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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

## Local News Headlines

- Government accuses SG of conveying “inaccurate information” to US (**Local dailies**)
- No ICC impact on elections – Elections Commission (**Al-Intibaha**)
- National Assembly to hold an emergency session on ICC (**Local dailies**)
- Presidential adviser dismisses claims of coup within NCP (**al-Rai Al-Aam**)
- Ocampo will regret his decision – Al-Bashir (**Al-Sahafa**)
- Thabo Mbeki due in Khartoum next Wednesday (**Al-Sudani**)
- Government says ready for Darfur talks

## Websites/International Headlines

- Five aid workers kidnapped in Sudan's Darfur (**Reuters**)
- Well-meaning NGOs welcome in Darfur - Sudan's UN envoy (**AFP**)
- 180 aid workers leave Sudan after NGO expulsion – UN (**AFP**)
- Sudan postpones local NGO meeting (**SUNA**)
- Russia ready to send aid to Sudan - senior senator (**RIA Novosti**)
- UN, Sudan assess humanitarian needs after aid groups ouster (**UN News**)
- Blue helmets, aid workers must “green” their operations – UN (**UN News**)
- Sudan's Bashir to travel “selectively” and in “secrecy”- Official (**ST**)
- Arab mini-Summit pledges to press for freezing Sudan president warrant (**ST**)
- Heavy fighting reported between Lou-Nuer, Murle in south Sudan (**ST**)
- Five killed, 15 injured in deadly wind storm in Juba (**Miraya FM**)
- Medical Convoy for South Darfur (**SUNA**)

## Links

- **Can Thai forces halt genocide?.** [Editorial]. Bangkok Post.11/03/2009. <http://unhq-apps-01.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2009-03-11CREA-7Q2NVD>
- **Why Khartoum President Omer Al-Bashir is Indicted?.**Sudan Tribune.11/03/2009.<http://unhq-apps-01.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2009-03-11DSIA-7Q2K2Z>

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# Highlights

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## Local Arabic and English Language Press

### Government accuses SG of conveying “inaccurate information” to US President

**Local dailies** report Sudan Government has criticized SG Ban Ki-moon’s statements on the INGO ouster. MFA State Minister Ali Karti accused the SG of “conveying inaccurate information” to the President Obama about the humanitarian situation in Darfur. “The SG should have waited for the outcome of the tripartite assessment mission in which UN is a party,” MFA Spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq said, according to **Al-Rai Al-Aam**. “Ban should have sought to know the reality on the ground before calling on Khartoum to review the INGO expulsion decision”, he said. “Khartoum has committed to bridge the food gap left by the INGO departure,” he added.

“UN should not dictate Sudan, it should deal with the INGO expulsion reality,” State Minister Karti said, according to **Al-Raed**. HAC Commissioner Hassabo Mohamed described Obama’s statement as “hasty”.

**Al-Ahdath** reports HAC Commission has admitted that 13 IDP camp and areas have been affected by the INGO ouster decision, four in South Darfur, three in North Darfur and six in West Darfur, adding available food would last for three months.

Meanwhile, **Akhir Lahza** reports 50 national NGOs have expressed their readiness to fill the gap created by the INGO expulsion.

### No ICC impact on elections – Elections Commission

**Al-Intibaha** reports the Elections Commission has said its work to prepare for upcoming elections has not been affected by the ICC decision. “We have not been impacted by the ICC decision. Our work is continuing to prepare for elections,” Elections Commission Deputy Chairman Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah said.

### National Assembly to hold an emergency session on ICC today

**Local dailies** report the National Assembly will hold an emergency session today to discuss the ICC decision of an arrest warrant against the President. According to **Al-Raed**, it is not clear whether the parliament will debate a bill to prohibit trial of Sudanese nationals abroad.

### Presidential adviser dismisses claims of coup within NCP

In a lengthy interview to **Al-Rai Al Aam**, Presidential Adviser Ghazi Salah Al Din said that only the Sudanese people would decide whether Al-Bashir would contest upcoming elections or not. He dismissed claims of a coup within the ruling NCP party.

