



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit
Communications & Public Information Office

MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

THURSDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2013

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Highlights

Oil Ministers of Sudan and South Sudan emphasize enhancing economic relations

AllAfrica.com, 24/10/2013 – During the visit of President Al-Bashir to Juba on Tuesday, a meeting of the Joint Committee of the Ministries of Oil was also held in Juba. The Ministers of Oil for the Sudan and for South Sudan agreed that oil was one of the bases for development, stability and security between the two states and stressed the necessity for strengthening economic relations between their two countries.

Sudan's Minister of Oil, Dr. Awad Ahmed Al-Jaz, said in a press statement that the Joint Committee had directed the Undersecretaries of the Ministries of Oil in the two countries to work out a work program in accordance with the agreement signed between the two sides. He said President Al-Bashir's visit gave positive indications to advance the economies of both countries. He said enhancement of relations was for their mutual interest.

Dr. Al-Jaz, who said Sudan can buy South Sudan oil and Juba can take advantage of Sudan's refining capabilities, stressed the importance of opening border crossings for movement of oil. He also suggested South Sudan needs to upgrade its oil output, noting that Sudan was the closest and least expensive place for refining and exporting South Sudan's oil.

The Oil Minister of South Sudan State, Stephen Deo Dow, described the outcome of the meeting as positive, fruitful and constructive, pointing out that there are no major problems in the field of oil flow. He said the joint meetings were aimed to achieve cooperation, of strengthening ties between the two ministries and at ensuring a continuous flow of oil through the Sudanese refineries. ([Back To Top](#))

Sudan, S. Sudan Relations Reach Integration Stage: Official

Sudanvisiondaily.com Khartoum, 23/10/2013 – The Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Sudan-South Sudan agreement exempting diplomats in both countries from obtainment of entry visa to either country was an important step to boost relations between them.

The ministry’s official in charge of South Sudan affairs told *Sudan Vision* that this step was indispensable at this time, and that crossings borders would be open for traffic of people and goods on 15th of next month after identification of the zero line. “That done, it would facilitate the movement of officials in both countries to wrap up pending protocols and implement the cooperation agreement,” he added.

The foreign affairs ministry official statements came in the aftermath of the successful Juba summit between Al Bashir and Salva Kiir held last Tuesday, at which the two leaders transcended several outstanding issues, demonstrating keenness to establish brotherly relations in the interest of both nations.

In a related development, Vice President Dr. Al-Haj Adam yesterday chaired a meeting by the in-between relations committee to review the progress of branch committees in charge of the

implementation of the cooperation agreement. In this connection, Sudan's minister of federal governance Hassabo Abdulrahman said the committees were advised to accomplish their jobs along the lines of the recent Juba summit communiqué. The minister further added that stress was put on the role of civil society organizations involvement in boosting bilateral relations.

He further disclosed that the federal governance ministry, in collaboration with the ministries concerned, would organize a Border States conference on December 15, this year, adding, the committee has stressed on the summit decision to complete the Abyei administrative and civil institutions.

In a relevant context, the national investment authority has hailed the outcome of the Juba summit, expressing their preparedness to hold joint economic forums with South Sudan.

The authority's secretary-general was quoted by **SUNA** as disclosing that they were in the process of establishing free trade zones at Border States to facilitate the flow of goods and investments between the two countries. ([Back To Top](#))

Activist lauds Bashir, Kiir summit

Gurtong.net Juba, 23/10/2013 – A South Sudanese civil society activist has lauded the Tuesday summit of the Sudanese President, Omar Hassan Al Bashir and his counterpart, South Sudanese President, Salva Kiir in Juba.

Though skeptical, Lorna Elia, the Executive Director for the Voice for Change (VFC), a South Sudanese civil society activist, described the summit as “positive move” towards strengthening relations of the two countries though “needs to be nurtured.”

“It is a very good move and a very good gesture. But the problem with us is that, the two leaders had not been consistent in maintaining some of these agreements,” she told Gurtong in an exclusive interview.

The two agreed on a number of issues including establishing Abyei Administration and police. They also agreed on opening of their closed-borders in an effort to boost trade.

“Personally, I was able to be moved that they reached these important points but whether it will be implemented or not, it is another question, because it is one thing to agree on an issue and it is also another to implement,” said Elia. ([Back To Top](#))

Abyei community determined to conduct unilateral referendum on 31 October

Sudantribune.com Juba, 23/10/2013 – Leaders from the contested oil region of Abyei say they are determined to hold a unilateral vote to decide whether the region should remain in Sudan or join South Sudan by 31 October.

The Africa Union suggested earlier this year that the vote - originally scheduled for January 2011 - go ahead this month but Sudan and South Sudan have been unable to resolve their outstanding issues on the plebiscite.

If the vote were to go ahead with only those resident in the area, the Dinka Ngok peoples would be expected to vote to join South Sudan, which itself seceded from Sudan in July 2011 as part of a 2005 peace deal.

The result of the unilateral referendum planned by the Dinka Ngok would be declared in one week's time on 31 October, Abyei community leaders said on Wednesday.

Khartoum has warned against any such action as had the African Union, while Juba has distanced the central South Sudanese government from the unilateral move for fear of jeopardising the recent defrosting of relations which allows the young nation to export its oil through north Sudan.

The Dinka Ngok accuses the African Union, United Nations and the rest of the international community of turning a blind eye to their concerns.

Deng Kuol, a senior member of South Sudan's ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), who comes from the area, told Sudan Tribune on Wednesday that "the people of

Abyei have the right like anybody in this world to decide our own destiny. It is up to us to decide where we would like to go, whether we want to go east, west, north or south."

"The international community should indeed come out now and makes a clear position to stand with our people instead of standing with the devil", he said, apparently in reference to the Khartoum government, which has insisted at the Misseriya tribe be allowed to participate in the vote.

Some members of the Misseriya enter Abyei for parts of the year to graze their cattle.

Kuol said the voter registration processes has already begun and people in the area are being issued with identification cards as well as information about places in which they can vote.

"Our people have drawn clear red lines that can only be crossed if the referendum is conducted. They have set dates for every activity and we are not shaken by messages about this referendum, instead these messages have strengthened the moral and unity of our people. The 31st October will certainly be the day on which the future of this area will be clear", said Kuol.

"President Salva Kiir himself has said it time and again that he will never reach an understanding with Bashir on the issue of Abyei, even if they were to be allowed to continue discussions for hundred years".

Kiir emphasised this in a letter to the African Union Commission earlier this month.

Kuol asked why "time and resources" should be wasted when the "demand of our people has been very clear. They want the referendum to be conducted so that we decide our fate. This is what we have been asking over the years."

Two years and nine months since the original vote was supposed to take place, Kuol, said the Dinka Ngok reached the conclusion that "nobody is listening to us anymore and so we are deciding to determine our own destiny by vote, which we have already started the processes for which the results will be made known at the end of this month. What this means to some people is not our business".

Missed Opportunity

Luka Biong Deng another senior SPLM member from Abyei said October "was not a creation of the people of Abyei" but that it was the work of the African Union's High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) led by Thabo Mbeki.

"The people of Abyei have waited long enough and I do not think the international community will a reason to stop from the determining their fate", said Deng.

