



FLICKR-HDPTCAR

Perspectives from the Arab World

This bulletin is part of FRIDE's project "The gap between narratives and practices. Darfur: Responses from the Arab world", funded by the Ford Foundation.

Main issues during February 2010:

- International initiatives towards Sudan
- Sudanese Peace Process
- ICC and Sudan
- Other issues

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A monthly selection of Arab official, journalistic and academic sources is compiled to give an overview of the main events, opinions and documents from the perspective of the Arab world.

Introduction

As the 11 April elections approach, the situation in Sudan is becoming more decisive, but it is not gaining any more attention from the Arab media. During February, the Gulf media was devoted to the assassination of a Hamas official in Dubai, the upcoming Iraqi elections and the Iranian nuclear program. The Egyptian media was focused on Al Baradei and his new role in the national political arena, Libya was confronting Switzerland and Syria was working on its new regional strategy and its relations with Washington.

The biggest concern is certainly a possible division of Sudan following the secession of the South and the regional implications it will have (mainly for Egypt). The ICC issue is not framed in the Arab media from a legal point of view but as a political move and, as a consequence, there is no difference between the Sudanese or the Arab perception of this problem.



Regarding the next presidential elections, the analysed media conclude that any of the three most important candidates (President Omar al-Bashir - NCP, Yassir Arman - SPLM and Sadeq Al Mahdi - National Ummah Party) will face many unsolved internal and external problems that will demand regional and international cooperation. The first step will be cooperating with the international observers (UN, Arab League, AU) that will be present during the elections.

The United Nations Secretary General recognised that the political and military confrontations continue to worsen the humanitarian situation of the Sudanese population. This will be the most important issue in the immediate future, since if there is no solution further clashes could occur.

■ Methodology

The main objective of this newsletter is to bridge the language gap between the Arab media and Western audiences. In order to obtain a complete picture of the information published in Arabic, five different sources have been analysed: the webpages of regional organisations, Ministries of Foreign Affairs, official news agencies, Arab think tanks and, finally, Arabic newspapers¹.

Our intention was not to cover every article published regarding Sudan and the ongoing humanitarian crisis, but to consider news items, editorials and opinion articles that reflect the main trends in the Arab media's perception of the Sudanese issue.

■ Trends

- The signing of the Darfur Framework Agreement in Doha is a step towards achieving a comprehensive peace solution to the conflict. However, some parties are not included in the agreement, so obtaining their support would be the next issue on the agenda.
- The ICC initiatives toward al-Bashir resulted in the formation of a common regional repulse, and a tense internal situation at a time when peace and stability are still a matter of discussion.
- All regional actors agree that the economic and social situation must improve in order to make the necessary political and diplomatic progress.
- The normalisation of Chadian-Sudanese relations and the international peace efforts could reinforce the will of many displaced people to return to their homes.

(1) See the list of sources monitored at the end of this newsletter.

February 2010 Arabic News Report

1. International initiatives towards Sudan

A prosperous Sudan is a unified Sudan

According to the author, The Arab League has taken the right path: to invest and to help develop the South instead of condemning and isolating it. Poverty and underdevelopment are the first causes of the conflict and if these problems are solved, other difficulties will also be solved.

Date: 24 February 2010

Source: Al Arabiya website (Arabic)

<http://www.alarabiya.net/views/2010/02/24/101325.html>

Third preparatory meeting of the International Donors' Conference for the Development and Reconstruction of Darfur

The third preparatory meeting was held in Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) at the OIC headquarters under the chairmanship of Egypt. The meeting was attended by representatives of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, the Islamic Development Bank, Egypt and the OIC.

Date: 22 February 2010

Source: Organization of the Islamic Conference website (Arabic)

http://www.oic-oci.org/topic_detail.asp?t_id=3375&ref=1444&lan=ar

Darfur and the re-engineering of Sudan

The author argues that the Darfur crisis provided a pretext for outside intervention, mainly through United Nations Security Council and the ICC. At the moment the government is pushing for a solution in order to gain internal support and to secure the international borders of the country. The improvement in relations between Chad and Sudan will aid both countries, which find themselves in a moment of transition in the Horn of Africa, especially since American and French positions reached a common position.

