

US deeply concerned over developments in Sudan

WASHINGTON, June 11 (KUNA) -- The U.S. said here late Friday that it is "deeply concerned" by ongoing developments in Southern Kordofan, Sudan, calling on the UN to "fully investigate" these incidents.

White House Spokesman Jay Carney said in a statement that fighting between forces loyal to the Government of Sudan, including its Armed Forces and the Popular Defense Force militia, and the Sudan People's Liberation Army "threatens efforts by the parties to the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement to forge a durable peace for the Sudanese people." "The United States condemns reported acts of violence in Southern Kordofan that target individuals based on their ethnicity and political affiliation," he affirmed and that "accounts of security services and military forces detaining, and summarily executing local authorities, political rivals, medical personnel, and others are reprehensible and could constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity." "We call on the UN to fully investigate these incidents, and we demand that the perpetrators immediately halt these actions and be held accountable for their crimes," Carney stressed.

He added that the Government of Sudan "must prevent further escalation of this crisis by ceasing immediately its pursuit of a military solution to disarm the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Southern Kordofan and to dissolve the Joint Integrated Units established under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

" He stressed that the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North "must agree immediately to a ceasefire and end restrictions on humanitarian access and UN movements," and that security arrangements for Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States "should be agreed upon through direct, high-level negotiations, not by the use of force." "We are encouraged to learn such negotiations at a political level will begin on Sunday," he noted.

"With less than one month before the end of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the United States calls on the Government of Sudan to consider carefully the consequences of its current actions in Southern Kordofan," he said.

He added that "although the United States has demonstrated a commitment to forging closer ties with Sudan, grave violations of international humanitarian law as have been reported to take place in Southern Kordofan will negatively impact this process and put Sudan on a path toward deeper international isolation." "We also call upon the leaders of the Sudan People's Liberation Army in South Kordofan to avoid reprisals and other human rights violations, to agree to a cease fire, to provide full access to the UN and humanitarian agencies and to cooperate in a UN investigation of the reports of such violations," Carney remarked. (end) si.gta KUNA 110946 Jun 11NNNN