Deng, the former Co-Chair of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) said the situation was aggravated by the killing of the Dinka Ngok's paramount chief in May.

He also blamed the continuous failure to agree on the terms of the referendum and not permitting the joint administration in which representatives of the Misseriya would also participate.

"It is a missed opportunity. The government of Sudan did it deliberately and this situation can only be averted if Bashir with President Salva agree within this month to the resolve the status", Deng told Sudan Tribune by phone from Abyei town, the administrative headquarters of the area.

Somaliland Status

Arop Madut Arop, a member of parliament in Juba representing the area said there was nothing which would stop his people from determining their fate, despite the failure of the two sides to reach a deal.

"Our people have exhausted all the avenues and it is this situation which will force them to decide their destiny if the African Union and the United Nations Security Council fail to stand by their own resolutions. There is no shame with outcome. You know that the people of Somaliland are now living a normal life in their territory despite the fact that they have not

been recognised by many nations. Our people can do the same provided that they will have where to live, if the international community fails to show any responsibility", Arop told Sudan Tribune in a separate interview.

Meanwhile, Eye Radio, last week quoted Sudanese Information minister Ahmed Bilal Osman as saying that the status of the Abyei region can only be determined by the government of the two countries without external pressure.

"Interference by outside countries in forcing one side to conduct a referendum in Abyei could destroy relations between South Sudan and Sudan", he said.

Osman told Eye Radio that Khartoum and Juba can resolve their difference as neighbours.

"The geographical area of South Sudan is 700,000 Kilometers and the size of Abyei is 10,000 Kilometers. So what does 10, 000Kilometer means to us compared to 700,000 Kilometers?" he asked.

"For us Sudanese, it is not a problem. Attempts by some people to fuel conflict in Abyei in order to make it a reason to spoil relations between the two nations, is wrong. The Abyei issue can be resolved amicably."

Western diplomats and the African Union have warned against any unilateral conduct of a referendum in Abyei to determine the future of Abyei. ([Back To Top](#))

Government distances itself from any unilateral decision to conduct Abyei referendum

News Agency of South Sudan Juba, 24/10/2013 – The government of the republic of South Sudan has said it will not be part of any unilateral decision to conduct a referendum in the contested border region of Abyei that is not backed by any status.

The minister for Information and Broadcasting Hon. Michael Makuei Lueth said the fate of Abyei referendum lies with the African Union and the United Nation as the President has already written to the two bodies over the matter.

Hon. Makuei who is also the official government Spokesman said for the referendum to be successful, certain fundamental issues must be addressed which include the formation of joint Abyei Administration to oversee the voter registration exercise.

Hon. Makuei explained that the holding of the Abyei referendum is now beyond the government of South Sudan as the matter is now before the continental body urging pressure groups that have threatened to go ahead with the referendum that they will be acting in bad faith. He said the African Union was supposed to have visited Abyei area on 21st of this month but the tour was latter postponed to enable further preparation.

The minister while pleading for patience from the people of Abyei said the two presidents in the Juba 22 October summit, committed themselves to the formation of Abyei joint administration and setting up joint security teams which will then create a conducive environment for the holding of the referendum, Michael Makuei was speaking to the media where he underscored the outcome of "the landmark meeting" between the two Presidents Salva Kiir and his Sudan counterpart Omer el Bashir which took place in Juba. ([Back To Top](#))

South Sudan wants AU, UN to get Sudan to withdraw police from Abyei oilfields

Platts Juba, 23/10/2013 – The African Union and United Nations should get Sudan to withdraw its police force from the Diffra oilfields in the disputed region of Abyei, South Sudan's foreign minister Barnaba Marial Benjamin was reported as saying Wednesday by Miraya FM, a UN-supported radio station.

Diffra, north of Abyei, produces 18,000 b/d of crude, compared with Sudan's total oil production of 140,000 b/d.

Benjamin said the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei, or UNISFA, was the only authority mandated to provide security in the Abyei area including surrounding oilfields.

The AU and UN are to play a major role in setting up an administration, local council and police force in Abyei, as agreed by Sudan President Omar al Bashir and South Sudanese counterpart Salva Kiir in Juba on Tuesday.

"The solution of Abyei now rests with the UN and AU. It will take time," Benjamin said, adding the next step would be to discuss the date of holding the Abyei referendum when Kiir pays a return visit to Khartoum.

"Bashir's visit and the discussions between the two foreign ministers have created the right atmosphere. We have made some progress and we are now moving to the final settlement of the Abyei issue," Benjamin said. ([Back To Top](#))

Bashir meets South Sudan leader over Abyei

Al-Jazeera News, 23/10/2013 – The leaders of Sudan and South Sudan have met amid pressure to strike a deal on the disputed Abyei region and other issues left unresolved since South Sudan won independence.

Bashir said the meeting was "fruitful", adding that both leaders will "make sure all the outstanding issues are implemented".

"We are ready to go the extra mile to make peace with Sudan," Kiir said.

Barnaba Marial Benjamin, the South Sudan foreign minister, said the meeting was about "building relationships between our countries and to strengthen our ties".

The African Union has urged the leaders to "seize the opportunity" towards settling the dispute over war-ravaged Abyei, wedged between the two countries and claimed by both sides.

UN-AU warning

The United Nations and AU have warned that any such unilateral move could inflame tensions in the oil-producing zone and risk destabilising the uneasy peace between the longtime foes.

"Abyei is one of the top items on the table," Benjamin said, adding that other issues included opening up border posts to allow traders and residents to cross the new frontier that splits the formerly united nation.

Sudan's Foreign Minister Ali Ahmed Karti, in a statement on state *news agency SUNA*, said the talks would "stave off the fear" that the dispute over Abyei would endanger the "improving relations between the two countries".

Abyei, patrolled by some 4,000 Ethiopian-led UN peacekeepers, is home to the settled Ngok Dinka, closely connected to South Sudan, as well the semi-nomadic Arab Misseriya, who traditionally move back and forth from Sudan grazing their cattle.

Some are pessimistic about a quick resolution.

"I think there isn't a solution in sight for quite a long time," a Western diplomat said, but added there was a need at least to show some progress "otherwise people get desperate".

"Both governments have important constituencies that they need to pacify, making the issue very difficult to solve," the diplomat said.

Senior leaders of the Ngok Dinka said last week they would organise and run their own referendum, saying international efforts had stalled and there was "no light at the end of the tunnel".([Back To Top](#))

Lawyers for Democracy Congratulate the people of Abyei for their firm stand after the failed attempt by Kiir and Bashir Summit in Juba

South Sudan News Agency Juba, 23/10/2013 – The Lawyers for Democracy in South Sudan call on the people of South Sudan to support the people of Abyei spiritually, morally and

financially for the successful conduct of this important vote for the nine Dinka Ngok chiefdoms, which will take place on October 2013. In less than a week, the electorate of Abyei will go to the polls to decide their fate.

Very little has been said in reference to the referendum of Abyei from both sides of the summit in Juba. But one fact which isn't in doubt, is that the people of Abyei will vote for yes and be part of the Republic of South Sudan, let us see if Honorable Michael Makuei 's Government will reject the outcome.

