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**Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes in
Africa**



MEDIA MONITORING

24 June 2015

DRC

DR Congo army clashes with Ugandan rebel in Garamba Park, 5 killed

NEWS STORY

Source: Xinhua

Kinshasa, 23 June 2015 - Five people were killed and several others injured last weekend during clashes where troops of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) and Ugandan rebel were involved in Garamba National Park, north of the country, local civil society groups and an army official told Xinhua on Monday.

The clashes were between the DR Congo army and Garamba park rangers on one side, and a gang of poachers led by Ugandan rebel group, Lord's Resistance Army, on the other.

The sources said the army and park rangers fell into an ambush laid by about 100 armed poachers on Saturday.

The five victims included two soldiers, a park ranger and two assailants, according to the sources.

The army's operational commander within Dungu area where the clashes took place, confirmed that to Xinhua.

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Les professionnels des médias de l'Afrique centrale en atelier sur les élections

ARTICLE

Source: ACP / MCN, via mediacongo.net

Kinshasa, 23 juin 2015 - Un atelier sous-régional de deux jours regroupant les professionnels des médias de l'Afrique centrale s'est ouvert lundi 22 juin à Kinshasa sur le thème: « Médias, élection et développement d'Afrique Centrale ».

Organisé par l'Union des syndicalistes des professionnels de la presse de l'Afrique Centrale (USYPAC), avec l'appui de la Fondation Friedrich Ebert (FES), cet atelier vise à renforcer les capacités des professionnels des médias de la sous-région pour affronter et reporter avec professionnalisme les élections dans leurs pays respectifs.

Le président du Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel et de la communication (CSAC), Tito Ndombi, a indiqué, dans son discours d'ouverture, que les médias jouent un rôle indispensable dans le bon fonctionnement d'une démocratie, pour autant qu'ils peuvent informer le public sur l'efficacité de ses représentants et l'aider à exiger des comptes.

Il a également fait savoir que les médias peuvent jouer un rôle plus spécifique en facilitant la pleine participation de tous aux élections, en éduquant les électeurs sur la manière d'exercer leurs droits démocratiques et en couvrant la campagne électorale.

Il s'agit aussi de fournir aux partis politiques un moyen de communiquer leur message à l'électorat, de leur permettre de débattre entre eux, de surveiller le dépouillement et de publier les résultats, de suivre de près le processus électoral lui-même dans le but d'évaluer son équité, son efficacité et son intégrité.

Le président de l'USYPAC, Stanis Nkundiye, a relevé le rôle essentiel des médias avant, pendant et après les élections, soulignant qu'ils sont considérés comme le gardien du temple. Comment les médias de l'Afrique centrale, connus pour leur pauvreté, auront-ils joué leur rôle de gardien de temple? S'est-il interrogé.

La représentante résidente de la FES, Susanne Stollreiter, a indiqué que les médias sont très importants pour la démocratie, particulièrement en période électorale, avant d'ajouter qu'ils ont une fonction de contrôle en leur qualité de 4ème pouvoir.

Le président de l'Union nationale de la presse au Congo (UNPC), Kasonga Tshilunde, a aussi fait remarquer que le journaliste doit faire correctement son travail en tenant compte des règles d'éthique et de déontologie.

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Les participants aux assises de Kinshasa vont réfléchir sur différents thèmes, notamment « Etat des lieux sur le processus électoral dans les pays d'Afrique centrale », « les élections en Afrique centrale : Etat des lieux, défis et perspectives », « les élections, vecteur de développement des communautés en Afrique centrale » et « élections libres et transparentes : quel rôle pour les médias indépendants ? Comment les médias surveillent-ils les élections? » .

Cet atelier concerne une vingtaine des professionnels des médias provenant de huit pays d'Afrique centrale, notamment le Cameroun, la République du Congo, la République Centrafricaine, le Tchad, le Gabon, le Sao Tome et Principe, la Guinée Equatoriale et la République démocratique du Congo (RDC), signale-t-on.

