

4 January 2009

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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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<http://unhq-apps-01.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2009-01-02ASPN-7MWN86>

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Highlights

Local Arabic and English Language Press

MFA denies Saudi paper's report of Bashir emergency measures

MFA spokesperson Ali A-Sadiq has dismissed as "incorrect speculation" a report in the Saudi-based newspaper ***Al-Watan*** that President Bashir stands ready to introduce emergency in the event of an ICC indictment. According to the paper, possible measures include a reshuffled cabinet, plus restrictions on the movement of international NGOs, UNAMID and the diplomatic community.

The ***Al-Watan*** report quoted a Sudanese diplomatic source as saying President Bashir is in process of declaring state of emergency in anticipation of a possible ICC indictment.

Al-Rai Al-Aam (3 January 2009) reported that the MFA spokesperson dismissed the claim as incorrect on Friday. These reports are incorrect, they are mere speculations," he said.

Meanwhile, security authorities are preparing a plan to prevent insecurity and chaos in major cities and to protect civilian lives and property. An informed source told the paper yesterday that the security authorities would meet this week for a briefing on the security plan by other states in preparation for any eventuality. The source said Khartoum would be the focus of the security plan.

Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie reiterated Sudan rejection of the ICC indictment "We will resist any attempt to subdue us," he told the ***Kuwaiti-based Al-Siyasi*** newspaper. He said NCP would hand over power only to an elected government. "We do not know what the US wants from us but we will not meet their demands. If they want our oil then they should come and compete with others" he said.

According to ***Al-Intibaha***, the Sudanese Islamic Movement held an emergency meeting yesterday, attended by President Bashir and the Secretary General of the Movement Ali Osman Taha. Sources said the meeting discussed the ICC, upcoming elections and NCP-SPLM pending issues as well as the situation in the Gaza and Somalia. Attendees reiterated support for President Bashir's leadership. ***Al-Akhbar*** reports that the NCP Shura (consultation) Council is scheduled to meet on 21 January to discuss the ICC and other issues.

NCP official Ibrahim Ghandour told ***Al-Wifaq*** that all indications were that the pre-trial judges would agree to ICC Prosecutor Ocampo's application because of the pressure being put on them by countries hostile to the Sudan. Informed sources say NCP and SPLM differed over a proposal for Bashir's resignation should the ICC indict him. According to one source, a member of the committee set up to address the ICC crisis proposed that the SPLM should request NCP that Bashir step down if he is indicted by the ICC with the proviso he would never be handed over. However, NCP committee members vehemently rejected the proposal saying it could lead to serious consequences. They demanded that such a proposal should not be raised again.

According to ***Al-Ayyam***, the Turabi-led Popular Congress Party has claimed that an ICC indictment against President Bashir could lead to the country's collapse. PCP official Kamal Omer stressed the need for a positive stance by the Sudanese people so that the country could avert a possible collapse.

NCP relations with US are bad – Deputy Speaker

Al-Khartoum reports SPLM as saying that it will be unable to improve Sudan-US relations if tension between the NCP and the US Administration persists. National Assembly Deputy Speaker Atem Garang said any political or economic sanctions imposed by the US would negatively affect the country. “NCP relations with US are bad. SPLM cannot improve the relations alone. NCP should also engage in political and diplomatic efforts,” he said. Atem denied that SPLM is taking advantage of its good relations with the US to pressure the NCP.

Abyei Chief Administrator and Deputy in Khartoum

Al-Khartoum reports an Abyei delegation headed by the Chief Administrator and his Deputy is to hold budgetary consultations with the government in Khartoum. A source told the paper that the State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs requested the attendance of the Chief and his Deputy for clarification on some budget points.

Meanwhile, Abyei SPLM chairman Chol Shangat said a delegation from the Abyei Legislative Council, Misseriya and Dinka native administrators and UNMIS will start a 5-day tour in the areas north of the Abyei (Roadmap) tomorrow. The aim is to familiarize nomads with the Abyei Roadmap and the Document of Principles signed by the Dinka and Messeriya last December on migration routes issues.

Addis to host tripartite meeting mid January

Al-Intibaha reports the Tripartite Mechanism between Sudan, UN and AU is to meet in Addis Ababa on 14 and 15 January to discuss progress of implementing the commitments agreed upon in Khartoum in November 2007. MFA Director of Peace Ambassador Al-Tayeb Ali Ahmed said there was a tangible progress in coordination and cooperation between Sudan Government and UNAMID as well as the level of Sudan’s commitment toward the Mission.

200 JEM elements surrender in El Fasher

Local dailies reports 200 JEM fighters surrendered yesterday to authorities of north Darfur State. The group is headed by Ibrahim Abbaker Adam, Ibrahim Mohamed Khalil, and Ismail Adam Ahmed Khatir. North Darfur State Governor Osman Mohamed Yousuf Kibir said an agreement with the group would be signed within 24 hours.

Websites/International News Coverage

President urges parties to get ready for elections

In his Independence Day address, President Al-Bashir urged political parties to prepare for the upcoming general elections, promising that they would be conducted in a “fair” manner. Addressing the Independence Day military parade, Al-Bashir called on the Electoral Commission to expedite an election timetable.