Date: 22 February 2010

Source: Al Arabiya Web Site (Arabic)

<http://www.alarabiya.net/views/2010/02/22/101096.html>



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إعلان الفاشر

الصادر عن اجتماع مجلس جامعة الدول العربية على مستوى المندوبين الدائمين في دورته غير العادية المنعقدة في الفاشر بتاريخ 14 فبراير/شباط 2010
مدينة الفاشر - جمهورية السودان

إن مجلس جامعة الدول العربية في دورته غير العادية على مستوى المندوبين الدائمين المنعقد في مدينة الفاشر بشمال دارفور يوم 14 فبراير/شباط 2010، بمشاركة معالي السيد/ عمرو موسى، الأمين العام لجامعة الدول العربية وبرئاسة مساعدة السفير يوسف أحمد المنسوب الدائم للجمهورية العربية السورية، رئيس الدورة الحالية لمجلس الجامعة، وقد دعي للمشاركة في أعمال هذه الدورة غير العادية لمجلس الجامعة كل من السيد/ مني أركو مناوي، كبير مساعدي رئيس جمهورية السودان ورئيس السلطة الانتقالية بدارفور، والسيد/ عثمان محمد يوسف كبير، والي ولاية شمال دارفور، والسيد/ حسبو محمد عبد الرحمن، المفوض العام للعون الإنساني، والسيد/ إبراهيم جمبري، الممثل الخاص المشترك للإتحاد الأفريقي والأمم المتحدة في دارفور.

وإذ يؤكد على قرارات القمم العربية السابقة في هذا الشأن، وآخرها قراري قمة الدوحة 2009 حول: دعم السلام والوحدة والتنمية في السودان، ورفض قرار الدائرة التمهيدية للمحكمة الجنائية في حق فخامة الرئيس عمر حسن أحمد البشير.

ويعد أن قام بزيارة ولايات دارفور الثلاث، وافتتح المنشآت العربية في قرى هبيلنا كناري ومراية جونفي وبركة، ولمس الجهود الحثيثة التي قامت بها الآلية المشتركة المكونة

Arab League meeting

The meeting that was held in El Fashr (North Darfur) at a ministerial level under the chairmanship of Amr Musa, Secretary General of the Arab League. He concluded by 'giving the complete support to Sudan, his stability, sovereignty, security and unity'.

Date: 14 February 2010

Source: Arab League website (Arabic)

http://www.arableagueonline.org/lasimages/picture_gallery/Elfaashr1-2-2010.pdf

About Gheit meets with the Africa Elders Panel on Darfur

The meeting between the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a delegation of The African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur formed part of the efforts to unify the positions of the regional powers on the Darfur issue. Egypt recognised the importance of the international efforts to persuade the ruling parties of the necessity of solving all pending problems before the referendum, in order to prevent any future conflict.

Date: 11 February 2010

Source: Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (Arabic)

http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA_Portal/ar-EG/MFA_News/Press_Releases/dar-foor1122010.htm

Donors conference for the Development and Reconstruction of Darfur

During his trip to Egypt the OIC Secretary General met the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In a press conference

following the meeting, the OIC official recognised the constructive role Egypt is playing in Sudan and the negative impact of the ICC decision on President al-Bashir.

Date: 07 February 2010

Source: Organization of the Islamic Conference website (Arabic)

http://www.oic-oci.org/topic_detail.asp?t_id=3309&ref=1425&lan=ar

2. Sudanese Peace Process

Egypt welcomes the agreement between the Sudanese Government and the JEM

According to the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman, this agreement is a very important reconciliatory step. He expects that this treaty will motivate I armed and unarmed movements to unify their positions and select their representatives to resume negotiations with the Sudanese Government in order to reach a comprehensive and just peace agreement to end the Darfur crisis.

Date: 24 February 2010

Source: Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (Arabic)

[http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA_Portal/ar-](http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA_Portal/ar-EG/MFA_News/Press_Releases/SUDAN2422010.htm)

[EG/MFA_News/Press_Releases/SUDAN2422010.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA_Portal/ar-EG/MFA_News/Press_Releases/SUDAN2422010.htm)

The Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council welcomes the Doha Agreement

According to Abdulrahman Bin Hamad Al Attiyah, this is an 'historical agreement'. He also said that the Qatari

government's idea to establish a development bank in Darfur will be a practical and important step in that region. According to the GCC official, this agreement shows the ability of Qatari diplomacy to achieve reconciliation in the Arab world.

