



SUDAN MORNING NEWS



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Al Bashir announces cease-fire in Darfur

- Yesterday, Sudanese President Al-Bashir announced an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Darfur and called for a campaign to disarm militias in Darfur. The announcement came at the concluding session of the forum for the Sudan People's Initiative. Al-Bashir stressed his "commitment to reach a peaceful settlement in Darfur." (*Al-Rai Al-Aam, Akhbar Al-Yom, et al*)

- Meanwhile, both the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A)-Unity faction and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) said that they "rejected the ceasefire." SLM/A-Unity faction said the ceasefire was "unacceptable without proper negotiations to determine the mechanism and conditions for the ceasefire." The rebel faction confirmed its rejection of the Sudan People's Initiative, saying "it does not really aim to solve the Darfur problem." Similarly, Suleiman Sandal, the JEM Deputy Chairman, expressed his suspicions to *Reuters* about the "authenticity of the initiative," saying that "JEM would not oblige to a ceasefire for free" and he added that "this is not an initiative of the people of Sudan, it is a National Congress Party initiative." (*Al-Rai Al-Aam, Reuters*)

- According to an article published on *Sudantribune.com*, the Secretary of External Relations for JEM, Haroun AbdulHamid, told Radio MirayaFM that the "announcement of a ceasefire by the government means a preparation for military operations." (*Sudantribune.com*)

Afeworki says Sudan "is at crossroads"

Eritrean President Assias Afeworki, who was present at the final session of the forum for the Sudan People's Initiative held in Khartoum yesterday, said that Sudan "was at crossroads and

the forum comes too late to solve the Darfur problem." However, Afeworki also said that he believes the initiative is a new Sudanese initiative to repel foreign intervention" and expressed his support. (*Khartoum Monitor, Al-Sudani*)

SPLM calls for the release of Darfur detainees

Pagun Amum, Secretary-General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), called for "the release of all political detainees in Darfur" and mentioned that "they should be considered prisoners of war." Amum said that the "SPLM has urged President Al-Bashir to issue an amnesty for these prisoners to create a suitable atmosphere for the forthcoming talks." SPLM Deputy Secretary-General Yassir Arman supports Amum's views and said that "it is important to release the detainees" in order "to set up a conducive atmosphere for negotiations." (*Khartoum Monitor*)

IFC seeks investments in southern Sudan

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, has announced that it is willing to explore investment opportunities in southern Sudan in the sectors of energy, construction materials, hotels, trade finance, and microfinance. IFC Director for Southern and Eastern Africa, Jean Philippe Prosper said that "more stable conditions on the ground and an improved business environment have created the right conditions for IFC and other investors to consider new investments in southern Sudan." (*Sudanese Online, Sudantribune.com*)

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