### Ocampo will regret his decision – Al-Bashir

**Al-Sahafa** reports President Al-Bashir addressed a rally of support by Darhamid tribes (Southern Kordofan) in Khartoum yesterday. The President revealed Sudan had refused an offer to normalize its relations with Israel in exchange for help. He reiterated his pledge to support the resistance and Mujahideen in Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan. “Ocampo must have regretted his decision, it rallied the people behind the President,” he said.

## Former South African President due in Khartoum next Wednesday

**Al-Sudani** reports former South African President Thabo Mbeki is to visit Sudan next Wednesday to discuss a proposal to set up hybrid courts to look into the alleged Darfur war crimes.

## Government says ready for Darfur talks

**Local dailies** report State Minister for Information Kamal Obeid as saying the government is ready for Doha talks and that it will accept any date set by the Qatari Government and AU-UN mediator Bassole for resumption.

## Websites/International News Coverage

### Five aid workers kidnapped in Sudan's Darfur

KHARTOUM (**Reuters**) – Five aid workers from the Belgian arm of Medecins Sans Frontieres, including three Westerners, have been kidnapped in Sudan's Darfur region, the UNAMID peacekeeping force said on Thursday.

The kidnapping came as tension escalated in Sudan following the decision by the ICC this month to issue an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir over accusations of war crimes in Darfur.

"We can confirm that a group of armed men went to the location and ordered five persons to follow them. They were three international staff and two national staff," Kemal Saiki, communications director for UNAMID said.

"We have had reports one of the national staff has been released," he added. UNAMID had earlier said that six aid workers were kidnapped in an area of north Darfur 200 km (125 miles) west of the provincial capital El Fasher.

A U.N. official who asked not to be named said the foreigners were of Italian, French and Canadian nationality. MSF's Brussels office confirmed that a number of its staff had been kidnapped but gave no further details. There was no immediate comment from the Belgian foreign ministry.

### Well-meaning NGOs welcome in Darfur - Sudan's UN envoy

**AFP**, UN, 11/3/09 - Sudan's UN envoy said Wednesday his government was willing to allow any well-meaning, foreign NGOs to operate in Darfur to replace those expelled for allegedly harming state security. Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem Mohamad however told AFP that the expulsion of 13 major aid groups from Darfur last week was "irreversible" because these NGOs "had done great harm to Sudan's national security." "We're open to any well-meaning NGOs, other than those that have been expelled, to come, be they from the US, Europe, the Arab world or Africa," he said. The 13 expelled international NGOs and the three national NGOs suspended as a result of the ICC decision employ about 40% of aid workers in Darfur.

### 180 aid workers leave Sudan after NGO expulsion - UN

**AFP**, Geneva – More than 180 foreign aid workers have left Sudan since Khartoum's expulsion of 13 NGOs. "As of 10 March, 183 international staff have already left the country, with others awaiting exit visas to depart," an OCHA statement said. OCHA spokeswoman Elisabeth Byrs said another 100 or so foreign aid workers await exit visas. In all 308 foreigners are affected by

the expulsion decision, OCHA said.

The UN also highlighted its concern about the safety of national and international staff on the ground amid “repeated incidents of intimidation and harassment.” OCHA cited continuing reports “of efforts to confiscate NGO, UN, and donor-owned equipment” and noted that the UN “has requested the Government of Sudan to return these items.”

### **Sudan postpones local NGO meeting**

**Suna website**, Khartoum, 10/3/09 -- The Nafrat Al-Izza (Pride Campaign) programme between the President Al-Bashir and national voluntary organizations has been postponed until 15 March, its chairman, Dr Al-Amin Al-Nus, has announced.

He said in a statement to **SUNA** that the programme would be attended by President Al-Bashir and that all the national organizations operating in the humanitarian field and experts in the humanitarian work domain will participate in the programme. A document of allegiance would be handed over to President Al-Bashir, and they will also express their commitment to fill the gap in the humanitarian work in the country, he said.

