [*click on the link for the full text of this story [Gunmen kill five African peacekeepers in Darfur](#)*].

On the other hand, Allintibaha quotes AMIS Spokesperson Nouredin el-Mezni as saying against the background of the recent attacks on AMIS that it has become important that a review take place of the AMIS mandate to allow the forces defend themselves and protect civilians. He said that the current mandate to monitor peacekeeping is not enough to stop hostilities. He said that AMIS will table proposals towards this end before the next meeting of the African Union Peace & Security Council after investigation is carried on the incident.

Presidential Advisor Majzoub el-Khalifa says the attack may have most likely been carried out by robbers. Speaking to *Allintibaha*, he said he does not think this will affect the AMIS presence in the region. He also said that this only highlight the need for cooperation between government and the African Union and the nee to expeite implementation of the Security Arrangements and integrating forces of the signatory Darfur factions into the SAF.

But a Spokesperson for SLM-MM blames the Janjaweed for the attack. Spokesperson AlTayeb Khamis told *AllIntibaha* that the attack occurred on areas under government control and where the activities of outlaw armed group have been reported. He called for a “Road-map” for AMIS activities in the region.

UNMIS has on its part issued a press release condemning the 1 April killing* of the 5 UNMIS peacekeepers and extending condolences to their families. The statement also condemned the 31 March attack by unidentified armed men on an AMIS helicopter and expressed deep concern over these attacks. UNMIS also stressed the urgent need to identify the culprits for the attacks on AMIS and to hold them accountable to the fullest extent of the law.

France has also joined UNMIS in condemning the attacks on AMIS. Denis Simone, Deputy Spokesperson for the French foreign ministry, conveyed his country’s concern over the situation on the ground in Darfur and stressed that such attacks and those on civilians is not acceptable. He called on the Sudan government to shade light on the circumstances that led to such attacks.

The deputy spokesperson also pointed out that such attacks against the AMIS peacekeepers is a violation of the ceasefire agreement and detrimental to ongoing efforts by the international community to improve the situation in Darfur.

11 million square meters of mines in Sudan

(Rai AlShaab) Jim Pansegrouw, Chief Technical Advisor for UN Mine Action, told a press briefing yesterday that Sudan has 25 states infested with landmines with South Kordofan, Eastern Equatoria, Kurmuk, and Tokar recording the highest numbers of landmines. He said 1,800 areas are targeted for de-mining and that the danger areas in Sudan cover about 11 million square meters.

He said that the landmines problem does not exist in Darfur but opinted out that two landmines did explode in Kutum and there are unexploded remnants of war that constitute a danger to children in Darfur. he pointed out that there are three active de-mining teams but security concerns constrain their trip to Darfur.

He said that thee are about 1,000 danger areas of which 500 have been de-mined with the assistance of the UK government.

Of casualties, he said that about 2,390 people are reported to have died of landmines.

He pointed out that UN Mine Action started operations in 2004 in the Nuba Mountains area.

He pointed out that the goal of the mine action program is to build local Sudanese capacities and train Sudanese on de-mining and that they agency will wind up in 18 months time after which it will be handed over to Sudanese.

WFP to cut southern Sudan food aid

(*SudanTribune.com*) The World Food Programme (WFP) of the United Nations will cut food aid for southern Sudan by 19 percent after an assessment indicated that the need has declined, a WFP official said on Monday.

"Last year we distributed some 133,000 tonnes and this year we plan on only 108,000 tonnes," said Justin Bagirishya, WFP head in South Sudan.

"We have seen a 4 per cent increase in food production in the south," said Bagirishya, who added that the opening of markets and trade roads and an increase in cultivated land had led to the adjustment in planned assistance.

"But the major change is not so much in terms of tonnage but a change in activity emphasis," said Bagirishya. Generalised food distribution would drop by almost 40 percent, he added.

Some of the food will be used instead to feed up to 450,000 children in school feeding programmes. Thousands of returnees to the south and demobilised soldiers will each receive a three-month food supply.

The WFP had also prepared a contingency stock in case of discrepancies in their projections, given South Sudan's volatile circumstance, Bagirishya said.

While in the past food was given for free, Bagirishya said the WFP was planning new approaches such as a "food for recovery" plan in which community members would be given food in return for fencing farmland, maintaining a clean village or agreeing to farm a certain area of land.

The Transition Debate

Time not right for tougher sanctions against Sudan - UN's Ban

(*SudanTribune.com*) UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged the United States and Britain on Monday to hold off on a push for tougher sanctions against Sudan, saying he needed more time to persuade the country to accept the deployment of U.N. peacekeepers in Darfur.

Ban said he hoped to send U.N. experts to Ethiopia's capital next week to follow up on an agreement he reached last week with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir to work out U.N. support for a beleaguered African Union peacekeeping force.

Ban said he felt the U.N. was making progress with the Sudanese government, citing an agreement reached last week to ease humanitarian access to Darfur's refugees.

He said he and AU chief executive Alpha Oumar Konare would meet at the United Nations on April 16-17 for an "extensive, in-depth consultation" on how to move forward in Darfur, based on the recommendations from the experts' meeting in Ethiopia [*click on the link for the full*

text Time not right for tougher sanctions against Sudan - UN's Ban; Bush rejects Sudan sanctions draft, requesting "something stronger"].

UN USG for Humanitarian Affairs has criticised calls by the UK government for a flight ban over Darfur saying it would obstruct relief operations, reports *AllIntibaha*.

