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HIGHLIGHTS:

Government of National Unity

President Al-Bashir to Receive Recommendations of Darfur Comprehensive Conference

President of the Republic, Field Marshal Omer Al-Bashir, is due to receive Tuesday the recommendations of the Comprehensive Conference of the People of Darfur from representatives of the conference. This was announced by the Governor of North Darfur State, Mohamed Yousif Kibir, in a press conference he held Monday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Meanwhile, the Governor added that a 15-member delegation is also expected to leave to Abuja to hand over copies of the conference's recommendations to the armed movements and the African Union. In this regard, he explained that delegations would leave to Asian, African and European countries to brief them on the outcome of the comprehensive conference. The Governor of North Darfur State affirmed stability of security situations in Darfur, referring to the voluntary repatriation of the displaced persons to their home areas in Al-Tina and Karnowiy.

President Bush affirms US support to government of National Unity

Khartoum,(SUNA) President of the United States of America, George W. Bush, affirmed the strong support of his country to the Government of National Unity and peace in Sudan. This came in a cable of congratulations he sent to the President of the Republic, Field Marshal Omer Al-Bashir, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Sudan's Independence. In his cable, President Bush conveyed his congratulations to the people of Sudan on the occasion.

National Assembly will Discuss some Presidential Orders/says House Speaker

National assembly will resume sessions immediately after Id Al Adha. "When it meets it should discuss a number of presidential orders have been issued before the formation of the government of national unity" said deputy house speaker Garang Atin. The presidential orders include acts of wages, higher education, voluntary organizations, police and armed forces. Deputy house speaker has likely noted that "if any of these acts were found contradicted with interim constitution or CAP should be returned to republic of presidency for revision. Other wise he said "They should be passed by the assembly."

Darfur:

African mini-summit on Darfur postponed - Libya

Sudan tribune, Jan 2, 2006 (TRIPOLI) - An African mini-summit on western Sudan region of Darfur and rising tensions between Sudan and Chad due to take place in Tripoli on Wednesday has been postponed, a Libyan official said Monday.

He said the delay followed calls from three of the countries due to take part — Chad, Egypt and Eritrea — without elaborating.

However, a diplomat in the Libyan capital said earlier that the meeting was called off because of the crisis between Sudan's government and Ndjamena which has accused Khartoum of supporting Chadian rebels.

No new date has been set for the summit but it is now expected to take place after the Muslim feast of Al-Adha on January 10, the official said.

Chadian Deputy Foreign Minister Lucienne Dillah said Saturday that his country would be unable to attend the Tripoli mini-summit because of a meeting of central African leaders in Ndjamena on Wednesday.

On Friday, Chad made fresh claims Khartoum backed Chadian rebels, alleging the insurgents were given air time on Sudan television and Sudanese nationals had been captured taking part in a recent rebel raid on a Chadian border town.

Several new rebel groups have sprung up recently in eastern Chad, a region inundated by about 200,000 refugees from the civil war in Darfur, and Khartoum had accused Ndjamena of deploying planes and troops on its territory.

The mini-summit was to be attended by the heads of state of five countries: Sudan's Omar al-Beshir, Libya's Moamer Kadhafi, Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo, Chad's Idriss Deby and the Central African Republic's Francois Bozize.

The main aim of the meeting was to speed up the Darfur peace negotiations after the latest rounds in Abuja failed to produce a breakthrough.

ANALYSIS-Darfur talks tackle thorniest issues

Saturday 3 December 2005 ABUJA - (Reuters) Delegations gathered in Nigeria for the seventh round of Darfur peace talks come to the table with a sense of optimism absent from the first six rounds.

Splintered rebel groups have agreed to set aside the differences that derailed earlier discussions and present a unified front.

The former southern rebel group that negotiated its own peace with Khartoum to end a separate 20-year war, and who Darfur rebels see as sympathetic to their cause, have joined the talks.

And the venue has changed.

Gone are the luxurious five-star hotels of the previous rounds, which some said encouraged lengthy talks to maximise the hospitality of the Nigerian capital Abuja.

Instead, a small hotel on the outskirts of town with limited Internet and telephone links has been chosen to house the gathering.

"It seems this is a deliberate choice to make people focus on the talks," said one African Union official.

"There are no distractions here," he said.