Date: 24 February 2010

Source: Gulf Cooperation Council website (Arabic)

<http://www.gcc-sg.org/index.php?action=News&Sub=ShowOne&ID=1498>

Organization of the Islamic Conference welcomes the new Peace Agreement

During the signing ceremony of the Peace agreement between the government of Sudan and the JEM, the Secretary General of the OIC said that this treaty will 'pave the way for a just, comprehensive and sustainable peace in Darfur'.

Date: 24 February 2010

Source: Organization of the Islamic Conference website (Arabic)

http://www.oic-oci.org/topic_detail.asp?t_id=3395&ref=1456&lan=ar

OIC Secretary General on the signing of the Framework Agreement in Ndjamena

The Secretary General welcomed this agreement and recognised as a gesture of good will the lifting of the death sentences issued against several JEM members. He also thanked the Chadian government for its efforts and renewed his calls to the rebels, especially those who are not part of the Doha Peace Process.

Date: 21 February 2010

Source: Organization of the Islamic Conference Web site (Arabic)

http://www.oic-oci.org/topic_detail.asp?t_id=3376&ref=1446&lan=ar

3. ICC and Sudan

GCC expressed its rejection to the ICC position towards al-Bashir

The Secretary General of the ICC rejected the ICC's decision concerning the Sudanese President at a moment when Arab and African efforts are achieving some results. He also said that the politicisation of this issue does not serve the principles of justice and international law.

Date: 07 February 2010

Source: Gulf Cooperation Council website (Arabic)

<http://www.gcc-sg.org/index.php?action=News&Sub=ShowOne&ID=1477>

The screenshot shows the Arabic website of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The header includes the OIC logo and the text 'مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية' and 'الأمانة العامة'. Below the header, there is a navigation menu with links for 'الرئيسية', 'أخبار التعاون', 'الدول الأعضاء', 'الأمين العام', 'المكتبة الرقمية', 'إصدارات حديثة', and 'روابط'. The main content area features a news article titled 'الأمين العام لمجلس التعاون يصف اتفاق الدوحة بين الحكومة السودانية وحركة العدل والمساواة بالتاريخي' (The Secretary General of the Cooperation Council describes the Doha agreement between the Sudanese government and the Justice and Equity Movement as historic). The article text is partially visible, mentioning the Secretary General's statement on the agreement.

OIC Secretary General cautions against the new move by the ICC

Dr Ihsanoglu expressed his concern about the ICC decision to charge Sudanese President al- Bashir again. While recognising his commitment to justice, the Secretary General said that these developments could affect the ongoing efforts to bring peace to Sudan. He reaffirmed his position on this issue: the ICC arrest warrant must be suspended by the UN Security Council in order to cooperate with the stability in Sudan.

Date: 06 February 2010

Source: Organization of the Islamic Conference website (Arabic)

http://www.oic-oci.org/topic_detail.asp?t_id=3290&ref=1421&lan=ar

4. Other issues

'Holding it together'

Dina Ezzat describes the economic and diplomatic foreign presence in Juba, the capital of South Sudan, and the Arab initiatives that are taking place in order to try to convince the Government of South Sudan to remain united to the North. If the Arabs do not occupy those positions in the south, outside powers will do so.

Date: 25 February 2010

Source: Al Ahram Weekly (English)

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2010/987/fr2.htm>

'Sudan... the beginning of the rescue'

The next presidential elections will not be the solution to the Sudanese problems. Many people from the South will not

participate since the security and political situation is far away from being safe. Besides that, the position of al-Bashir is more favourable than the position of other candidates as he is able to use official resources.

Date: 16 February 2010

Source: Al Arabiya website (Arabic)

<http://www.alarabiya.net/views/2010/02/16/100484.html>

Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs meets Sudanese Vice President

Ahmed Aboul Gheit received Ali Osman Taha in Cairo to discuss matters of common interest. Egypt stressed the importance of coordinating the different international efforts in Darfur and the need to unify the numerous political factions in the region. According to the Egyptian point of view, NCP and SPLM must solve the remaining problems before the elections.

Date: 09 February 2010

Source: Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (Arabic)

http://www.mfa.gov.eg/MFA_Portal/ar-EG/MFA_News/Press_Releases/soudan9210.htm

OIC Secretary General on Sudan-Chad bilateral relations

The OIC welcomed the normalisation of the bilateral relations between Chad and Sudan. According to the Secretary General, 'this cooperation will improve the chances of a final settlement of the Darfur conflict'.