RWANDA

Karake arrest strains fragile UK-Rwanda relations

OPINION

Source: BBC

By Karen Allen

23 June 2015 - The arrest of General Karenzi Karake in London is bound to strain what is increasingly becoming a fragile relationship between Britain and Rwanda.

Like two best friends, harsh words are exchanged from time to time, but on this occasion it feels like a smart slap whose sting may last for some time.

It is perhaps not surprising that the detention of Rwanda's head of intelligence is being flagged up by London as a European "obligation" rather than a British decision.

There is a strong ambition in Whitehall that the matter simply goes away. After all it was a Spanish high court judge that made the accusation of war crimes, not a British one.

Rwanda has long been considered by Britain as one of its closest allies in the region and "an African success story".

Following the genocide in 1994 in which 800,000 mainly Tutsis perished in unspeakable violence, Britain has pumped millions into development aid and Rwanda has responded with impressive rates of economic growth.

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The Rwandan government is said to be "furious" with Britain, as much for the style in which the arrest was made as the substance of the indictment itself.

Broadly speaking, Rwanda's view is that the Europeans, by issuing an arrest warrant, have been hoodwinked by pro-Hutu sympathisers.

It feels energies should be better channelled into chasing the Hutu militia - known as the FDLR - still wreaking murderous havoc in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo, rather than pursuing alleged war criminals from Rwanda's troubled past.

It is a well rehearsed argument.

When Britain temporarily suspended direct budget support to Rwanda in 2012, following allegations by a UN group of experts that Rwanda was funding the Tutsi-dominated M23 militia waging war in eastern DRC, it also suggested its long-term friend had been influenced by genocide deniers.

Rwanda is still deeply haunted by its past and European leaders, who acknowledge they didn't do enough to intervene in one of the worst atrocities of a generation, are silenced.

Britain is Rwanda's biggest bi-lateral donor contributing £66m a year in aid to Rwanda.

That figure swells to nearly double when European contributions are added.

British businesses are increasingly looking for new investment opportunities in Rwanda from real estate to mining to financial services and the conservative "wealth agenda" in Africa has put Rwanda centre stage.

But Britain is often criticised by some activists for pursuing a policy of wealth creation at any price - not doing enough to challenge President Paul Kagame's human rights record in his dealings with his opponents and the media.

'Extremely embarrassing'

Andrew Mitchell - Britain's former international development secretary - for whom Rwanda has become something of a poster boy for development - has been the most outspoken on the British side so far, since Gen Karake's arrest.

He told me it was "extremely embarrassing" that the intelligence chief was arrested during "official diplomatic business" and said that he and others were still trying to figure out "why now?"

General Karake is a frequent visitor to the UK and has been for many years.

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Twitter users have suggested that the arrest of such a prominent figure is "revenge" for a recent dispute with the BBC, following a controversial Panorama programme questioning the historic record of the genocide.

This is patently not true as the BBC has no influence over European arrest warrants or the police. But it does beg an important question.

How does Britain navigate a relationship based on trust and mutual respect, when the execution of a European Arrest Warrant is seen by some in the Rwandan leadership, not as a legal practicality but the ultimate act of betrayal?

BURUNDI

Burundi's ruling party boycotts UN-mediated crisis talks

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

Bujumbura, 23 June 2015 - Burundi's ruling party said on Tuesday it had boycotted the restart of UN-led talks hoped to broker peace between rival parties following weeks of violence and ahead of elections on Monday.

The troubled central African nation has been in crisis since late April over President Pierre Nkurunziza's controversial bid to stand for a third consecutive five-year term.

This move is branded by opponents as unconstitutional and a violation of a 2006 peace deal that ended 13 years of civil war.

Opposition politicians as well as civil society and religious leaders attended the talks, but neither Nkurunziza's CNDD-FDD party or the presidency sent representatives.

"The CNDD-FDD party informs the national and international community that its priority is the continuation of its election campaign," party president Pascal Nyabenda said.

