



## UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

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By Public Information Office

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## Highlights

## Main News

### **UN starts feeding thousands of Sudanese who fled disputed town**

(UN News Centre) 19 May 2008 – United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) today started distributing food and clean water to tens of thousands of people who fled fighting in the disputed Sudanese town of Abyei last week.

“Today we are distributing vital food assistance in two locations in Agok,” said David Greesly, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Southern Sudan. “A total of five food centres are being set up covering some 18 villages. We are also providing clean water and health care to the displaced people.”

An initial assessment found that the most pressing needs of the displaced population were for food, shelter, water and health-care facilities. Humanitarian agencies are also beginning work on reuniting separated children with their families. However, the rainy season is hampering access to some areas in the east, while insecurity is posing challenges to the west, according to a statement issued by the office of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan.

OCHA estimates that between 30,000 and 50,000 people were displaced by the fighting in Abyei, which broke out last week despite a peace deal signed three years ago between Sudanese Government forces and southern rebels. The town lies in an oil-rich area near the boundary between north and south Sudan.

A joint meeting last Thursday between the Government and the southern rebels, under the auspices of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), struck an agreement to end the clashes in Abyei, which is now largely deserted.

### **What is happening in Abyei is worse than Darfur – US Charge d’Affaires**

(Alshafa) The US Charge D’Affaires in Khartoum Alberto Fernandez told the BBC yesterday that Abyei was suffering a humanitarian crisis as most of its residents fled the town, rendered IDPs and they lack assistances and services, which was a cause of concern for America.

“The large number of IDPs, the injured and the dead in Abyei is worse than Darfur,” he said. “This is unacceptable. After three years from CPA conclusion there is still military confrontation, violence, killing and exchange of charges,” he added.

## GoNU

### **Captured JEM elements to be tried in accordance with Terrorism Act – Justice Ministry**

(Al-Watan) Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Abdul Daem Zumrawi told journalists yesterday that JEM elements captured during attack on Omdurman would be tried in accordance with the Sudanese Terrorism Combating Act and that legal measures would also be taken against other fugitive particularly Khalil Ibrahim.

With regard to captured JEM child soldiers, he said they would be tried in accordance with the Sudanese Juvenile Act.

### **President Bashir to visit Japan and Korea on Saturday**

(Al-Ahdath) President of the Republic Field Marshal Omer Bashir will begin unprecedented 7-day official visit to Japan and Korea on Saturday in a bid to open up to the outside world particularly Asia in order to strengthen Sudan's relations with economically mighty countries.

A high-level ministerial delegation will accompany the President on this trip.

### **Nafie Ali Nafie calls for crackdown on traitors and skeptics**

(Al-Ahdath) The Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie has commended the political forces that supported SAF victory over JEM. He has also hailed the role played by police and security forces in beating mercenaries and rebels.

Nafie made the statement while addressing the central reserve forces yesterday.

The Presidential Assistant has directed apparatuses, media, journalistic and patriotic institutions to wage internecine war on traitors and skeptics who have collaborated with enemies of the country as well as those playing down and detracting the ongoing efforts by the security to crush the saboteurs.

### **Sudan says talks with US on normalization postponed indefinitely**

(ST) - A senior Sudanese official today confirmed that the second round of negotiations with the US have been postponed indefinitely.

The Sudanese presidential adviser Nafi Ali Nafi met yesterday with the US charge d'Affaires Alberto Fernandez to discuss a "suitable date to continue the dialogue".

However, Nafi said that no new date has been set and did not elaborate on the causes of the delay in the negotiations that were supposed to start in Khartoum today.

### **Sudan ruling party, opposition Umma to sign political agreement**

(ST) — Sudanese opposition Umma Party leader Sadiq al-Mahdi will sign today with President Omar al-Bashir as head of the ruling National Congress Party a national reconciliation agreement called the "National Compromise Agreement".

Umma Party Secretary-General Abdelnabi Ali Ahmed said that the agreement contains agendas with seven themes: removing tension and create a conducive climate in the country, national principles, comprehensive peace, Darfur crisis, civil liberties, comprehensive forum and the general elections.

Ali pointed out that these themes are national issues, not partisan or bilateral.

He added that the signing of the agreement is the first step before its presentation to all national forces in order to give their opinion on it. This step would be followed by the preparation for a comprehensive forum which will discuss the above mentioned agendas besides its mechanisms of implementation.

He said that "the nation is now facing the risk of tension which might lead to fragmentation and external targeting leading to the malignant internationalization. He added that his party in order to avoid all these dangers insists on the need to gather the national forces in order to ensure the unity and integrity of Sudan as well as the democratic transition.

The Umma Party is one of the ancient historical parties in the Sudan and had a majority in parliament during the three periods of democratic rule in the Sudan since its independence in 1956.

### **[AU to re-energize Sudanese-Chadian agreements](#)**

(Akhbar Al Yom) The African Union has pledged to exert efforts to restore Sudanese-Chadian bilateral.

The new Chairpersons of the African Union Commission Jean Ping left Monday for Chad, met for the second time with Chadian President Idris Deby and returned to Addis Ababa the same day.

A press release issued by the Office of the Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed that Sudan would remain keen on maintaining good neighborly relations with all its neighboring countries including Chad. The statement warned that Sudan would not tolerate interference in its internal affairs.

### **[GoSS](#)**

### **[SPLM second National Convention postpones election to senior positions to Tuesday](#)**

(Miraya FM) The SPLM Second National Convention has postponed the election of the chairperson, the deputy chairmen and the SPLM secretary general to Tuesday.

