



SUDAN MORNING NEWS

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National Assembly endorses 2008 Electoral Bill

The National Assembly endorsed yesterday the 2008 Electoral Bill by a majority of 350 votes out of 366 after long heated discussions and strong debate between the different parties. This new law is considered crucial to the democratic transition in Sudan as it grants women 25% of seats in the National Assembly and encourages proportional presentation for political parties. An Electoral Commission will be appointed within a month of the ratification of the law. (*Khartoum Monitor, Rai el-Shaab, et al*)

NCP & SPLM to sign an arbitration pact

Yesterday, NCP and SPLM signed the Arbitration Tribunal Agreement that stipulates the demarcation of the Abyei borders in accordance with the road map agreement. This latest pact will be submitted to the International Arbitration Court within a week of the nomination of the international arbitrators. The pact is considered an important step toward ending the dispute between the parties, said Al-Dirdiri Mohammed Ahmed, the NCP representative who confirmed that the decisions of the arbitration commission would be implemented as soon as the decisions of the commission were taken. Luka Biong, the GOSS Minister of Presidency, mentioned that implementation would take place within 30 days of the inking of the Abyei road map. (*Sudan Vision*)

Five foreign aid agencies suspended in Darfur

Five foreign aid organizations operating in Darfur have been suspended by the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs on the grounds that they had no technical agreement that entitled them to operate in Darfur. A Ministry official mentioned that the programs of these agencies would be assessed by

the Sudanese Human Rights Commission before being allowed to resume their activities. These organizations are Medecins Sans Frontieres, The International Rescue Committee, American Refugee Committee, the International Medical Corps, and the Norwegian Christian Aid Organization. Four of these agencies were said to be funded by the International Jewish Agency for services except for the Norwegian Church Aid and were said to have no direct impact on the lives of the refugees in Darfur. (*Al-Shari Al-Siyasi, Rai Al-Shaab, Al-Wihda*)

British FM to visit Sudan

David Miliband, British Foreign Minister, is set to visit Sudan on Wednesday, during which he will hold talks with federal government officials and GOSS. Al-Samani Al-Wasila, the State Minister of Foreign Affairs, told SUNA that he hoped Britain would play a positive role in lifting the sanctions and political pressures on Sudan, and in removing the negative stance towards the Sudan in order to establish a mutual understanding that will help in achieving peace and stability in the region. (*Al-Wihda, Sudan Vision*)

SPLA fires at UN military observers in Abyei

Yesterday, SPLA units fired at UNMIS military observers in the town of Agok, wounding two observers. One observer was shot in the head. The Sudanese Armed Forces and the UN condemned the incident and said the perpetrators would be identified and handed over to a court of law. (*Al-Khartoum, Al-Ayam, Al-Shari Al-Siyasi*)

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.