Lawyers for Democracy are deeply concern with the statement of the spoke person of the Government of South Sudan "virtually no chance". There is certainly cause for concern amongst the ranks of Kiir cabinet about the referendum in Abyei. After the bows they have made before Bashir in Juba.

The question of what would happen if Abyei referendum is conducted in October 2013 is a difficult one to be answer by Honorable Michael Makuei, but the people of South Sudan through their Parliament must have the answer. We call upon the People's Parliament of South Sudan to exercise their supremacy and put an end to suffering of the people of Abyei.

The problems Juba and Khartoum could face are multiple. But Oil shutdown is on top of them, as a result of the vote, and what drive Kiir government crazy, they think this is certainly a risky strategy and lacks any real credibility, Kiir and Bashir share a view.

Lawyers for Democracy in South Sudan understand that under the current government of Kiir they would continue to receive the 2% percent of Oil revenue this is not the thinking of Abyei People who are serious about finally taking control of their own destiny.

The vote on Abyei on October is extremely serious which the summit of Kiir and Bashir has failed to address adequately. The NCP may have secured the power in Juba to force honorable Michael Makuei to abort the exercise.

But they have failed to present clearly their picture on how to convince the people of South Sudan in General and People of Abyei in particular on how the communiqué of the summit would fit into two Sudan. Until they do, Kiir and Bashir proposal is doomed to failure, and Makuei Statement to political irrelevance.

(If the International or regional community are not willing to midwives the referendum in Abyei, the traditional birth attendance will do their novel duty for history to be made on October 2013). ([Back To Top](#))

President Kiir regrets Twic East killing

News Agency of South Sudan Juba, 24/10/2013 – The President of the Republic of South Sudan Gen. Salva Kiir Mayardit has condemned in the strongest possible terms the recent killing of unarmed civilians in Twic East County of Jonglei State on Sunday 20th of October 2013 by armed groups operating in the area.

The President deeply regrets the "senseless killing of innocent civilians" that resulted into the loss of 79 lives, including women and children. ([Back To Top](#))

US issues warning on travel to S. Sudan, imposes curfew on embassy staff

The East African, 23/10/2013 – The United States of America has reissued a warning on travelling to South Sudan, imposed a curfew on its staff working in Juba and has ordered them to travel in armored vehicles at night to ensure their safety.

The United States Department of State on Tuesday said that the US Embassy in Juba has imposed a curfew on its staff between 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. and has banned its government personnel, their spouses and family members from living in South Sudan.

"In addition to the curfew, the embassy has implemented other measures to protect US government personnel living and working in South Sudan. These include requiring personnel to travel in armored government vehicles at all times at night and to obtain advance permission for any travel outside of Juba," said the US Department of State in a statement.

The US Department of State said that its citizens should avoid South Sudanese states including the Upper Nile, Unity and Western Bahr el Ghazal states and Sudanese states Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states and the Abyei Special Administrative District.

It said that although fighting between Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has declined since spring 2012, the potential for troop build-ups along the border and renewed fighting remains.

The US Department of State said that in addition to sporadic clashes in the border region, there are armed militia forces that engage in violent clashes with SPLA forces in various areas of South Sudan, particularly in Jonglei State.

"The Government of South Sudan has limited capacity to deter crime or provide security to travelers throughout the country, including in the capital city of Juba," said the US Department of State in the statement.

The travel warning against South Sudan comes barely a week after another one was issued warning its citizens to avoid travelling to Sudan.

At the end of the second week of October, the Department of State warned its citizens against travelling to Sudan, the Darfur region and the Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states.

It said that while the Government of Sudan has taken some steps to limit the activities of terrorist groups, elements of these groups remain in Sudan and have threatened to attack Western interests and that the terrorist threat level throughout Sudan and particularly in the Darfur region, remains critical.

In Sudan, all US government personnel are required to travel in armored government vehicles at all times and to obtain advance permission for travel outside of Khartoum. ([Back To Top](#))

Commissioner calls for protection of foreign businessmen

Gurtong.net Wau, 23/10/2013 – The Commissioner of Tonj South County in Warrap state has expressed concern over the hostility of citizens to foreign nationals.

William Wol Mayom's urged the county residents to protect foreign businessmen and women in the county.

His appeal comes three days after the Friday grenade blast that killed a Darfuri businessman in Tonj South's congested main market. The deceased passed on instantly when he was attacked with a grenade by a South Sudanese in the market. The cause of the attack is still unclear.

"We want people of Greater Tonj to protect Darfuri, Ugandans, Kenyans and other foreign businessmen operating in the county," said Mayom. "People of Tonj must respect and protect foreigners and work with them as brothers and sisters."

The commissioner was speaking at the funeral rite of the Darfuri trader. He called for love of one another regardless of nationality for peace to prevail and development.

"They are benefiting from the money we use to buy their goods but we also benefit from what we buy from them," he advised. ([Back To Top](#))

Two killed over dowry dispute

Gurtong.net Wau, 23/10/2013 – A dowry dispute in Adido Boma in Jur River County of Western Bahr El-Ghazal state (WBGs) has left two dead.

A man identified as Uchala Nyang has been killed by his brother in-law who confronted him in a dancing party over dowry.

An eye witness Joseph Alfred, told Gurtong that the incident prompted revenge attack against the family of the assailant leaving one more person dead.

He said the revenge victim identified as Choro Mon was speared at the back in revenge as he was sleeping in his mosquito net last night.

Wau Teaching Hospital authority confirmed the death of the two, saying they died due to excessive bleeding.

The two were on Wednesday brought to Wau teaching hospital for postmortem before their burial at the cemetery to rest in peace.

The incident fueled tension between the clans but calm is said to have returned to the area as the county authorities pursue the culprits. ([Back To Top](#))

Governor wants more civil servants in Counties, Payams

Gurtong.net Torit, 23/10/2013 – The Governor of Eastern Equatoria State (EES) Louis Lobong Lojore has announced plans to deploy more civil servants to the Counties as opposed to concentrating them at the state capital, Torit.

The governor made the revelation while in his two-week tour to the state ministries, which is expected to conclude later this week...

Accompanied by the State Secretary General, Charles Atul Rino, the governor urged the state employees to get ready for deployment to the eight counties of EES.

According to the new plan, only 20 civil servants of each ministry would remain at the state capital, about 85 percent of them shall be based at the counties.

This is the implementation of the government's policy of taking towns to the people at the grassroots for better services, a vision of the founding father of the new nation, the Late John Garang Mabior.

While meeting the officials of the ministries of Animal Resources and Information, the governor Lobong said his visit was to inform the plan to take services closer to the citizens in rural areas through the civil servants.

He urged the civil servants to remain committed in discharging the duties amidst the challenges his administration continues to face as he reminded them to be ready to move to counties, Payams and Bomas. The governor did not specify when the deployment would start but said soon.

He directed the two Director Generals in the information and animal resources ministries to coordinate and effect the implementation of the deployment.

A bigger budget has been allocated to the counties for effective service delivery and allowances such housing and others will also be availed to employees in the rural areas according to the governor.