But despite the elements that augur well for an end-of-year deal the United Nations and United States have called for, the issues at the heart of the Darfur conflict have yet to be tackled.

Still outstanding are agreements on sharing Sudan's growing oil wealth, political autonomy for Darfur, and security in the vast desert region the size of France.

"There are very difficult issues which are going to be tackled in this round -- like power sharing, issues of percentages of power -- those are very intractable issues," said Sam Ibok, head of the AU mediation

team.

The United Nation's top envoy in Sudan Jan Pronk said: "A framework agreement ... is possible but difficult because the positions of the parties in the talks are still far apart."

SECURITY, POWER, WEALTH

More than 2 million people have been driven from their homes to squalid refugee camps in Darfur, and tens of thousands have been killed in fighting since the rebels took up arms in February 2003 saying the government in Khartoum marginalised and ignored the region.

The government dispatched militias to put down the rebellion but thousands of civilians were caught up in the conflict. The militias are accused of a widespread campaign of rape and looting that the United States called genocide.

Earlier rounds secured agreements to stop the fighting, allow AU ceasefire monitors and ensure humanitarian access. But the results on the ground were mixed.

Large-scale conflict, rape and pillaging subsided in the middle of this year, but the United Nations said last week killing and rape was on the rise again and the region was sliding towards complete lawlessness. Informal talks on security were among the first items on the agenda at Abuja. The delegations on Friday began discussing power sharing in earnest and talks on wealth sharing begin next week.

The Sudanese government has proposed a system of federal rule and limited autonomy for Darfur. The proposal is similar to that agreed for three contested central Sudanese areas under a separate peace deal signed in January to end a bitter civil war in southern Sudan.

Rebels say they will not accept just autonomy, but also want a share in central government, including a rotating presidency and the right to elect their own governors for the Darfur region, positions which are currently appointed by Khartoum.

The Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) is campaigning for control over a large proportion of the jobs in central government and of the nation's 330,000 barrels per day oil output.

OIL

"We want power in proportion to the population of Darfur," SLA leader Abdel Wahed Mohamed el-Nur said. He said Darfur was as marginalised as southern Sudan and deserved a similar settlement.

The south won about 50 percent of Sudan's oil revenue, which is mostly derived from that region, and a referendum on secession within six years in their peace deal signed in January.

The Darfur rebels want a similar deal but the government has rejected such an agreement for its western region.

The former southern rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement's Yasir Arman would not comment on the particulars.

But he said the group's three delegates, part of the government delegation at Abuja, "brought 20 years of negotiating experience and good relations with the rebels as well as partnership with the government to the talks".

"We are rebel graduates and we know the feeling of demanding. ... There is a crisis in Darfur and this needs to be addressed in a fair and just manner," Arman said.

Some are hoping the new-found rebel unity and the influence of the SPLM will produce a final agreement that has eluded past negotiators.

"All the elements are coming together with the rebel's unified position and the presence of the SPLM and if we can maintain that ... it does raise the level of confidence," the AU's Ibok said. "We are optimistic, but it is cautious optimism."

LRA

Ugandan army kills six rebels in country's north

*(BBC Monitoring, Radio Uganda, 30 Dec, **Kampala**)* The army has announced it killed six Lord's Resistance Army, LRA fighters on Wednesday night [28 December] in Gulu and Pader districts, along the Uganda-Sudan border.

Four SMG rifles and three rounds of ammunition were recovered. Three rebels surrendered.

UPDF [Uganda People's Defence Forces] Fifth Division Public Relations Officer Lt Deo Akiiki Asiimwe said the army had embarked on what he termed a daily harvest of LRA fighters who refuse to surrender.

Meanwhile, another group of LRA rebels escaped UPDF helicopter attacks along the Uganda-Sudan border where they burnt bushes around them, raising smoke which disabled the visibility of the helicopter crew.

Sudan, Chad relations

Chad accuses Sudan of recruiting mercenaries

Jan 2, 2005 (N'DJAMENA) — The Chadian government late Monday accused neighboring Sudan of "recruiting mercenaries to attack Chad" and inflame conflicts in the area.

"The (Sudanese) government of Omar Hassan El-Bechir, with its policy of inflaming conflict in the sub-region starting with Chad, continues to recruit mercenaries" and "reorganize adventurers" by giving them the financial means and material "to come attack our country," said government spokesman Hourmadji Moussa Doumgor in a statement.