The paper says that John Holmes told French radio that the situation in Darfur is improving albeit not at the speed required. He cited the joint agreement signed between the UN and the Sudan government to facilitate humanitarian operations and access to IDPs. The UN humanitarian chief pointed out however that obstacles to humanitarian operations include the activities of non-signatory armed groups and tribal conflicts. He said that the armed militias have also started recruiting refugees from within the camps.

GoNU

President addresses parliament

(Sudan Vision, Akhbar Alyaum) In his address before parliament yesterday, President Bashir summed up government's vision on a solution to the Darfur crisis into five points.

These are that any solution has to be on the basis of a comprehensive political solution to the problem based on the Darfur Peace Agreement and that the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue be a complimentary element to such a process. He also said that the view is that the African Union continue to be in the lead in the security side of things and continue to sponsor the political process in cooperation with the UN and the other regional and international actors. The participation of the international community and the UN in this process should be in the context of the support package agreed upon with former Secretary-General Kofi Annan and over which dialogue is still ongoing. He also highlighted the need to realise justice and accountability for transgressors through the state judicial organs and that the Darfur problem be resolved on the basis of national responsibility.

An MP on an SPLM ticket pointed told the press however that the President's speech was a repeat of the mistakes of the GoNU in terms of depending on the AMIS for solutions to the Darfur crisis despite the fact that the African Union has announced its inability. He also points out that the government continues to see the Darfur Peace Agreement as the basis for a solution while the agreement itself is not effective.

Akhbar Alyaum issues a full transcript of the President's address.

Sudan to probe recent clash between police, former Darfur rebels

(SudanTribune.com) In a presidential decree carried by the official media, President Bashir on Monday named Supreme Court Magistrate Haider Ahmed as chairman of an investigation committee into a recent clash between police and a former Darfur rebel faction that left 11 people dead and more than 15 others injured.

A faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement has blamed the government police for the shootout that erupted in Omdurman, located across the Nile River from the capital of Khartoum, on March 24. Two policemen and nine SLM members, including a woman, were killed in the clashes.

Southern Sudan/ GoSS/SPLM

About 1,000 die of small pox and meningitis in Warrap

(Akhbar Alyaum) About 1,000 people, most of them children, have died in Warrap State of small pox and meningitis infection.

Mjr. Gen. Faustino Atim, an MP on SPLM ticket, called on the Ministry of Health to urgently send vaccines to the region.

SPLM launches organisational restructuring in Western Equatoria

(Khartoum Monitor) SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amoum inaugurated yesterday a push for an organisational restructuring of the movement in Yambio, W. Equatoria State

Addressing the ceremony that was also attended by Governor Samuel Abu-John, Amum said that the campaign was necessary in order to tackle the challenges ahead.

Foreign traders beaten, robbed in southern Sudan

(AllIntibaha) A number of foreign traders have reportedly been harassed by SPLA elements in southern Sudan. Some have reported that they have been robbed of property and beaten by the SPLA at Sudan's borders with Uganda and have called on the GoSS to help stop these practices.

SPLA Spokesman Koul Deim admits there are some such cases of SPLA harassment of traders and has promised an investigation into the issue.

GoSS prohibits dawn call for prayers

(AllIntibaha) AllIntibaha is in possession of a document issued by the Governor of lakes State with the signature of a Mr. Wang Bol Riek appended as having ordered Muslims in Rumbek not to use loudspeakers for the dawn call for prayers.

This has raised the ire of the local Muslim community that has on its part sent a memorandum to the governor calling for respect of belief.

Darfur/ Darfur Peace Agreement

Sudanese president appoints members to Darfur authority

(SudanTribune.com) Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir today has appointed in accordance with the Darfur Peace Agreement the Interim Regional Authority for Darfur under the chairmanship of Minni Minawi, the Senior Presidential aide.

The presidential decree also named the governors of the three Darfur states as alternate chairmen, the official SUNA reported. The governor are : Mohamed Yousuf Kibir (NCP) of North Darfur State Osman, Abulgassim Imam (SLM) of West Darfur and Al-Haj Atta Al-Mannan (NCP) of South Darfur State.

The decree also named the Chairman of Darfur Rehabilitation and Development Fund, Ibrahim Musa Madibo (fSLM), Chairman of Darfur Land Commission Adam Abdelrahman Ahmed (NCP) and Chairman of the Security Arrangements Implementation Commission Gen. Mohamed Ahmed Mustafa Al-Dabi (NCP) as members of the authority.

The decree also named as members of the authority the Chairman of the Compensations Commission, Chairman of Darfur Peace and Reconciliation Council and a number of persons agreed upon by all parties.

SLM-MM buries its dead

(AlIntibaha) SLM-MM buried yesterday eight of its soldiers killed during a recent clash with police in Omdurman but has expressed disappointment that its 43 members arrested by authorities following the clashes are yet to be released.

SLM spokesperson AlTayeb Khamis pointed out that they were promised the release of the 43 at noon yesterday but were still waiting.

It is worth noting that the SLM had pointed out it will only bury its dead once the prisoners are released.

CORRECTION:

Headlines sent earlier to some recipients read, "Museveni, Minnawi discuss Darfur crisis" and quotes AIRai AlAam as the source. The headlines should read, "Museveni, Affewerki discuss Darfur crisis". It is sourced from the same paper and the story is about a meeting in Massawa, Eritrea between the two leaders.