Whereas Lobong urged the ministry officials of Animal Resources and Fisheries to be alert to vaccinate animals, he urged the information ministry to creatively educate the public on issues of concern such as changing bad attitude. ([Back To Top](#))

IGAD Doctors end Wau Hospital Mission

Gurtong.net Wau, 23/10/2013 – A medical team from the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has ended their two-year service in Wau teaching Hospital, Western Bahr El-Ghazal state (WBGS).

Four medical experts from Uganda and Ethiopia were assigned by IGAD to build up the capacity of the local staff in the state hospital.

WBGS cabinet on Wednesday gathered at the State Secretariat to discuss the report of the IGAD team as they shared their experience in the last two years.

They team released a report outlining the challenges faced by medical practitioners and the general situation of the hospital.

According to the report, Wau Teaching Hospital lacks appropriate waste management and medical equipment system necessary.

Inefficient human resource management such as lack of Job description for the staff is also key challenge affecting the hospital.

WBGS State Governor Rizik Zachariah Hassan thanked the IGAD team for the service rendered.

“We shall put effort to address some of the challenges which our budget can allow articulating that the national government will have to attempt that which is beyond our reach,” said Rizik.

The governor acknowledged said the state is the immediate beneficiary of the Hospital much as it is for the national government.

The cabinet resolved that the report needs more technical approach but admitted that some challenges need quick response.

The IGAD team will officially leave the state next Monday. Their departure will leave a gap in the hospital which has to be filled. ([Back To Top](#))

Lakes State parliament suspended

Radio Miraya, 23/10/2013 – The Speaker of the Lakes State Legislative Assembly, John Marik Makur, has suspended proceedings of the house for one week pending the return of acting governor Matur Chut.

In a letter addressed to all the Members of Parliament, Mr Marik, said the decision was taken in consultation with the governor, citing what he terms as a “looming crisis” in the state parliament.

The suspension will remain in force until the return of the governor and chairperson of the ruling Sudan People’s Liberation Movement party in the state.

An MP in the house, Marik Nanga, however questioned the speaker’s authority to suspend the house. Nanga said 34 MP's have signed a petition calling for the removal of the speaker. ([Back To Top](#))

Upper Nile governor sacks commissioner

Radio Miraya, 23/10/2013 – The Governor of Upper Nile State, Simon Kun Puoch, has issued a decree dismissing the Commissioner of Fachoda County.

The decree, read on the state radio on Tuesday, dismissed Lt. Col. Jokino Fedell, and named Morris Papiti as his replacement. ([Back To Top](#))

Senior government officials undertake aviation training

Gurtong.net Juba, 24/10/2013 – A total of eight senior South Sudanese Government officials are undertaking executive management training in Entebbe, Uganda.

The participants included the Deputy Minister and Undersecretary of Transport, Roads and Bridges, Simon Mijok Mijak and Capt. David Hassan Martin; the Chairman of South Sudan Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), Gen. Agasio Akol; CAA Board of Directors and the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the CAA, Patrick Lotwa.

The training facilitated by the European Union Aviation Security Mission in South Sudan (EUAVSEC) aimed at equipping the officials with knowledge on administration, human resources management, management tools, operations and implementation of well-defined organizational strategic structures.

The five day training course in Entebbe from 21-25 October 2013 is being conducted by specialists from the Danish National Police.

In his opening remarks, Mijok said the capacity building courses being facilitated by EUAVSEC are important steps in institutional capacity building to improve aviation security in South Sudan.

EUAVSEC assists the government of South Sudan to raise the security at Juba International Airport to internationally accepted standards, which will also enable the increased flow of people, goods and boost trade. ([Back To Top](#))

Polio vaccination campaign launched in Eastern Equatoria

AllAfrica.com Torit, 23/10/2013 – Health officials in South Sudan have launched an emergency campaign to vaccinate 700,000 children under the age of 15 in Equatoria state against polio by the end of the week after a child in the state was diagnosed with the crippling and potentially deadly disease last month.

The national Ministry of Health has also rolled out a polio vaccination campaign in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, where two more children were diagnosed with the disease in late September.

The small outbreak is significant because the region that became South Sudan in 2011 has been polio-free since 2009. The Ministry of Health runs four polio vaccination campaigns every year and says 94 percent of South Sudanese children under five have been vaccinated against the disease.

Medical authorities in South Sudan have been on high alert for cases of the disease after an outbreak in Somalia in May quickly spread to Kenya and Ethiopia.

Parents in Eastern Equatoria are being encouraged to bring their children to health centers or to wait for volunteer immunizers to come to their homes.

Akwir Joska brought her five-year-old son and one-year-old daughter to Torit Civil Hospital Tuesday to get them vaccinated against polio. She urged all mothers to do the same.

"I am very happy now. None of my children will get polio as they received the polio vaccine. I encourage all mothers to take their children to vaccination centers so that children get polio vaccine," she said.

A nationwide polio vaccination campaign in South Sudan is scheduled for November and December. ([Back To Top](#))

SRF supports unity of opposition forces to overthrow the regime

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 23/10/2013 – The rebel coalition group known as Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) affirmed its support to the unification of all opposition forces for the aim of toppling the regime and bringing about a democratic transformation which does not exclude any of the national political forces.

The SRF leadership held a meeting on Wednesday in preparation for its upcoming meeting with the leader of the opposition National Umma Party (NUP) al-Sadiq al-Mahdi.

The SRF media secretary and spokesperson, Abul-Gasim Imam, said in press statements afterwards that the focus of the anticipated meeting with al-Mahdi should be on regime change in order to fulfill the desires of the Sudanese people and the martyrs who fell during the continued battles against the regime.

He mentioned that the SRF intends to hold meetings with all political forces and civil society organizations including youths and women groups in order to unify the opposition forces to overthrow the regime.

The SRF had earlier said that it accepted a request from Al-Mahdi asking for a meeting with its leadership in Kampala, stressing that no date has been yet determined for the meeting.

Al-Mahdi for his part said that the opposition forces would coordinate with the armed groups as long as they committed themselves to a peaceful regime change.

The former Prime Minister, who leads the largest opposition party in Sudan, is opposed to the use of force to topple the regime. Instead, he calls for holding comprehensive talks including rebel groups and political parties and the ruling National Congress Party (NCP).

He also proposes, like the other opposition parties, the formation of a national unity government to run the country during an interim period followed by elections after settlement of regional conflicts and agreement on constitutional principles. ([Back To Top](#))

Darfur rebels reject African Union call for peace talks with Khartoum

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 23/10/2013 – The rebel groups in western Sudan rejected a call by the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) to join the Doha peace process to end the 10 year conflict in Darfur and reiterated their demand for a comprehensive peace operation for the whole Sudan.

In a meeting held on 17 October, the PSC discussed the efforts of the joint mediator, Mohamed Ibn Chambas to reenergize the peace process in Darfur and called on the non-signatory rebel groups to engage peace talks with the Sudanese government "without any further delay and without preconditions".

The 15 member body which will discuss the situation in Darfur next month further warned it would "take measures and recommend to the UN Security Council to do the same against those impeding the search for peace in Darfur".

"We condemn the communiqué de the Security and Peace Council of 17 October. It would be more appropriate for the African Union to stand beside the victim of the regime (...) and to support the International Criminal Court arrest warrants against its president. We regret that the African body, rather than that, supports criminals and killers", said the spokesperson of the Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) Abu El-Gasim Imam.