Date: 09 February 2010

Source: Organization of the Islamic Conference website (Arabic)

http://www.oic-oci.org/topic_detail.asp?t_id=3314&ref=1429&lan=ar

GCC Secretary General receives the Sudanese Ministry of commerce

During the visit of the Sudanese Ministry to several GCC countries, he met with the Secretary General of this Organization in Saudi Arabia. They review the economic and commercial relations between Sudan and the Arab Gulf countries.

Date: 08 February 2010

Source: Gulf Cooperation Council website (Arabic)

<http://www.gcc-sg.org/index.php?action=News&Sub=ShowOne&ID=1479>



'Don't forget Sudan'

Abdel Moneim Said analyses the different steps that the southern Sudanese politicians have taken in the past that could lead to the potential secession of South Sudan. This will be one of the biggest challenges to Egyptian foreign policy since it will 'strike the heart of Egyptian security and interests in several ways'. Besides secession in the South,

the developments in the North of Sudan could also affect Egyptian security, mainly through the export of extremism.

Date: 04 February 2010

Source: Al Ahrām Weekly (English)

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2010/984/op1.htm>

■ Chronology - February 2010

25 February

- United Nations Security Council calls on all parties in the conflict in Sudan's Darfur region to join in the Darfur Framework Agreement.

23 February

- Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) reaches an agreement with the Sudanese government (Darfur Framework Agreement) in Doha.

22 February

- Joint UN-African Union Envoy visits North Darfur

21 February

- UNAMID Joint Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari meets the US Special Envoy Scott Gration in Khartoum.

16 February

- UNAMID peacekeepers ambushed in South Darfur.

15 February

- US Special Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration travels to Chad and Sudan.

14 February

- Clashes on the Kenya/Sudan border.

13 February

- Extraordinary session of the League of Arab States in El Fasher, North Darfur.

10 February

- UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative, Henry Anyidoho, visits South Darfur.

09 February

- Joint UN-African Union Envoy to Darfur meets with Armed Rebel Movements in Doha.

08 February

- Chadian president Idriss Deby visits Khartoum.

07 February

- A French aid worker was released after nearly three months in captivity.

01 February

- Joint Special Representative for UNAMID Ibrahim Gambari participates in the 14th Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Summit in Addis Ababa.

■ Annexes

International Donors Conference for the Development and Reconstruction of Darfur

Source: Organization of the Islamic Conference website

http://www.oic-oci.org/external_web/darfur/en/index.asp

■ List of sources

Regional Organisations' web pages

Arab League	http://www.arableagueonline.org/
African Union	http://www.africa-union.org/
Organization of the Islamic Conference	http://www.oic-oci.org/
Gulf Cooperation Council	http://www.gcc-sg.org/

Ministries of Foreign Affairs' web pages

Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs	http://www.mofa.gov.qa
Saudi Arabia - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	http://www.mofa.gov.sa/
Libya - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	http://www.foreign.gov.ly/
Egypt - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	http://www.mfa.gov.eg/
Sudan - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	http://www.mfa.gov.sd/

News agencies

Al Jazeera	http://www.aljazeera.net/
Al Arabiya	http://www.alarabiya.net/
Qatar News Agency	http://www.qnaol.net/
Saudi Press Agency	http://www.spa.gov.sa/
Emirates News Agency-WAM	http://www.wam.org.ae/
Jamahiriya News Agency	http://www.jananews.ly/
Middle East News Agency (MENA)	http://www.mena.org.eg/
Sudan News Agency	http://www.sunas-sd.net/
Radio Dabanga	http://www.radiodabanga.org/

Arab think tanks and information web pages

To understand Darfur	http://ifhamdarfur.net/
Arab Program on Human Rights	http://www.aphra.org/pcd/
Arabic Network for Human Rights Information	http://www.anhri.net/
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies	http://www.cihrs.org/
Al Academy for Graduate Studies	http://www.alacademia.edu.ly/

Newspapers

Ash sharq al awsat	http://www.asharqalawsat.com/
Al Hayat	http://www.alhayat.com/
As Sahafa	http://www.alsahafa.sd/
Sudan Tribune	http://www.sudantribune.com/
Al Ahram	http://www.ahram.org.eg/
Al Watan Al Libi	http://www.alwatan-libya.com/
Tripoli Post	http://www.tripolipost.com/