



SUDAN MORNING NEWS

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Special Envoy Williamson in Sudan

-- The meeting between U.S. Special Envoy Richard Williamson and Umma Party leaders Saddig Al-Mahdi shortly after the Special Envoy's arrival in Khartoum on May 28 was highlighted in many Sudanese newspapers. The papers quoted Williamson describing Al-Mahdi as a wise man with wide experiences. They pointed out that he expressed optimism toward future relationship between US and Sudan, though he described the road to normalize the relation between the two countries as a long path and a continuous process. In a joint press conference after the meeting Al-Mahdi criticized US foreign policy saying it uses double standards, accused it of bias toward SPLM and against the NCP. Al-Mahdi blamed the Experts' Report for the deteriorating situation in Abyei. Williamson was quoted by *Al Wefaq* as playing down the withdrawal of SPLM from the talks, saying that it will not have a negative effect. (*Al-Ayaam, Al-Ray Al-Aam, Al-Khartoum, Akhbar Al-Yom, Al-Watan, Al-Wefaq*)

-- Communication between the Bush administration and the Southern Sudan leaders is very active in an effort to convince the latter to participate in US-Sudan talks and refrain from their decision to boycott it until the Abyei crisis is solved. On another development, the SPLM sent a memo to the fact-finding commission on Abyei asking for UN intervention under Chapter Seven of the UN Charter (allowing the use of force). (*Al-Sudani*)

Bashir blames UN for deployment delay

In his meeting with the President of the African Union in Tokyo, Japan, where he is attending the TICAD Summit, Sudan President Omar El-Bashir blamed the UN for delaying the deployment of the international hybrid force (UNAMID), saying that

the international organization did not provide the finance or the equipment needed for the deployment. Bashir also called the international community to offer the support needed to boost the political process and peace efforts in Sudan. Bashir added that the international community should take action against Chad for the support it offered to JEM's rebels in their recent attack on Omdurman. (*Al-Khartoum, Al-Ayaam*)

Khalil out of hiding

Khalil Ibrahim, JEM's leader who led the attack on Omdurman in early May, came out of hiding in a Chadian village and headed to N'Djamena seeking treatment for an acute nervous breakdown. Khalil was quoted earlier denying any links with Al-Turabi's Popular Congress Party saying that his movement is closer to the Communist Party. (*Al-Wahda, Al-Intibaha*)

Call to withdraw elections bill from Presidency

There is growing demand from the members of the National Assembly (NA) to withdraw the Election Law from the Presidency for further debate. The NA speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir is cautioning that the remaining time for the current session is too short for the members to debate and pass the law. He added that this will not be possible to do in the next session as it is going to be interrupted by public religious holidays (Ramadan and Christmas). Al-Tahir warned that if the election bill is not approved during the session, no election will take place. The NA speaker reaffirmed that, should the bill be tabled for debate by NA before June 15, it is most probable that the bill may be passed during the current session. (*The Advocate et al*)

The Sudan Morning News is compiled as a service of the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, Sudan. It presents a partial survey of the current Sudanese press and international reporting about Sudan. This summary does not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government.