

Bin Ladin Condoles With Al-Bashir on Salih's Death

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[Please note: Images may have been removed from this document. Page numbers have been added.]

[Unattributed report: "Rebels Say Attack on Juba Imminent"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Khartoum, Nairobi, Al-Quds al-'Arabi -- Sudanese President 'Umar al-Bashir has received a letter of condolences from Saudi Islamic activist Usama Bin Ladin following Sudanese Vice President al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih's death in a plane crash.

Bin Ladin said in the letter: "This tragedy has come at a time when the international Christian crusade is rushing madly against our country Sudan and against the heart of the Islamic world."

He added that "its (the international Christian crusade's) fleets are plowing the seas of Islam. They are besieging and blockading the peoples of the region as a whole with total disregard for pledges and charters, and are violating the sacred sites and draining all the wealth, while the al-Aqsa Mosque remains the prisoner of this Christian-Jewish alliance."

[passage omitted on the plane crash]

Meanwhile, Sudanese and Ugandan officials have been exchanging accusations concerning a probable plan to invade Sudan from the south.

Southern rebels have announced that their attempt last month to seize the city of Wau, the south's second largest city, has left the city's airport and garrison within range of their artillery and that this increases the chances of an overwhelming attack to seize the Sudanese southern capital of Juba. Observers have said that the Sudanese Government has massed 60,000 troops there to repel any attack. Khartoum reacted angrily to reports that Sudanese People's Liberation Army Commander Colonel John Garang, who has been fighting against it for 15 years, has met with a delegation of Western ambassadors in a strategic city situated on the road to Juba. [passage omitted citing Ugandan newspaper reports that attack on Juba is imminent]