

SPLM calls for international intervention over clashes in South Kordofan

By Ngor Arol Garang

June 6, 2011 (JUBA)-The leadership of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) on Monday called for immediate international community assistance over armed confrontation it says was instigated by the National Congress Party (NCP), to provoke a return to war between the south and north in transitional areas.

It also claimed the SAF mission in Kadugli to be instigate the resettlement of the region with Arab tribes.

The former rebel movement which became the official ruling of the semi-autonomous region of South Sudan made the remarks in which it blamed the international community of turning a blind eye to crimes it says were being deliberately committed by the NCP.

This came following reports of armed confrontation involving elements allegedly loyal to both to the southern army, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the north's Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) in South Kordofan.

Bol Makueng, secretary for information, culture and communication with the SPLM on Monday said SAF troops entered Kadugli with tanks and heavy artilleries and have started attacking civil population in the area with intention of re-settling the land with Arab tribes as it has been alleged occurred in Darfur and Abyei.

"The Sudanese Armed Forces entered Kadugli town yesterday on Sunday 5 June 2011. They entered with tanks and heavy artilleries mounted on vehicles. This is after taking positions at strategic places around Kadugli town, especially at the airport to allow delivery of the military hardware to arm more militias in the area".

“Their mission is to disarm Sudan People’s Liberation Movement component of the Joint Integrated Units in South Kordofan and to clear the area of Nuba in order to settle Arab tribes there as done in Darfur and Abyei. This is a clear violation of the terms of Comprehensive Peace Agreement”, reads part of the release obtained by Sudan Tribune on Monday by the Secretariat of the SPLM.

Arnu Yusuf, a SPLM Secretary General for South Kordofan state confirmed the attack which he said was initiated by “hooligans and enemies of peace and democracy”.

“Yes, there was an attack by armed criminals on civil population in Umm Dorein and in three other places yesterday on June 5, 2011. There are casualties. Some innocent civilians were killed and others have fled the area”, said Yusuf.

Yusuf denied claims that the incident was initiated by supporters of the SPLM reported to be unhappy with May election results. The South Kordofan election was won by the NCP’s Ahmed Haroun, who is wanted by the International Criminal Court. Although the election was internationally accepted, controversy still surrounds the result.

He said an investigation into the cause of attack on civil population would be conducted, in order to diffuse the tension and escalation.

Musa Kaka, a senior member of the SPLM in Nuba Mountains denied that the fighting in the area was started by members of the SPLA in Joint Integrated Units (JIU). He claimed the fighting was initiated by the SAF.

“The Sudan Armed Forces in Umm Dorein and in three other places started the fighting. They entered a camp in which SPLA members of the Joint Integrated Unit lives in Talodi on Sunday and started misbehaving”, said Kaka, denying reports that some SPLM supporters stole money in agriculture bank at Talodi branch.

“These reports are not correct. The reality has been twisted. No SPLM supporters in the area have entered Agriculture bank to steal. The reality is that bank officials acted in collaboration with some soldiers from the Sudan Armed Forces took the money and claimed the money was taken by the Sudan People’s Liberation Army in order to escape from taking responsibility”.

“I repeat. There was no citizen from the area who has taken any money from the bank. The money was stolen by bank officials who acted in collaboration with some soldiers from the Sudan Armed Forces. They attack SPLA component of the JIUS in their compound just for covering purposes, explained Kaka.

He argued that there are no any armed groups in the area which can initiate the fighting apart from enemies of “peace and democracy “he said cannot be done by SPLM. “Our supporters are responsible people and people who advocate peace and dialogue. They support and prioritise dialogue as alternative to resolving differences. This is nature of our people in the Mountains. They are generous people and not naturally thief,” he explained.

He reiterated that the SAF carried out the attack on the civil population with intention to remove local inhabitants from areas of their ancestors to settle Arab tribes.

“You do not need to ask who initiated the attack if you have been following current affairs. The Sudan Armed Forces appeared in Kadugli town yesterday. This is in preparation to launch offensive operation against Sudan People’s Liberation Army component of the Joint Integrated Units in Kadugli”.

“They are also intending to attack villages believe to be stronghold of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement. They are acting in response to recent declaration of war by President Omar Al-Bashir on the

Sudanese people. So, Sudan Armed Forces are executing orders by intensifying slaughtering activities in Nuba Mountains just like they are doing against the people of Darfur”, he explained.

Earlier, Bol Makueng, head of information, culture and communications in the SPLM southern sector said the Sudanese people in the three transitional areas of Abyei, Nuba Mountains, and South Blue Nile and the people in Darfur, are being killed while the international community pays little attention.

“Omer Bashir is committing these crimes one after the other because SPLM and SPLA are peaceful. They do not want more Sudanese people to die after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), because Sudan has experienced violence and death of its people for too long. So, the NCP thinks this is weakness on part of SPLA/M”, said Makueng.

He accused the NCP of having started arming militias to commit atrocities in Darfur, Abyei, Southern Kordofan and Southern Sudan immediately after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

“Neither legal measures nor military confrontations have been taken against them. And so the NCP consider it as weakness of the SPLA/M and the international community, which are guarantors’ of the peace accord. The NCP also stole the oil money, refuses to implement vital protocols of the CPA like referendum in Abyei, popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile. Ignores and defies the call to adhere to the CPA’s protocol on Abyei, the work of the Abyei Border Commission [ABC], the Hague arbitration yet the international community failed to put more on the National Congress Party to honor the agreement. The CPA guarantors, IGAD countries and the United Nations have provided little attention on these violations. They have done very little”, he explained.

Makueng continued to argue that, throughout the CPA implementation,

the NCP has been caught red-handed distributing arms with a helicopter he said was captured and shown to the whole world yet the international community, particularly, the CPA guarantors and made no investigation.

"There was no condemnation either. It was left to SPLM to handle it alone. During referendum for the Southern Sudan early this year, the NCP planes bombed Northern Bhar el Ghazal and Western Bhar el Ghazal states. As usual, the local population suffered loss of lives and material destruction. There was still no challenge to Omer Bashir who has assumed himself the Hitler of Sudan. NCP rigged elections to install the most unpopular and an ICC wanted person, Ahmed Mohammed Harun, in Southern Kordofan as governor. Again, this crime against democracy and freedom was left to SPLM alone in Southern Kordofan to challenge it. Why? Where is the international community? Are CPA guarantors, asked Makueng, explaining that SPLM will continue to maintain peace, although a loner in this endeavor and so there is no going back to war?" asked Makueng.

He said the voice coming out from South Kordofan is calling on all the peace loving Sudanese and democratic forces in the country to stand up in solidarity with people of Abyei, Southern Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile and to reject and denounce the NCP's war monger attitude.

He called upon the international community, the CPA guarantors and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development countries to rescue the Abyei protocol, the protocol for Southern Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile, and to stop the NCP from returning the country back to war, adding "All organisations and individuals of good will to support victims of the NCP aggression".

A staff member of the UN office in Kadugli has confirmed the rising tension in the area and that their movement has restricted to the camp.

“We have been in the camp since Friday. We have not been able to leave the camp because our movement is restricted because of the security situation outside. Our national colleagues have not been advised to stay in their houses until the situation stabilizes”, said an official from UN office in Kadugli who did not want to be named