



AFRICA/SUDAN - Tension rises between north and south Sudan, the UN launches the alarm to avert a possible war

Khartoum (Agenzia Fides) - Tension rises between Sudan and Southern Sudan, including reports of new clashes on the border between the two countries (see Fides 05/12/2011) and new measures by Khartoum to try to control the export of southern Sudanese oil. The Sudanese Parliament approved an amendment to the law on December 8 that allows the export of oil to the Ministry of Finance in Khartoum to confiscate a portion of oil exports if the owner fails to pay its taxes. The measure is designed to condition the southern Sudanese exports which take place through the pipelines that pass through the territory of the north. Khartoum says it has a credit of 727 million dollars in unpaid taxes for 4 loads of south Sudanese oil which have been exported through its territory. According to the President of the Parliament of Khartoum, northern Sudan demands to raise the customs duty on southern Sudan crude oil from 8 to \$ 36 per barrel. This figure however was not confirmed by the Oil Ministry in Khartoum.

According to Herve Ladsous, Under Secretary General for UN Peacekeeping operations, the tension between the two countries is likely to escalate into open war. Ladsous invoked the two sides to return to the negotiating table as soon as possible to avoid further conflicts that would have a significant impact on the region. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 09/12/2011)