The hold-out rebel groups met on 22-27 August with the joint mediator in Arusha, northern Tanzania, where they reaffirmed their commitment to a negotiated agreement to end Darfur conflict. However, they demanded to merge the two peace processes for Darfur and the Two Areas under one mediation and to include the political opposition parties in order to discuss regional crisis and also ways to re-establish democratic regime.

The rebels argued that partial agreement failed to provide security and peace in the country., Pointing to Abuja peace pact of May 2006 and the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) signed in July 2011, they said that Khartoum government used to dishonour the signed deals

Speaking to Sudan Tribune after a meeting of the SRF leadership body, Imam said the threat of sanctions by the PSC "would not affect our decision or weaken our determination", adding they are poised to cooperate with any willing to work for a just and comprehensive peace in Sudan.

"We do not want to repeat a failed experiment over and over again and cause more suffering in Sudan", added Iman who had joint the Abuja agreement in November 2006.

On Wednesday, the SRF released a statement welcoming a visit the leader of the opposition National Umma Party, Sadiq Al-Mahdi plans to conduct to Kampala in order to discuss ways to unify the action of the forces opposed to the regime of president Omer Al-Bashir.

The rebel groups that participated in Arusha meeting— Justice and Equality Movement led by Gibril Ibrahim (JEM) and Sudan Liberation Movement of Minni Minnawi (SLM-MM) – agreed with the joint chief mediator to meet within 60 days to resume consultations on peaceful settlement.

In a briefing to the UN Security Council on Wednesday via videoconference from Khartoum, Ibn Chambas said Sudanese government officials welcomed his engagement and expressed willingness to hold talks with the rebels under the DDPD.

"They also indicated that they were open to the participation of the Darfur non-signatory movements in a national dialogue", he further told the Security Council.

Alluding to an understanding reached in Arusha to meet with the rebels within two months, the joint mediator further told the Security Council he is planning to hold another meeting with them to discuss the humanitarian situation in Darfur.

"The Joint Meditation is exploring the possibility of holding a follow-up meeting in the form of a workshop in the near future focused primarily on issues regarding a humanitarian cessation of hostilities and efforts towards a comprehensive peace", he said.

Asked about the meeting, Imam said they recently discussed with the mediation the organisation of a meeting on the humanitarian situation in Darfur, adding that it would not take place in Arusha this time. ([Back To Top](#))

Bread shortage in Sudan's capital but parliament says flour reserves sufficient

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 23/10/2013 – Large parts of the Sudanese capital, Khartoum have been witnessing a shortage in bread over the past few days apparently due to an increase in the cost of production following removal of government subsidies on cooking gas cylinders.

Khartoum residents complained about the reduction in bread weight and said that some bakeries are selling three loaves of bread instead of four at the price of one pound.

They also complained that several flour mills have cut production while some bakeries are selling their flour quotas into the black market.

But the parliament deputy-speaker, Hago Gasm al-Seed, in press statements on Wednesday downplayed prospects of a severe bread shortage within the coming days and affirmed that the country has wheat reserves that cover the next 25 days, stressing the continuation of wheat importation.

Al-Seed accused unspecified bodies of fabricating the flour crisis and asserted that the government provided large amounts of wheat flour.

"I believe that certain bodies are trying to create panic among citizens. Wheat reserves suffice for 25 days and we have full details on the quantities of cooking gas, gasoline, wheat flour, and sugar," he added.

The deputy-speaker held Khartoum state government responsible for following up on the recent economic decisions and sending inspection teams to ensure the availability of basic services.

He also urged the oil ministry to monitor cooking gas retail outlets to be on the lookout for glitches and price manipulators. ([Back To Top](#))

Africa takes ICC's case to UN Security Council

Sudantribune.com Addis Ababa, 23/10/2013 – The African Union (AU) will next week submit its position on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to the UN Security Council (UNSC), an Ethiopian official told Sudan Tribune on Wednesday.

Ethiopia's foreign ministry spokesperson, Dina Mufti, said an African delegation led by Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Tedros Adhanom, will head to New York next week to the UN security council headquarters to submit a report that details the AU's position on the ICC.

The AU delegation will deliver the position passed by African leaders during the extra ordinary session of AU heads of states and government held In Addis Ababa on 12 October.

In their declaration African leaders resolved that no serving African head of state is prosecuted before ICC or any international tribunal.

Mufti said although Africa denounces any criminal acts such as genocide or war crimes the continent has reservations on the legal procedures and ways of ICC's treatment towards Africa.

With all its current eight cases from Africa, the ICC has been accused by African leaders of targeting the continent.

Last week, the ICC President said accusations by African leaders against the court were "regrettable" adding that African countries voluntarily referred their cases to the court.

"We never chased any African country, we didn't do anything in this respect, they brought their own situation to us", said judge Sang-Hyun Song. ([Back To Top](#))

Study: Flu vaccine could prevent heart attack

Voice of America, 23/10/2013 – The flu season is just beginning in the northern hemisphere and doctors are urging anyone older than six months to get immunized. A new study also suggests the vaccine may do more than ward off the flu.

Medical experts say there is nothing that kills as many people as the flu.

Heart patients, like Loreen Naylor, are especially vulnerable. That's why she gets vaccinated every year. "I think it is very important. It's a way of managing my own health and making sure I don't get the flu," she said.

Doctors say heart patients who get the flu seem to have a higher risk of heart attack, heart failure or stroke.

Researchers believe as our bodies fight the disease, inflammation and plaque in our arteries become more unstable and may form clots and blockages. It appears the flu vaccine, though, may help protect even healthy people from heart attack and stroke.

Dr. Jacob Udell at Women's College Hospital in Toronto analyzed data from previous studies involving nearly 7,000 patients.

"Overall there was about a 33 percent reduction in risk for heart attacks, strokes and other major cardiovascular events in those who received the flu shot, compared to those who'd received a placebo or just the standard of care," said Udell.

For people who'd recently had a heart attack, getting a flu shot cut their risk of having another one by 50 percent. So Dr. Udell says getting the vaccine is a no brainer [requires little thought].

"I encourage anybody who's skeptical about getting the flu vaccine for any reason that there is a potential other benefit here from a cardiac point of view," he said.

Udell said he now wants to hold a large new trial to see if he gets the same outcome. The result of his recent analysis was published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. ([*Back To Top*](#))

Polio declines in Nigeria, grows in Horn of Africa

AllAfrica.com, 24/10/2013 – Vaccinating against polio in Nigeria, one of the three countries in the world in which it is still endemic, but where progress towards eradicating it is being made.

As the global community marks World Polio Day on Thursday, recent events show there is both cause for celebration and concern.

There have been 296 cases of polio caused by the "wild type" virus so far this year, compared to 171 cases during the same period last year, according to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, a public-private partnership spearheaded by the World Health Organisation (WHO). However, only 99 of this year's cases have been in polio-endemic countries, compared to 166 last year.