"The CNDD party therefore wishes to communicate that it will not participate in dialogue during this period," he added, calling it a diversion "aimed to disrupt the elections."

Parliamentary elections are planned for June 29, ahead of the presidential vote on July 15.

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Interior Minister Edouard Ndiwumana, the government representative to the talks, also did not appear.

A new UN mediator, Senegalese diplomat Abdoulaye Bathily, arrived in Burundi on Sunday after his predecessor Said Djinnit quit when civil society leaders accused him of bias.

Burundi's opposition, which has said that fair polls are not possible because independent media have been shut down and many opponents have fled the country, accuses the president of trying to force a vote regardless of the crisis.

Last week, the Burundian human rights group Aprodeh said that at least 70 people have been killed, 500 wounded and more than 1 000 jailed since late April, when the opposition took to the streets to protest Nkurunziza's bid to remain in power.

More than 100 000 people have fled the violence to neighbouring countries.

Nkurunziza survived a coup attempt last month and has since faced down international pressure, including aid cuts, aimed at forcing him to reconsider his attempt to stay in power, which diplomats fear could plunge the country back into war.

UGANDA

Uganda: LRA weapons found buried in CAR

NEWS STORY

Source: APA

23 June 2015 - Ugandan peacekeepers deployed in the Central African Republic have commandeered 30 pieces of Sub Machine guns and twenty seven AK47 empty magazines suspected to have been buried by fleeing rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). "Considering the fact that the rebels are already experiencing scarcity of arms, this is a big achievement and, no doubt, their combat capacity will never be the same. The LRA demise is in sight," the commander of the Ugandan Contingent in Central Africa, Col Michael Kabango said in a statement sent to Kampala Tuesday.

Ugandan soldiers are in the Central African Republic as part of the African Union Regional Task Force that is fighting insurgents in the war-torn country.

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The LRA has over the decades buried weapons when under pursuit for easier escape, with a hope to return, at a later date, to recover them.

However, UPDF spokesman Lt. Col Paddy Ankunda said the UPDF has often discovered the arms caches, while sometimes, the LRA rebels have been chased away too far to return for the arms.

The African Union Regional Task Force was formed in 2012 after the African Union declared the LRA insurgency a regional challenge.

The forces have since made some progress against the LRA whose leader Joseph Kony has been in hiding for years despite an indictment for his arrest and prosecution.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Centrafrique: nouvelles accusations d'abus sexuels sur enfants par des Casques bleus

ARTICLE

Source: Jeune Afrique avec l'AFP

La mission de l'ONU en République centrafricaine (Minusca) a été informée d'accusations d'abus sexuels qui auraient été commis par ses Casques bleus "contre des enfants des rues à Bangui".

23 Juin 2015 - Un nouveau contingent de la Minusca est soupçonné d'avoir commis ces crimes. Les faits « pourraient remonter à 2014, mais n'ont été signalés que le 19 juin à la mission de l'ONU en Centrafrique, a indiqué mardi 23 juin le porte-parole de l'ONU Stéphane Dujarric.

Selon une autre source de l'ONU, il s'agit « d'un contingent africain ». Deux jeunes filles de moins de 16 ans auraient été exploitées sexuellement à Bangui, a précisé un responsable de l'ONU sous couvert de l'anonymat. Les deux jeunes filles ont affirmé à une ONG locale avoir reçu de la nourriture et des produits en échange de relations sexuelles.

L'ONU tente de vérifier ces accusations et « fournit un soutien aux victimes ». Le pays dont est originaire le contingent soupçonné a été averti le 20 juin. L'ONU a donné dix jours à ce pays pour lui faire savoir quelles mesures il comptait prendre. « Nous

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espérons qu'il va enquêter et nous tenir au courant » et qu'il « va agir rapidement », a ajouté Stéphane Dujarric.

« Sanctions appropriées »

L'ONU s'en remet aux pays contributeurs de troupes pour sanctionner leurs ressortissants coupables de tels abus. La Minusca avait déjà demandé il y a quelques semaines au Maroc d'enquêter sur des accusations de viol sur mineure commis par un de ses soldats.

