

RELEASE IN FULL

CONFIDENTIAL

June 8, 2011

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: Sudan intel

During the evening of June 7, 2011, a source with direct access to the commanders of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and advisers to President Omar Hassan al-Bashir stated in confidence that the Department of Intelligence and Security (DIS) of the SAF has established a clandestine relationship with dissident members of the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM) and its military wing, the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA), in support of a secret plan to undermine the claim by the SPLM led government of Southern Sudan to the oil producing district of Abyei. This region and its capitol, Abyei Town, have been disputed since the beginning of the first Sudanese Civil War in the mid-1970's. Both the Khartoum and Juba regimes are working to control oil production in the region, as well as the operations of the Greater Nile Oil Pipeline that runs through Abyei en route to loading facilities at Port Sudan.

According to this knowledgeable source, SAF/DIS officers under the command of the SAF deputy Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Sidiq Aamir have established contact with SPLM dissidents, including Peter Gadet and George Athor. Aamir

and his staff, operating on orders from Bashir and vice president Ali Osman Taha, chose the Abyei region for these operations based on the knowledge that the area's oil deposits are still substantial and, with the loss of the oil fields further south, very important to the economic well being of the Khartoum regime. Also, while Abyei is inhabited primarily by the Ngok Dinka people, who are supporters of the SPLM/SPLA and the Southern Sudanese Government in Juba, the region is widely used for dry season grazing by the Misseryia, a nomadic Muslim people living in Southern Kordofan. This group is loyal to Bahsir, and the Khartoum regime cited their protection as one of the reasons for sending troops into the area prior to the recent fighting.

According to these very sensitive sources, the fighting in Abyei in mid-May 2011 came after SPLA dissidents, under the influence of the SAF/DIS, staged operations against representatives of the Khartoum government, giving Bashir a reason to send between 500 and 1,000 SAF troops to the region. The regular SPLA forces reacted to this by ambushing SAF forces later in May, killing 22 soldiers. Bashir then used this attack as an excuse to overturn the Abyei Protocol of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), sending in up to 5,000 troops to take control of the district.

Sensitive sources with access to the SPLM/SPLA state that their leader, Salva Kiir Mayadit, has instructed SPLA commanders to continue guerrilla attacks against SAF forces in Abyei. At the same time, these sources add that Salva Kiir and his advisors have also come to realize that SPLA dissidents are cooperating with the SAF.

(Source Comment: One particularly sensitive source added in strict confidence that

at present only a small number of SPLA dissidents are active in Abyei, however; as the situation deteriorates and the SAF becomes entrenched, there will be an increasing number of attacks by SPLM/SPLA dissidents against regular supporters of the Juba government, with the support of the Northern forces. This source believes that Abyei situation will involve a struggle for power and financial gains by various tribal factions, particularly the Dinka, Nuer, Shilluck, Equatorians, and Murle. This source expressed concern that this situation does not bode well for the future of the new state of South Sudan.)

As background, a source with access to the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) stated in confidence that, on the evening of 19 May, SPLA troops ambushed and opened fire on 200 SAF troops as they were moving outside of Abyei. The SAF troops were being escorted by a convoy of UN peacekeeping forces of the UNMIS in six vehicles.

(Source Comment: This same source added that the SAF announced that 22 of its soldiers were killed, with dozens missing. The Bashir government also stated that the SAF initiated a massive operation to evacuate the wounded soldiers, and harshly criticized UNMIS officials, who reported that they could not determine the identity of the attackers. UNMIS confirmed the attack on its peacekeepers, without mentioning SAF, and said it took place in an area controlled by the SPLA. However, the mission stopped short of directly accusing the SPLA of being responsible. The UNMIS officials stated privately that they were convinced that the attacks had been conducted by SPLA dissidents acting under influence of the SAF/DIS. UNMIS officially called for an investigation into the attack, saying it constitutes a crime punishable under international law.)

This sensitive source added that, as part of the SAF/DIS covert action operation, the Sudanese state minister for foreign affairs, Salah Al-din Wansi, followed the incident in Abyei with an official statement that the ambush represented a breach of the CPA; the second in a chain of CPA violations by the SPLA. At the same time, the civil administration in Abyei, which is loyal to the SPLM, accused the SAF of launching air and ground attacks against civilian targets in the region.

(Source comment: According to sensitive sources with access to the Juba, Salva Kiir is concerned that the fighting in Abyei will lead the UN to defer a final decision on the future of region, removing it from the Southern Sudan Transitional Draft Constitution. The SPLM believes that this step will lead to international mediation under UN auspices, which could, in turn, transform Abyei into a UN protectorate, with Khartoum and Juba forced to divide the profits from the oil fields equally. This source added that Salva Kiir is aware of the fact that the SAF may also decide to simply occupy Abyei on an indefinite basis, creating a situation similar to that existing between Israel and Palestine.)

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