This difference is significant because fewer polio cases in endemic countries means the battle against the virus in those nations is succeeding. Polio outbreaks in other countries originate in the endemic ones – Nigeria, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"Progress in the three remaining polio-endemic countries has continued since 2012," said Dr. Hamid Jafari, director of the initiative. "That was the year when the fewest number of cases was reported from the fewest number of countries.

"That progress has continued into 2013, and the highlight of that progress has been that of the two remaining types of polio virus, type 3 has not been seen anywhere in the world since November last year. That's very, very important element of progress."

On the downside, there has been an increase in transmission of the virus outside of the three remaining endemic countries, most significantly in the Horn of Africa: Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan.

“These outbreaks will continue to occur as long as we have continued transmission in these endemic reservoir countries,” Jafari said.

Polio is highly infectious and mainly affects children under five years of age. One in 200 infections leads to irreversible paralysis. Among those paralysed, five to 10 percent die when their breathing muscles become immobilized.

Polio cases have decreased by more than 99 percent since 1988, from an estimated 350,000 cases then to 223 reported cases in 2012. WHO says the reduction is the result of the global effort to eradicate the disease.

One of the main obstacles to stopping transmission in the three reservoir countries is insecurity.

Nigeria’s northeast, where most of the country’s polio infections occur, has been in turmoil stemming from Boko Haram Islamist militants, who are suspected of killing nine vaccination workers last February. Nine other vaccination workers were killed in Pakistan in December 2012. ([Back To Top](#))

Africa faces water crisis despite discovery of huge aquifers.

United Press International Nairobi, Kenya, 23/10/2013 – The recent discovery of two vast aquifers in northern Kenya and Namibia has given weight to scientists' claims the African continent is sitting on immense underground reservoirs of water.

But the scientists also warn that Africa faces more droughts because of climate change and could have 25 percent less water by the end of the century, setting the stage for possible water wars.

Egypt and Ethiopia, for instance, are facing off over the long-contested waters of the Nile River because Addis Ababa is building a giant \$4.3 billion hydroelectric dam, which will cut the flow to Egypt, whose 84 million people depend on the Nile to survive.

The U.S. global security consultancy Stratfor cautioned the September discovery of the aquifers in the drought-plagued Turkana desert of northwestern Kenya near the borders with Uganda and South Sudan raises "the possibility of cross-border conflicts over water rights in the future."

The Lotikipi Basin Aquifer and the smaller Lodwar Basin Aquifer were among five aquifers located by Radar Technologies International of France, in collaboration with the Kenyan government and the United Nations with funding from Japan.

The East African aquifers were discovered using advanced satellite technology and confirmed by drilling. The size of the other three Kenyan aquifers still has to be determined by drilling.

Lotikipi, roughly the size of Rhode Island, contains an estimated 7.3 trillion cubic feet of water with an annual recharge rate of 42.4 billion cubic feet through rainfall in Kenya and Uganda.

All told, some 8.8 trillion cubic feet of underground water was found, with an expected annual recharge rate of 110 billion cubic feet -- an amount roughly equal to 15 percent of the 741 billion cubic feet of water currently available to Kenya each year.

The Turkana region is populated largely by nomadic tribes, who lack regular access to water. Kenya's economic hubs of Nairobi and the Indian Ocean port of Mombasa are around the Lake Victoria and Athi basins, which hold around 60 percent of the country's water resources.

So there's likely to be considerable debate over how to use the new aquifers in terms of national development resources that Kenyan officials initially claimed could supply the entire country with water for the next 70 years.

But Stratfor observed that with a growing population already surpassing 41 million, Kenya, riven by tribal rivalries and heavily reliant on foreign aid for development, is likely to find the new water resources not enough to "support continued population and economic growth."

It noted: "Competition for the new reserves can be expected. Currently, agriculture dominates water usage, accounting for roughly 80 percent of Kenya's water consumption, but oil and manufacturing will likely vie for the resource. ...

"Sustainability will require improvements in both infrastructure and resource management, neither of which will come easy. ...

"Overuse of water resources by agricultural, municipal or oil sectors would further limit the region's potential for long-term growth," Stratfor observed.

Africa's water woes also have been mitigated by the July 2012 discovery of a major aquifer named Ohangwena II under the Namibia-Angola border on Africa's southwestern coast.

On the Namibian side, the 10,000-year-old aquifer covers an area roughly 43 miles by 25 miles.

Because of climate change over the eons that turned the Sahara into a desert, scientists say many of the aquifers deep under the sands were last filled with water 5,000 years ago.

Project manager Martin Quinger, from the German Federal Institute for Geoscience and Natural Resources, says the aquifer could supply northern Namibia "for 400 years" and will help people adjust to climate change.

The 400-year estimate is probably overly optimistic, but scientists writing in the journal *Environmental Research Letters* recently argued the total volume of water in African aquifers is 100 times the amount found on the surface and probably purer because it's untainted by pollution.

That could be good news for the estimated 300 million people on the planet who are believed to have no access to safe drinking water.

The BBC reported in April 2012 scientists from the British Geological Survey and University College London was able to map Africa's hidden underground water reserves.

Helen Bonsor of BGS estimates there's enough water there to "provide a buffer to climate variability." ([Back To Top](#))

The greater Bor community-USA condemns the killing of civilians in Twic East County; calls for security improvements.

South Sudan News Agency Juba, 23/10/2013 – We, the members of Greater Bor Community in the United States; as affected residents of the bomas, payams, the County of Twic East, as members of greater Bor community, as residents of the largest State in South Sudan and finally, as your beloved fellow citizens of our youngest nation, would like to inform you that the tragedy has befallen us once again. A vulnerable population that was already helplessly threatened by the floods was attacked and brutally massacred. As of now, 78 people are dead, 88 are wounded, 24 children and women are abducted, 25,000 heads of cattle are raided and 144 houses are burnt down to ashes.

It is indisputably known that the gunmen were about 700 people in number, properly uniformed in military outfits and overwhelmingly equipped with superior weaponry. It is also widely known that the gunmen are members of the Murle community and largely attributed to David Yau Yau's Group. It should also be noticed that this is not the first time the group carried out an attack in the same area. In the last 12 months, this area and others across Bor area have seen seven attacks and each time, people are killed, children are abducted and properties are robbed and/or destroyed. It is confirmed that the majority of the dead were helpless children, women, elderly and a few young men who were trying to defend their people and properties. It is also said that as of now, many are left without shelters and foods. The situation is devastating to those helpless civilians on the ground.

The Government Role in deterring the incidences

Unfortunately, Juba has been very silent on many tragedies that have befallen this community and Jonglei State as a whole. A silence over this recent attack is even more shocking given the

good spirit we just witnessed the president portrayed when he had to visit the great people of Bahr el Ghazal who were affected by the floods. In this case, we view silence as equals to perpetuation of the incidences and we, as residents of Jonglei and citizens of South Sudan, regret it. The same observation (failure of Juba to curb the insecurity incidences in the largest state in the nation) is true across the board on all incidences relating to the Murle criminals and David Yau Yau's group terrorist activities in the State, causing some residents in the State to take law of protecting themselves into their own hands as evidenced in the case of Lou Nuer Youth.