« Si ces (dernières) accusations sont confirmées, il s'agirait d'une grave violation des principes de l'ONU et du code de conduite des Casques bleus », a assuré M. Dujarric. « Nous demanderons au pays concerné de prendre rapidement les sanctions appropriées ».

L'ONU est déjà sous le feu des critiques pour sa gestion d'une affaire d'accusations de viols d'enfants en RCA par des soldats français et africains. Ces soldats n'étaient cependant pas sous son commandement. Quatorze militaires français font l'objet d'une enquête judiciaire en France dans cette affaire.

Les Nations unies ont chargé lundi trois experts indépendants d'évaluer la manière dont elle a géré cette affaire et de lui recommander des mesures pour améliorer les procédures en vigueur.

Les cas d'harcèlement et d'abus sexuels commis par ses Casques bleus dans le cadre des missions de maintien de la paix sont nombreux. Selon un récent rapport interne, des soldats de la paix ont échangé de l'argent ou des téléphones contre des faveurs sexuelles de centaines de femmes en Haïti et au Liberia.

EU Reinforces Its Support to Central Africa, Pledging EUR350 Million

NEWS STORY

Source: RTT News (<http://www.rttnews.com/2515008/eu-reinforces-its-support-to-central-africa-pledging-eur350-million.aspx?type=pn>)

23 June 2015 - EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, signed the Central Africa Regional Indicative Program (RIP) of the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) for an amount of EUR350 million for the period 2014-2020.

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The signature took place in the presence of Ministers and representatives of the Central African region, the Secretary General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the President of the Commission for Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC).

The program implementation will be monitored by a steering committee. It will cover three areas: political integration and cooperation in peace and security (EUR43 million), regional economic integration and trade (EUR211 million, of which EUR135 million will go through the Infrastructure Trust Fund), and the sustainable development of natural resources and biodiversity (EUR88 million). Another EUR8 million is set aside to support technical cooperation and regional authorizing officers.

The region of Central Africa includes 11 countries: Angola, Burundi, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Sao Tomé and Príncipe.

The European Commission said that Equatorial Guinea never signed the revised Cotonou Agreement, and can therefore not directly benefit from EDF funding. The region has a total population of about 160 million with the Democratic Republic of Congo accounting for nearly half. It is a region rich in natural resources, covering the largest tropical forest area after the Amazon.

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa threatens to quit ICC over Bashir

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

24 June 2015 - South Africa threatened on Tuesday to withdraw from the International Criminal Court after an outcry over the government's refusal to detain Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on genocide charges.

Bashir flew out of Pretoria last week after attending a meeting of the African Union despite a court order that barred his departure, sparking international criticism of President Jacob Zuma's government.

In a heated parliamentary debate, the lead speaker for Zuma's ruling African National Congress said South Africa would press for reforms of the ICC, accusing it of losing

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credibility because countries such as the United States had failed to place themselves under the control of the Hague-based organisation.

"The ANC reserves the right to raise these reform packages and if rejected we will have no alternative but to review our membership of the ICC," said Obed Bapela, deputy minister of traditional affairs.

The opposition Democratic Alliance had accused the government of a serious breach of the constitution by allowing Bashir to leave the country.

"The Zuma government has committed a crime of allowing a wanted man to evade the law," said Stevens Mokgalapa, the DA's shadow minister of international relations.

The South African court which called for Bashir to be prevented from leaving the country has given the government until Thursday to explain why it defied the court order.

In parliament, the ANC made its case clear, claiming that because Bashir was attending a meeting of the AU he was entitled to immunity, in the same way heads of state received immunity from arrest in the United States when they attended the United Nations general assembly.

"We are not going to use the AU as a platform to arrest leaders -- that will never happen," Bapela said, adding that international criticism of South Africa's action showed "contempt" for the continent.

This line was supported by radical opposition lawmakers in the Economic Freedom Fighters, who usually totally oppose government positions.