A number of national organizations assumed their tasks at premises of the suspended organizations and that more than 2000 organizations have declared their readiness to fill the gap resulted from INGO suspension.

### **Russia ready to send emergency aid to Sudan - senior senator**

**RIA Novosti**, Moscow, 11/3/09 -- Russia is ready to consider dispatching emergency food and medical aid to Sudan, the Russian presidential special envoy for Sudan, the head of the Federation Council international affairs committee, Mikhail Margelov, has told **RIA Novosti**. However, Margelov stressed: “We do not aspire to fill in the vacuum that has been left after the departure of West European organizations; we only seek to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe.”

### **UN, Sudan assess humanitarian needs after ouster of aid groups**

**UN News Centre**, 11/3/09 - A joint UN and Sudanese Government mission to evaluate the need for food, water, health and emergency shelter in Darfur commenced today, as the humanitarian community attempts to recover from the expulsion of 13 major aid groups assisting some 4.7 million people.

As of 10 March, 183 international staff of the affected non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had already left the country, with others awaiting exit visas to depart, according to OCHA.

A UN spokesperson in New York said today that in addition to Darfur other areas of North Sudan would be deeply affected by the expulsions. For example, Abyei, Blue Nile State, and Southern Kordofan State were located on the front lines of the North-South civil war and some of the expelled NGOs had provided health, nutrition, water, sanitation, education, food security, and other assistance to hundreds of thousands of people there.

In addition, concern for the safety of all humanitarian staff continues following repeated incidents of intimidation and harassment and reported efforts to confiscate NGO, UN, and donor-owned equipment. The UN has requested the Government of Sudan to return all confiscated items, UN Spokesperson Marie Okabe said.

Meanwhile, UNAMID reports that a peaceful demonstration made up mostly of youth and labour movement figures took place today in Nyala, South Darfur, condemning the ICC decision to indict President Al-Bashir.

Despite being hit by another carjacking last night, UNAMID said its operations proceeded normally today, conducting 51 military and 96 police patrols around villages and displaced persons camps in the past 24 hours.

### **Blue helmets, aid workers must “green” their operations – UN**

**UN Media Centre**, 11/3/09 - Military and civilian aid experts at a UN-backed meeting today emphasized the need for a peacekeepers and aid agencies to take a “green” approach in their work to protect the environment and the long-term livelihoods of communities affected by conflict.

Studies have shown that the demand for such critical natural resources as wood and water by peacekeepers can often be significant, straining vulnerable environments.

But this demand could be considerably curbed through better planning and management – including the use of new technologies that guarantee water and energy efficiency as well as construction methods that minimize deforestation – and even play a part in recovery, development and peace consolidated in areas hit by hostilities.

International peacekeeping forces and aid organizations “have the responsibility to ensure that their presence and operations have a minimal ecological footprint and do not aggravate environmental degradation, which may be a dimension of the conflict,” said UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

The day-long gathering at the Nairobi headquarters of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) was co-organized by the UN Department of Field Support (DFS), **the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS)**, the Swedish Defence Research Agency and the Environmental Law Institute.

**UNMIS, with the support of the Swedish Government, is investing \$5 million in environmentally-friendly operations for its 10,000 troops in 25 bases. As part of this pilot programme, the Mission is using new ways of treating waste and using both water and energy more efficiently, with the goal of reducing the volume of waste by 60 per cent, water consumption by 30 per cent and energy expenditure by 25 per cent.**

A new UNEP report, entitled “From Conflict to Peacebuilding: The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment,” presented at today’s Nairobi’s gathering, noted that at least 18 conflicts since 1990 have been triggered by the exploitation of natural resources. At least 40% of all civil clashes in the past six decades being linked to these resources. How the environment is handled can influence post-conflict peacebuilding and stability, according to the report

### **Sudan’s Bashir to travel “selectively” and in “secrety”- Official**

**ST**, Khartoum, 11/3/09 The London based ***Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*** reported an unnamed official as saying that Bashir will continue to make foreign trips before adding that his travel will be “subject to a selective process” and that his travel plans “will be surrounded by as much secrecy as possible”.