Chad's government has called on the African Union (AU) and the international community to help avoid a further escalation of the conflict which could have "incalculable consequences", the statement added.

Chad declared a "state of war" with Sudan last week following a December 18 attack on the town of Adre, on the border between the two countries, by Chadian rebel groups which N'Djamena claims are supported by Khartoum.

An extraordinary meeting of the heads of state of the Economic and Monetary Community of Centra Africa (CEMAC) is scheduled to be held here Wednesday to address the deteriorating relations between Chad and Sudan.

Sudan has accused neighboring Chad of violating its airspace and supporting rebels in its western Darfur region

Saturday 26 November 2005. A Sudanese foreign ministry statement said Chadian airplanes had flown over Sudanese territory without permission on two occasions earlier this month. Chadian troops allegedly crossed the border several times, stealing cattle. Chad denies the accusations and last week accused Sudan of using Chadian deserters to fight rebels in Darfur.

In its statement, the Sudanese foreign ministry also accused an unnamed third country of shipping arms and ammunition to rebels in Darfur.

In an interview with the BBC, Chadian Information Minister Hourmadji Moussa Ndoumgor earlier said Sudan was trying to destabilize his country.

Chadian troops mutinied from their army in September this year and claim to number in the hundreds. They say they want to overthrow their president.

According to Sudan, the Chadian number about 120.

East:

Eastern Sudan rebels leader to return to Khartoum - report

Jan 2, 2005 (KHARTOUM) — The return of the leader of the Rashaida Free Lions rebel movement, Salim al-Mabrouk, to Sudan is imminent following the signing of a political agreement with the ruling National Congress party, the al-Watan newspaper said.

The chief of the Rashaida tribe in eastern Sudan, Hamid Hamid al-Nuqayshi, revealed that the mediation committee led by Rashaida dignitaries to seek the return of their people to Sudan had succeeded after a series of continuous lengthy meetings and an accord reached on the return of the leader of the armed organization.

Al-Nuqayshi did not wish to comment on whether the return of Mabruk was conditional or not, the source said.

The Sudanese government and Rashaida Free Lions rebel group signed an agreement to end hostilities following negotiations held under the auspices of the Libyan leader in Tripoli on 24-25 December.

The rebel Beja Congress questioned Libya's involvement in the agreement which appeared to undermine the unity of the Eastern Front, which was formed in February after the merger of Rashaida Free Lions and the main rebel group, the Beja Congress.

But the Rashaida Free Lions said in a press statement after the signing of Tripoli accord that they are committed to the Eastern Front charter, and would not seek to reach an independent deal without the Beja Congress.

SPLM Claims Arrangement to Pullout Troops from Eastern Region

SPLM has stated arrangements of Pulling out its troops from areas in the east and relocated into the south.

SPLM joint forces commander Gen Yasir Jafaar said, the pull out process should be carried out under direct supervision of SPLM chief of staff. Gen Yasir however has denied any coordination between his troops and eastern front forces. He said SPLM has already stated pulling out from Humishkorab gradually and it should fully complete withdrawing soon. The SPLM military man demands government and eastern rebel resolve the dispute of the region as soon as possible.

Biga Dignitaries Demand Govt Allow Them Meet Armed Carriers in Exile

Tuesday 3 January 2006. Some officials and popular leaders from Biga tribe have urged the government allow them see armed carriers who belong to the tribe. Head of cultural and social committee at Kassala state legislative council Mohammed Ahmed Turok told (smc) that they think government should mandate them go and see armed carriers on borders with Eritrea or may be inside Eritrea as well. He said these meetings would enhance negotiation process between the two parties' (government and rebels.) He said it is timely right to carryout these meetings with rebels particularly after recent positive development on bilateral relation between Sudan and Eritrea. Turok confirms that Biga organization in exile however has expressed willingness to attain political settlement for eastern dispute.

Other Developments

America Justifies Extension of Sanction on Sudan, by The Crisis in Darfur, Democracy And Counter Terrorism

Wednesday 16 November 2005, US deputy secretary of state Robert Zollik visited Sudan four times during the current year, in the framework of the America's concern by the peace process in Sudan, in the wake of signing of comprehensive peace agreement between the Sudanese government and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in Nairobi – Kenya last January.