They said that former US president George Bush and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair should be arrested for war crimes over Iraq, and that leaders of Israel -- which has also not joined the ICC -- should be prosecuted for offences against the Palestinians.

Bashir has evaded justice since his indictment in 2009 for alleged serious abuses in the western Sudanese region of Darfur. The conflict began in 2003 when black insurgents rose up against his Arab-dominated government, protesting they were marginalised.

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SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan: UN Mission Reports Five People Injured in Shooting At Juba Marketplace

NEWS STORY

Source: UN News Service

22 June 2015 - The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) today reported that five internally displaced persons (IDPs) - four women and one man - were shot during an incident early Saturday evening.

That shooting took place at a market area adjacent to the site where the UN provided civilians protection in Juba, the capital.

Seriously wounded, four of the victims were taken to a clinic inside the UN site for medical treatment.

"Another two displaced people were injured as they fled the scene of the shooting. UNMISS is investigating the incident," stressed the UN Spokesperson during a press briefing today.

Meanwhile, for the 6th consecutive day, UN aircrafts have been denied permission to land at the Mission's county support base in the Upper Nile State town of Nassir by armed opposition forces.

The amount of supplies for the UNMISS personnel stationed at the Nassir base is reaching critically low levels as a result of the inability to operate flights into Nassir, warned the Spokesperson.

Since the beginning of the year, some 60,000 civilians have fled the country, mostly to Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda bringing the total number of people who fled since the start of the conflict December 2013 to 555,000. Some 1.5 million are internally displaced and more than 3.8 million - a third of the country's population of 11 million - do not have sufficient food.

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Le choléra et la rougeole s'abattent sur les Soudans

ARTICLE

Source: Jeune Afrique avec l'AFP

Aux prises avec la guerre civile et l'insécurité alimentaire, les Soudanais du Sud doivent maintenant affronter un nouveau fléau : une épidémie de choléra. Pendant ce temps, les Soudanais voisins se battent avec une « énorme épidémie » de rougeole qui touche l'ensemble du pays.

23 Juin 2015 - Au Soudan du Sud, au moins 18 personnes sont mortes depuis le 1er juin 2015 en raison d'une épidémie de choléra, selon le ministère de la Santé. Au total, 117 cas ont déjà été recensés.

L'épidémie aurait pris naissance dans les bases surpeuplées des Nations unies dans la capitale Juba, où se sont réfugiées près de 30 000 personnes depuis le début de la guerre civile en décembre 2013, selon Riek Gai Kok, le ministre de la Santé. Le choléra est une infection provoquée par l'ingestion d'aliments ou d'eau contaminés et peut provoquer la mort en quelques heures en l'absence de traitement.

Le gouvernement sud-soudanais était sous le feu des critiques depuis quelques jours parce qu'il refusait de déclarer l'épidémie malgré le nombre grandissant des cas déclarés. L'an dernier, plus de 6 400 personnes avaient été infectées par le choléra au Soudan du Sud faisant 167 morts. L'Organisation mondiale de la santé avait alors lancé une campagne de vaccination.

Dix-sept des 18 États soudanais sont affectés par la rougeole

Par ailleurs, au Soudan voisin, au moins 2 511 cas de rougeole et 38 décès ont été confirmés depuis le début de l'année 2015, soit quatre fois plus qu'en 2014. « Nous voyons des cas de rougeole tous les ans au Soudan, mais jamais plus de 500 ou 600 cas sur l'ensemble de l'année », a expliqué Geert Cappalaere, le coordinateur par intérim des affaires humanitaires de l'ONU au Soudan. « Ce qui nous inquiète aussi c'est que l'ensemble du pays est touché », a-t-il précisé.

Dix-sept des 18 États soudanais sont affectés par la rougeole, une maladie contagieuse qui s'accompagne de fièvre et qui peut provoquer des complications allant des lésions cérébrales à une perte de l'audition ou de la vue.