While we appreciate the recent move by the president to visit the regions of Bar el ghazal that were recently affected by the floods, we regret the silence and lack of actions for the vulnerable, long suffering residents of Jonglei including this unfolding incidence of the most recent attack on Twic East. Even as on the Today news in Juba, the talk is about flooding and Jonglei flood is nowhere to be heard, let alone the loss of innocent lives. The talk is about the visit of Bashir and none is heard about the incidence that has befallen the people of Twic East, Greater Bor and the State of Jonglei at large.

One would think that a combination of floods and terror in terms of innocent killings and abductions of children and women would dominate the news in Juba and move Juba even more than last time when the floods moved Juba to visit the regions of Bahr el Ghazal unless that visit was not humanitarianly but politically driven. Please, Mr. President, be the nation's president, we ask you, once again!

The 2011 disarmament program is to blame for the vulnerability of communities. By the way, why did it have to start in Bor areas? This community never went out and attacked another peaceful and vulnerable community in Jonglei State. What was the basis of starting disarmament in the Bor Areas?

Juba, you are playing too much politics at the expense of South Sudanese and we, as citizens, get that! Your divide and rule politics, your selective of policy neglecting some states and favoring others is well understood.

The UNMISS and other NGOs in Pibor Areas Role in perpetuating insecurity in Jonglei

These great organizations that are doing amazing jobs in South Sudan have been manipulated and falsely informed to become advocates and protectors of the criminals in the State. Murle criminals and David Yau Yau's group are all members of Murle community. When they are being pursued as evidenced in the last operations between the SPLA and the groups, they would go and take cover among the vulnerable populations of Murle and use them as human shields and as advocacy tools.

As a results, the UNMISS and other NGOs in Jonglei, particularly, in the Pibor areas, and the international community have been led to an invalid conclusion that a potential ethnic cleansing was eminent. Now, the Murle criminals and the Yau Yau's groups go and terrorize the vulnerable populations and run back to the Murle areas and take cover under the UNMISS and NGOs in Pibor County. This is saddening and it does not help the State of Jonglei.

To the Murle Community

We do not hold your entire community responsible for these senseless killings and robbery and nor do we believe that your entire community does not have people who love peace. However, we want to call on you to help the State and the nation of South Sudan rectify this problem of insecurity in Jonglei. We are a nation and we belong to one state. We must deny or refuse to follow self-interested politicians who create havocs in our state. You own a big share in solving this problem of insecurity in our state. How long are we going to remain nomads? How long are we going to remain without hospitals to treat our vulnerable people? How long are we going to continue to depend on what we rob from others and not produce our own wealth? How long are we going to remain with no basic services for our people?

Mind you, politicians in Juba and the State of Jonglei do not care and they benefit from this situation of insecurity in our state. They use our communities as leverage, political capital to

bargain for job offers in Juba and in the State. But how do your own children and community benefit from this tribal base baiting politics? No, your community does not benefit from it! We must denounce this work of terror by David Yau and his blood thirsty thugs. You know your own criminals. Stop them because they are tarnishing your image and ruining your opportunities for a better life in prosperous State of Jonglei in the Republic of South Sudan. [\(Back To Top\)](#)

Is there a need for state government in Jonglei?

Sudantribune.com, 23/10/2013 – Another deadly attack rattled remote villages in Jonglei state on Sunday in what authorities say is a joint operation by rebels of David Yau Yau and some members of armed Murle cattle raiders.

Of course it is difficult to independently verify who carried out the attack or how many people are killed, how many children abducted and cattle raided. However, it is impossible for David Yau Yau rebels and Murle tribesmen to prove beyond reasonable doubt that they were not involved.

When I phone an eyewitness on Sunday, I was shocked about his description of the style of the attack and the manner in which some children and women were axed to death by attackers. The attackers engaged local police and cattle keepers within the villages leading to indiscriminate killing and burning of huts.

This is the repeat of December 5, 2011 in Jalle Payam of Bor County, neighboring Paker and Ajuong of Twic East County. On February 7, 2012, armed men from Dinka Bor raided a village in Gumuruk of Pibor and dozens were killed and many more raids from either sides. At the time, politicians gave strong worded statements condemning the raid and promising heaven-on-earth that “such attack will never happen again.”

But one year and eleven months later, it is the same story. In 2013, like the previous years, reports of Murle raiders killing and looting cattle in Lou Nuer and vis-versa dominated local and international news headlines. In July 2013, Lou Nuer revenged against the Murle resulting into huge casualties from both sides.

All these attacks happen with full knowledge of local authorities. It is impossible for authorities to deny knowledge of 1,000 armed men leaving a certain Payam to raid another.

Instead of leaders to act as national figures, they behave like tribal representatives. There is no ambition to lead South Sudan as a nation. Everybody wants to gain tribal support in order to be given more chance to remain in his position in order to eat. His chances to loot using political seat increase with vocal criticism about another tribe. These tribal politicians are breeding anarchy for innocent South Sudanese.

Inter-communal raids in South Sudan are not new but Jonglei’s different. Cattle raiding and child abduction were practice in the past but intensified after the 2005. Some people say that it is due to illegal arms in the hands of civilians – awash by SPLM/A and Khartoum government and its affiliated militias during the 1983—2005 civil war. What commentators fail to appreciate is lack of leadership in Jonglei state.

Unlike other states of South Sudan, politicians from Jonglei state (i.e. members of state assembly and national parliament, commissioners, senior civil servants and businessmen) don’t have their families in the villages. It is understandable given the notorious road networks, insecurity and poor social amenities such as hospitals and schools. Unfortunately, these politicians argue that villages should not be deserted.

These politicians mobilized the civilians who were displaced to camps during the war to return home but abandon without protection. They made empty pledges and shamelessly repeat them over time. When I attended a ceremony in Panyagor in February 2012 included local chiefs and politicians, I saw the anger in the eyes of traditional chiefs and hopelessness for the future. Head chief, Manyok Ajak summarized like this:

“If we (traditional chiefs) leave the villages and take our families aboard like you (politicians), whom will you govern,” he said and gazed for a moment.

“I think it is better for you to refuse taking up the responsibilities of representing or ruling the civilians if the government cannot protect women and children,” Manyok added.

After the meeting, I spoke to some elderly men on how this insecurity in Jonglei state could be addressed. They told many unexhausted avenues. I clearly remember one innocent respond.

“Is there a government? Why are children and women killed with impunity?”

According to him, during the British colonial period, perpetrators of crimes were instantly arrested using small police force compared to what South Sudan has today. There were equally no roads and no police cars.

When I met the then deputy of Jonglei state, Hussein Maar Nyout and asked him on the police’s and army’s inability to arrest suspected raiders, he said there are no roads.

“How do raiders move from one point to another? Can’t the police and army move too?” I asked him. And I will continue to ask, how do raiders move from one point to another? Can’t the police or army move too?

When I called Acting Governor Hussein Maar Monday October 21 to ask him about the future plans to address the insecurity in Jonglei state, he says they don’t resources to do the job.

It is understandable to claim that there are no resources but where and when will the resources come?

Disarmament was launched in March 2012 and is not officially stopped to-date. However, the killings of civilians by raiders from all tribes of Jonglei state continue. On other hand, the army and police give their own excuses as to why they don’t tackle this issue.