Zollik's visit to Sudan came in the wake of extension of US sanction on Sudan. the U.S.A imposed sanction on Sudan in 1997 and remained renews it on November, 3 annually. Under the pretext of the war in the south of Sudan. eight years after imposing of U.S sanction Sudan government and the Sudan people liberation movement signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The government commenced the implementation of the peace agreement and remained waiting November, 3 for lifting of the sanction, but the government was surprised by the resolution of the American administration by extension Sanction against Sudan, During the visit of the first vice president L.T general Salva Kiir to Washington. The American administration prior to signing of peace agreement between Sudan government and Sudan people liberation movement promised to lift sanction as a support for the comprehensive peace agreement, as well as many promises which became stipulated by realization of peace in Darfur.

Zollik Visit To Khartoum:

US deputy secretary of state Robert Zollik arrived in Khartoum last Wednesday. Zollik led high level American delegation, he was received by the manager of the American administration at the Sudanese ministry of foreign affairs and some diplomats, in a step appeared as if its is a protest by the Sudanese government on the behavior of the American administration, that the president Al Bashir described it as a contradictory one Zollik met with the president Al Bashir and the vice president Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, but he didn't manage to meet the minister of the foreign affairs due to the visit of the latter to Washington. The Sudanese government officially notified the U.S Deputy secretary of state its rejection to the dual and contradictory stance of Washington represented in imposing sanction against Sudan in a time that it alleges its support to the peace agreement. The Sudanese government considered that extension of sanction as a continuation of American pressure on Sudan. Sudan rejected the American dual stance calling for extension of sanction against the north and lifting them from the south.

Zollik justified extension of sanction against Sudan for extra year by saying that Sudan had witnessed a war That claimed 2 million lives, beside Genocide in Darfur.

He said that lifting of Sanction stipulated by the stance of Sudan towards the terrorism.

He said that Sudan had harbored Osama Bin Ladin before, but Zollik went back on his

word, pointing out that the situation witnesses change after signing of the peace agreement.

Adding that his visit to Sudan aimed to benefit from the situation in peace era, inspection on situations in Darfur particularly violence against woman, in his speech in a symposium

organized at Sharja Hall - university of Khartoum Zollik expressed the worry of the

American officials about spreading of violence against woman in Darfur, pointing out that

Washington extended US\$17 million for eradication of violence against woman in Darfur he

send a direct message to the rebels movement in Darfur reminding them that if they don't halt violence operation in Darfur they will lose the international support.

Continuation of sanction is unpersuasive:

Despite that Zollik extended his justifications to the Sudanese government regarding extension sanction against Sudan, but these justifications were not persuasive to the Sudanese government. A diplomatic source said that the justifications of the US deputy secretary of state about extensions sanction on Sudan were not persuasive, and the message extended to him by the president of the republic regarding rejection of the government to contradictory

stance was very clear. But the source described the visit as a positive one, and as a step which will be followed by other steps in the domain of the Sudanese American dialogue, particularly the dialogue is in progress.

The retired general Mohammed Al Bbas Al Amin the professor of the political sciences at Zaeem Azhary university said that he does not expect lifting of the sanction in the near future, because the strategy of the American administration is to form strong strategic coalition with the government of the south, and not with the government of the north, the evidence is the calling for partial lifting of sanction from the south only, and extension of the sanction against the north so that the donation of Oslo conference extended to the south. Adding that the United States prefers one unified Sudan but without Islamic movement. U.S.A wants to change senior northern official and strengthening the southerners particularly SPLM, so America will continue in extension sanction against Sudan, he said that Zolleik didn't extend useful thing to the north of Sudan adding that Zolleik from the beginning was discrimination, in his speech before the congress session he only concentrated in the south, he thought that Zolleik didn't extend a new thing for the favor of the Sudan in his recent visit. Pointing out that Zolleik speech in the Sharja symposium concentrated in four points:

- realization of peace.
- Solution of Darfur problem.
- Counter terrorism.
- Democracy.

He said that there was not a new thing particularly peace and Darfur are fundamental issues to the government, and about counter terrorism. The government is cooperative in this respect. About democracy the government exerts great endeavors for participation of all political forces in the government.