Près des trois quarts des cas concernent des jeunes de moins de 15 ans. Selon l'ONU, cette épidémie serait attribuable à une défaillance dans les précédentes campagnes de vaccination qui n'ont pas touché assez d'enfants.

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En avril dernier, une vaste campagne de vaccination avait été lancée par le gouvernement soudanais, aidé de l'ONU et d'autres ONG, pour immuniser près de huit millions d'enfants dans l'est du pays. La seconde phase de vaccination a été enclenchée lundi au Darfour, vaste région de l'ouest du Soudan touchée par un conflit depuis plus de 10 ans.

SUDAN

Arresting Bashir 'would have risked peace process in Sudan'

OPINION

Source: BD Live (<http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/2015/06/24/arresting-bashir-would-have-risked-peace-process-in-sudan>)

By Natasha Marrian

24 June 2015 - Debate on Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir's visit to SA over a week ago, divided the National Assembly on Tuesday, with the government accused of flouting both international and domestic law.

But the African National Congress (ANC) hit back, accusing the opposition of being indifferent to the urgent necessities of the African Union (AU) to attain peace and stability on the continent.

In the snap debate, some opposition parties accused the government of violating both international and domestic law in allowing him to leave the country without being arrested for war crimes and genocide, while others argued that the niceties of African politics could not possibly allow the arrest of an African head of state on South African soil.

None of the government heavyweights accused of being involved in Mr Bashir's secret departure from SA — Defence Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, Police Minister Nathi Nhleko, International Relations and Co-operation Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane and State Security Minister David Mahlobo — participated in the debate.

Tuesday's debate was also a major departure for the ANC in Parliament as last week questions to Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa about the matter were ruled off-limits as the matter was still before the courts.

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Introducing the debate, which was called by the Democratic Alliance (DA), its MP Stevens Mokgalapa said "justice must be done for the 300,000 Africans murdered in Sudan".

His DA colleague, James Selfe, said Mr Bashir was apparently escorted to the airport by President Jacob Zuma's protection team so that he could escape arrest.

"There can be no doubt at all that government colluded to defy the ICC and our courts."

The highest representative of the ANC, Small Business Development Minister Lindiwe Zulu said the arrest of an African head of state on South African soil was out of the question and the ANC's position was inextricably linked to the situation on the African continent. She said the arrest of Mr Bashir would have jeopardised the peace process in Sudan.

Deputy Minister in the Presidency Obed Bapela said the International Criminal Court (ICC) was losing direction and the ANC reserved the right to raise the issue of the reform of the ICC.

In a decision taken on Saturday, the ANC wants the government to send a delegation to The Hague to raise its concerns over the shift in the mandate of the ICC and for SA to suspend its membership.

Sudanese president says army possesses 'sophisticated' force

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

Khartoum, 23 June 2015 - The Sudanese president Omer Hassan al-Bashir declared that the army has become recently in possession of resources that made it a "large and sophisticated deterrent force" with the ability to protect and secure the country from any internal and external dangers.

Pro-government Ashorooq TV quoted him as saying that this enabled the army to protect the country without getting into wars with neighboring countries.

Sudan's military is self sufficient in the light weapons, ammunition and armored vehicles produced by the Military Industrialization Commission.

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Bashir's statements were made public on Tuesday during a handover ceremony at the Ministry of Defence from outgoing minister Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein to acting minister General Mustafa Osman Obeid.

The president also issued a decree read by presidency minister Salah Wansi awarding Hussein to grant the former defense minister the 'Excellence Award' "in recognition of his effort in the development and modernization of the armed forces in a variety of industrial, scientific and legal fields and his concern for the soldier, his weapons, work environment and in recognition of his performancein extending security and stability in Sudan".

The new defense minister said that the army would go ahead with its plan to secure the country and protect the homeland as well as developing military manufacturing and training.

He renewed the call for rebels to join the peace process to stop the bleeding and focus on building the country.

Hussein for his part said that despite the challenges faced by army in previous periods, they went on to achieve its objectives in the field of manufacturing to raise capacity and training.