I would ask, is there is a leadership in Jonglei state? If there is one, what are they doing? During colonial period, murderers were easily netted and prosecuted, sectional and tribal fights over swampy grazing areas where quelled using minimum resources and police force. One example of effective enforcement of rule of law has remained in a saying to-date: That: “I never heard this sound of the bird that has yelled this morning in the land of my mother Apul.”

It was British colonial police on horses that had surrounded villages in Jonglei state that made the sound during the morning dawn. But since those villagers did not know horse, one man thought it was a sound from a bird. In the morning, the whole village was searched and suspected child abductors arrested.

In those colonial times, the British committed what could be termed as grave human right abuses today including slave trade and summary execution of suspects without fair trail, but it was worth maintaining security for the innocents. No one will condone the re-colonization of South Sudan by British in the 21st century but it is a big hurdle when civilians believe that those colonial periods were better than what we call our government today.

Because there is no political will in Jonglei state, police simply run after raiders for few hours and return with this result saying that “raiders had already gone very far.” Since the suspected raiders don’t cross into another sovereign country, say Ethiopia or Sudan, it become ridiculous to fail justice for the victims of these heinous attacks over and over again.

It does not matter whether the suspected perpetrators of child abduction, indiscriminate killing and cattle raiders are from Dinka Bor, Lou Nuer or Murle tribes, but the government must respond decisively. There has to be leadership. The politicians should either tell the villagers to leave Jonglei state or – quoting head Chief Manyok Ajak, “is better for you (politicians) to refuse taking up the responsibilities of representing or ruling the civilians if the government cannot protect women and children.” *(Back To Top)*

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Protest Crackdown: Another African Union failure in Sudan

Sudantribune.com, 23/10/2013 – The brutal crackdown in late September by Sudan's security forces and militias, resulted in over 200 deaths and hundreds of protesters wounded and arrested, according to Sudanese and international human rights organizations. The largest anti-government demonstrations in many years saw protesters who sought a reversal of the government's decision to reduce fuel subsidies.

The incident also resulted in the detention of a number of political opponents, a crackdown on journalists, and restrictions on freedom of expression and organisation, thus violating the fundamental and constitutional rights of the Sudanese people. Notwithstanding the crackdown of Omar al-Bashir's brutal regime, the African Union (AU) has failed to act according to the requirements of its founding documents, including the AU'S Constitutive Act of 2002 and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights.

There has been neither an official reaction from AU's executive organs, nor from the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the enforcement mechanism that has been established by the African Charter to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in Africa. Following its failure to deliver in Darfur, the AU seems to be destined to fail Sudan at large.

Darfur: A Test Case

"Darfur is a test case for the AU," and the AU will "succeed in the Darfur test case". These words, still echoing in my ears, were uttered by Ambassador Said Djinnit, the former director of the AU's Peace and Security Council. This was in Addis Ababa, May 2004, and Djinnit was addressing the negotiating delegations of the conflicting parties in Darfur for talks on the modalities of the implementation of the N'djamena Ceasefire Agreement for the Humanitarian Purposes in Darfur.

The agreement had been signed in April 2004, by the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) on the one hand, and the government of Sudan on the other.

As an African, the words of Ambassador Djinnit were a source of inspiration. I was so proud that finally our continent would stand up to its complex and longstanding problems and resolve them once and for all, and without outside intervention. My hope was based on the new spirit and aspiration that came with the birth of the AU as a successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The AU came with noble values of humanity, principles and doctrines of democracy and human rights, enshrined in its founding documents, such as the AU's Constitutive Act which shifted Africa from the doctrine of "non-interference", the legacy of the old OAU, to the new doctrine of "non-indifference" that marked the new era of the AU.

To my chagrin, however, the horrific events that later engulfed Darfur, and the protests in Sudan, has rendered the Ambassador's words mere wishful thinking. Indeed, the AU has failed the test case on all fronts.

It has been 10 years now since the AU started its involvement in Darfur in various aspects of the crisis, including monitoring the ceasefire, peace-making and peacekeeping. Nonetheless, the Darfur human tragedy is still unfolding. Furthermore, the conflict has spilled over to the states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile. The failure of the AU in Darfur constitutes a serious setback to the doctrine of "non-indifference" and the slogan of "African solutions for African problems."

Too Little, Too Late

Last month, the protest demonstrations and popular uprisings in Khartoum engulfed various neighbourhoods and spread widely throughout the rest of Sudan's large urban centres. The entire world has been a witness to the horrific and violent crackdown against the peaceful demonstrators who have been defying the brutal regime in Khartoum. Bashir's security forces responded to the peaceful demonstrators with an iron fist and absolute force. Regrettably, the international response has been weak and has fallen short of adequately responding to the gravity and magnitude of the crisis.

However, the worst and most regrettable response has been the AU's. The AU has been silent throughout the course of the unfolding pro-democracy uprising. To date, there has been no statement from the AU on this grave human rights situation which falls under the category of "serious circumstances" of the Constitutive Act 2002. Many human rights organizations have been dismayed and shocked by the silence and inaction of the AU. Indeed, this silence has brought the credibility and integrity of the AU into question.

Article 4H of the act permits the AU to intervene in a member state in the case of "grave circumstances", which include gross violations of human rights such as crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide. It has been the hope of Africans that the birth of the AU would mark a fresh beginning, a new era that would transform Africa to a free, peaceful, democratic and prosperous continent. Moreover, the hope was also that the newly established organisation would be on the side of the people and not the rulers.

In Sudan, the AU and African leaders failed to fulfill their obligations under the AU's founding documents. Furthermore, it is evident that Bashir's regime has been using the AU, under the banner of African solidarity, to obstruct and frustrate regional and international efforts towards resolving the crisis in Darfur.

Waiting for Bashir?

In September, during the meetings of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, I had the opportunity to meet with two high profile AU officials who have been working on the Sudan file for quite a long time.

In my meetings with officials, I asked why the AU has been silent on the situation in Sudan. Its silence will undermine the AU's role and engagement in Sudan. The responses were not convincing, they gave the impression to me that they were waiting for Bashir to quell the peaceful pro-democracy protests and consequently end the uprising.

The AU should rise up to the complexity and urgency of the crises in Sudan and should strongly condemn the gross violations of human rights committed by Bashir's regime.

In the name of Pan-Africanism and in the spirit of the South Africans noble struggle against apartheid that we all supported unequivocally, I call upon Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, the chair of the African Union Commission, to act swiftly to save Sudanese lives and dignity. The AU shouldn't wait until Sudan descends into more chaos; it is imperative that the AU convenes an urgent meeting to deliberate on Sudan's crisis.

The African Commission on Human Rights is urged to immediately dispatch a mission to investigate the crackdown on the civilians and peaceful demonstrators. Furthermore, the Commission should call upon the government of Sudan to adhere to its obligations under the African Charter and other relevant instruments. The AU should put forward a strategic and comprehensive plan for Sudan with the aim of promoting and facilitating a peaceful democratic transition. This is the only way that the AU will be relevant and a part of the solution in Sudan.

We still have hope in the organisation that we once dreamed of to play the lead role in transforming Africa, and for Africa to stand as a world model for democracy and human rights.

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