“We call on all political powers to get ready for next phase -- the phase of going back to the people, renewing the mandate to rule the country through fair and free elections.” The President stressed his commitment “to double efforts to create all the necessary requirements for that and clearing all difficulties that come in the way.”

Diplomats who attended the parade told **Reuters** they saw several missiles and Iranian multi-barreled rocket launchers. Four jet planes that flew over the crowd were identified by the official announcer as Sukhoi Su-25s which were added to the air force in 2008. Diplomats said the Su-

25, also known as the "Frogfoot", was first developed in Russia.

Ugandan rebels, DR Congo army clash near Sudan border

KINSHASA (**AFP**) – LRA rebels have clashed with government forces in a national park in the northeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo, local officials said Saturday.

"About 50 LRA rebels attacked Magero, home of the chief station of the Garamba park wardens, Friday evening," Joseph Bangakya, deputy governor of the northeastern province of Orientale, told **AFP** by phone. "They wanted fresh supplies but they did not know that elements of the FARDC (regular Congolese army) were there," he said. "Fighting went on for almost three hours and the FARDC succeeded in repelling the militias who retreated into the jungle." He said he had no details of casualties but no civilians had been hurt as far as he knew.

The LRA rebels have retreated to the north of the Garamba Park on the Sudanese border, the local authorities say.

LRA forces have been seen in the Ango region, on the CAR border, Bangakya said. CAR government in Bangui has said it had received no alert as to the presence of the rebels.

Four die following suspected LRA attack in southern state

Nairobi-based, Sudan Radio Service, 2/1/09 -- Four people were killed by suspected LRA rebels at Mburoko Payam in Maridi County in Western Equatoria State. A witness told Sudan Radio Service by telephone from Maridi hospital that two young girls, an elderly woman and an old man were among those killed. Residents of Mburoko, he said, had fled the area for fear of another attack by LRA rebels.

Qatar postpones Afro Arab meeting on Darfur

Sudan Tribune website, 3/1/09, Cairo -- Qatar has postponed a ministerial meeting scheduled to take place tomorrow in Doha to discuss African and Arab efforts to solve Darfur conflict, the Arab League said. The six-member committee, co-chaired by Qatari Prime Minister, Hamad bin Jasim, AU Commission Chairperson, Jean Ping and Arab League Secretary General Amr Musa was to have met to help arrange peace negotiations between the Sudanese government and the rebel movements. However, the Qatari government has asked the Arab League to delay the meeting of the FM Committee to 12 January because Prime Minister Jamis (also the Foreign Minister) is traveling to New York with other Arab counterparts to seek a ceasefire between Israel and Gaza.

The Arab-Afro panel will tackle the current situation and adopt a plan of action for the next period in order to bring all the concerned parties together to negotiate a lasting and comprehensive solution for the conflict.

FVP Kiir travels to Washington to meet US officials

(**Sudan Tribune website**) January 3, 2009 (KHARTOUM) – FVP Kiir, who also serves as the president of semi-autonomous Southern Sudan and the chairman of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, will arrive in Washington, USA today.

A delegation of up to 27 ministers, governors and officials is accompanying him, mostly SPLM members but also including two or three National Congress Party members.

President Kiir and President George W. Bush will meet on Monday morning to discuss Darfur, the International Criminal Court, and implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

It is their third time meeting.

The Southern Sudan president will also meet with UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, who is traveling to Washington, as well as aides of U.S. President-elect Barack Obama.

The First Vice President met with Sudanese President Omer al-Bashir on Friday to discuss the issues that he intends to raise in Washington. Al-Bashir, who is indicted by the ICC prosecutor on ten counts of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity, wanted to discuss Kiir's agenda, like CPA implementation, the Darfur crisis and the criminal charges.

Bush's successor, former Senator Obama of Illinois, has voiced harsh criticism of Al-Bashir and his aides threatened military action against the regime over the Darfur conflict, which at present has displaced 2.7 million people, according to the United Nations.

Sudan earmarks \$123 million in medical supplies for Gaza

(***Sudan Tribune website***) January 1, 2008 (KHARTOUM) — Sudan's Doctors Union, a pro-government syndicate, will send a relief convoy to embattled Gaza at the cost of 270 million Sudanese pounds (US\$123 million), **SUNA** reported.

Sudan announced after the hostilities escalated that it would send an aircraft of relief supplies to the Gaza Strip via Egypt and also claimed to have started extensive campaigns to donate blood for the Palestinian people.

The medical convoy, containing emergency and life-saving medicines and including a number of Sudanese surgeons, anesthesia specialists and medical assistants left the premises of Sudan Doctor's Union Thursday on its way to Gaza.

Addressing the departing medical convey, Dean of Sudanese Doctors Abdul Aziem Kablo said the union will be in continuous session in order to prepare for successive medical conveys in support of the people of Palestine in Gaza. He called on the members of the union to send urgent contributions and support to the central chamber at the premises of the Union.

He explained that other medical conveys will be sent to Gaza in the coming days, adding that the current convey comes at the initiative of the Sudan Doctors Union in collaboration with the Arab Doctors Union.

Commentary

Darfur enmeshed within Sudan's broadening national crisis. <http://unhq-apps-01.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2009-01-02ASPN-7MWN86>