In Sunday's session, the convention endorsed an adjustment on the membership of the National Liberation Council adding twenty five seats to the already two hundred and fifty members. The delegates also approved an amendment to the number of the political bureau's members to become twenty-seven instead of twenty one members, including the SPLM chairman and his three deputies.

### **[Darfur](#)**

### **[Egypt expels Darfur SLM representative](#)**

(ST) May 19, 2008 (NAIROBI) — The Egyptian authorities continued its crackdown on Darfur rebel groups in Cairo following the 10 May attack on the Sudanese capital and expelled the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) representative from the country.

Last week Egypt asked a leading member of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and two others to leave the country but Ahmed Tugud and the two others are still in Cairo because the security service said they want to interrogate them.

Last week, Hafiz Youcif Hamoda, an adviser of the SLM leader Abdel Wahid al-Nur and member of the SLM negotiating team was expelled from Egypt without any explanation.

However Hamoda reached by telephone said his expulsion has no link with the JEM coup on Khartoum.

Speaking with Sudan Tribune from Nairobi, the rebel figure said the Egyptian decision might be motivated by the “tremendous rapprochement between Khartoum and Cairo”. He also feared his expulsion might have been upon a request from the Sudanese security service.

Hamoda had complained last month that he was prohibited from holding a press conference in Cairo on the occasion of the fifth national census in Sudan.

The SLM official also said the opening of Israel office has no direct relation with the Egyptian decision. But he noted that security services were embarrassed by the growing number of Darfuris who cross to Israeli border from Sinai.

One source who declined to be named told Sudan Tribune that Egyptian authorities believe that the SLM officials played a role in the organization of the Darfuris travel to Israel. However, Hamoda said that Egyptian Bedouin smugglers are the ones responsible for "this lucrative business".

Hamoda said he never violated the Egyptian law or insulted its government before saying that "there was no reason to expel me apart from leveraging on the opportunity of the JEM attack"

The Sudanese trek across Egypt's Sinai desert and pay Bedouin smugglers to help them cross the remote border, usually giving themselves up to Israeli army patrols. Most are driven by increasing hardship in Egypt, where they lack residence and work permits and have been subject to arrest.

Sudanese refugees started sneaking into Israel through Egypt regularly in 2005 and the numbers increased as violence raged in the troubled Darfur region.

### **Rights watchdog urges greater international protection for Darfur civilians**

(ST) May 19, 2008 (NEW YORK) — Human Rights Watch urged today the international community to provide greater protection for civilians in western Sudan troubled region of Darfur. It also urged targeted sanctions on Sudanese officials.

In a 35 page report released today, ‘They Shot at Us as We Fled’ Human Rights Watch documents how government attacks last February on several towns in West Darfur’s “northern corridor” were a vicious reprise of Khartoum’s “scorched earth” counterinsurgency tactics.

The report, based on interviews with more than 60 witnesses and victims of the attacks in West Darfur, shows how Sudanese armed forces and government-backed “Janjaweed” militia killed and injured hundreds of civilians and destroyed and looted property.

The attacks occurred on February 8, 18, 19 and 22 in the towns of Abu Suruj, Sirba, Silea, and in the villages in and around Jebel Mun, a mountainous rebel-held area in northern West Darfur.

The rights group said that Khartoum’s continuing violations of international law highlight the urgent need for the United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission (UNAMID) to be fully deployed, equipped and trained to effectively protect civilians where they are most at risk.

The report further calls on the UN Security Council to impose targeted sanctions on those responsible for the attacks, enforce sanctions it has already imposed, and ensure that UNAMID has adequate resources to effectively protect civilians from attack. The report also calls on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate and prosecute offenses in West Darfur that fall within its jurisdiction.

Human Rights Watch found that the government attacks carried out on four locations in February followed a similar pattern. Aircraft bombed civilian areas, followed by soldiers in military vehicles and hundreds of “Janjaweed” militia on horses and camels who raided and burned towns and villages.

The attackers killed more than 120 civilians, set fire to hundreds of dwellings and looted civilian property, including clinics of nongovernmental organizations.

The rights watchdog criticised the international community saying the UN Security Council has taken no serious action to address the abuses. For its part, Sudan has not acknowledged any wrongdoing or taken any steps to investigate or punish the crimes.

Khartoum says the report has continued its campaign of indiscriminate bombing in North Darfur, reportedly killing at least 13 people, including seven children, in an attack on a school and a market on May 4, 2008.

The February attacks and continuing attacks on civilians demonstrate the current limitations of UNAMID and its capacity to effectively protect civilians, the group stated.

The peacekeeping forces based in the capital of South Darfur Al Geneina and Kulbus, about 50 kilometers from the areas that were attacked, were unable to move quickly to the fleeing populations because they lacked sufficient troops and equipment.

Human Rights Watch called on UN member states to provide UNAMID with the resources it needs to respond rapidly and robustly to protect civilians under attack and those who remain at risk of attack, and to urgently increase UNAMID’s presence in northern West Darfur where civilians remain unprotected.

The February attacks displaced an estimated 40,000 people, of whom 13,000 are refugees in eastern Chad. The majority of residents of Abu Suruj and Sirba, the two towns closest to Al Geneina, have returned, while Jebel Mun and surrounding areas are still largely abandoned.

Some residents who returned have reported that government soldiers now based there are committing human rights abuses, including sexual violence against women and girls, the report said.

Human Rights Watch called on the Security Council to impose targeted sanctions on those responsible for the February attacks and to establish benchmarks for the parties to the conflict to monitor their compliance with obligations under international law and existing Security Council resolutions, and impose sanctions for non-compliance.