The statements mark the first time Khartoum acknowledged the impact of the warrant on Bashir’s movement. Previously Sudanese officials dismissed the ICC and expressed confidence that no country would execute the arrest warrant, including the ICC members.

This week Bashir skipped on a scheduled trip to Addis Ababa for the annual supreme joint committee meeting that was to be co-chaired by Ethiopian Prime minister Meles Zenawi.

Sudanese media made no mention of the cancellation or provide reasons behind it but reported that the committee will convene on April 11th.

The Sudanese president next scheduled foreign trip will be to the Arab Gulf State of Qatar for the annual Arab summit. Sudan has not received an official invitation as of yet but officials in Khartoum asserted that he will attend. The Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jasim Al-Thani told reporters yesterday that Bashir "is welcomed in Qatar". "The summit is an Arab meeting, it is not for Qatar or Sudan....Sudan will be invited, and it's up to the Sudanese government weather to attend or not" he said.

Qatar is not a member of the ICC's Rome Statute and is therefore under no legal obligation to arrest Bashir.

### **Arab mini-Summit pledges to press for freezing Sudan president warrant**

**ST**, 11/3/09, Riyadh— A four-way meeting of Arab leaders hosted by Saudi Arabia on Wednesday vowed to press for deferring the indictment Sudanese president Al-Bashir, an Egyptian official said yesterday. The mini-summit included Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdel-Aziz, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, his Egyptian counterpart Hosni Mubarak and Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The meeting aimed at defusing the growing tensions that erupted between the regional Arab states following the Israeli assault on Gaza strip.

The Egyptian presidential spokesperson Suleiman Awad said that the leaders "reviewed ways to support president Omer Al-Bashir regarding the arrest warrant for him issued by the ICC and confronting the crisis that affects the dignity of all Arabs and their sovereignty". Awad said that the four countries agreed on pressing the international community "through international organizations, Arab League to stop the implementation the decision involving the president of an important Arab state in the region".

Most of the Arab states expressed concern over the indictment without directly criticizing the court and urged the UN Security Council (UNSC) to invoke Article 16 of the Rome Statute that would suspend ICC proceedings against Bashir for a period of 12 months that can be renewed indefinitely. The Egyptian official also said that a "unified Arab vision" has been formulated "to help the Sudanese president and our Sudanese brothers".

### **Heavy fighting reported between Lou-Nuer, Murle in south Sudan**

**Sudan Tribune website**, 11/3/09 -- Authorities of Jonglei State reported deadly clashes between the Lou-Nuer clan and Murle tribe in the state on 10 March. Jonglei state governor, Kuol Manyang Juuk briefed GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit on Tuesday in Juba. In a press statement, Manyang said a group of armed Lou-Nuer civilians organized a retaliatory attack on the Murle community, prompting him to come to Juba requesting urgent intervention by the GoSS. He said the Lou-Nuer community had captured the Murle town of Kwangala - the second largest Murle community's administrative headquarters after Pibor town. He added that fighting was still continuing into other Murle areas.

### **Five killed, 15 injured in deadly wind storm in Juba**

**Radio Miraya FM**, Juba 11/3/09 -- A senior prison officer in south Sudan, Brigadier Serillo Kenyi, has told Miraya FM that five people were killed and fifteen officers injured when heavy wind blew off roofs and damaged 29 tents at Lologo reform Centre in Juba town. Brigadier Kenyi who is in charge of the Reform Centre, said that training of prison officers at Lologo, will be closed.

## Medical Convoy for South Darfur

**SUNA**, Khartoum, 11/3/09 - A Medical convoy left Wednesday for South Darfur including specialists carrying medicines and medical equipments. The convoy, launched by the National Health Foundation, affirms the government commitment to provide the necessary services to all Darfurians and to continue the development of the region, said the Political Secretary of the National Congress, Dr. Mandour Al Mahdi.