

08 August 2010

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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

Highlights

Al-Bashir issues expulsion threat to UNAMID

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 07/08/10 – President Omar Al-Bashir stepped up pressure on UNAMID by threatening to expel them should they attempt to block or hinder the work of the authorities in this country.

"Any aid group or UN or African Union agency, even UNAMID — their mandate is to support government authorities," he told a gathering of Darfur leaders in Khartoum Saturday.

"I tell my brothers the governors of Darfur that anyone who exceeds these boundaries or their mandate can be expelled the same day" he added. The directive by the Sudanese leader means that the governors of the three states of Darfur are empowered to issue expulsion orders while at the same time informing the Presidency, according to Sudan official news agency (*SUNA*).

"No one has the right to prevent the government from doing its job to protect civilians," Al-Bashir said.

"The camps in Darfur are Sudanese territory under Sudanese authority and there is no authority in this world which can stop the government from ... prosecuting criminals who break the law" he stressed.

The remarks appear referring to the unwillingness of UNAMID to hand to Khartoum six IDP's accused of instigating violence in the Kalma camp in South Darfur.

UNAMID chief Ibrahim Gambari met with Sudanese officials and conveyed to them today that it is in their best interest to drop their demand of handing over the wanted individuals. The mission will not hand over anyone to Sudanese authorities without a set of guarantees, according to talking points obtained by Sudan Tribune on Thursday.

The United Nations says that Khartoum has prevented international aid agencies from entering the Kalma camp and it is believed that it is running short on food and water.

Bashir also ordered governors in Darfur to confiscate weapons and limit it to uniformed forces.

"We decided to stop the war in Darfur and the work on all axes of development and reconciliation and the involvement of everyone, without isolating anyone and unifying energies and efforts to return Darfur to better [state] than it was" he said.

He expressed hope that a solution to the Darfur conflict would be reached before year end.

23 SPLM-Northern Sector members defect to SPLM-DC

Khartoum Monitor Khartoum, 08/08/10 – Some 23 members of the SPLM have defected to join the SPLM-DC, according to the SPLM-DC's Secretary for Culture and Information, Peter Adwok. He told a press conference at the party headquarters in Khartoum yesterday that all 23 were members of the Northern Sector of the SPLM mainstream.

N. Bahr-al-Ghazal, Unity, Warrap poorest states in southern Sudan - survey

Radio Miraya [via BBC Monitoring] Khartoum, 06/08/10 - The National Baseline Household Survey on poverty in southern Sudan, released on Thursday [5 August], suggested that Northern Bahr-al-Ghazal, Unity and Warrap are the poorest states in southern Sudan.

The State Statistical Director in Northern Bahr-al-Ghazal, Arun Atuer Jok, pointed out that

poverty rates are higher in the Greater Bahr-al-Ghazal Region. The survey on poverty in southern Sudan was conducted by the Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation in the year 2009 and was conducted in Northern Sudan by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Kalazar outbreak kills more than 40 people in Jonglei state

Sudantribune.com Bor, 07/08/10 - Officials in Jonglei State have reported an outbreak of the deadly Kalazar disease in the area. The disease which struck this week has already left 48 people dead and more than 130 people hospitalized, with the fear that the death toll could get higher.

According to the Minister for Law Enforcement in the state, Gabriel Duop Lam, the victims were having difficulty accessing areas where they could receive medical treatment.

Mr. Duop who returned from Ayod town on Thursday added that many patients are locked up in villages due to lack of transport and heavy flooding in the area, thus making it difficult for them to access health units.

Sudan's oil giant set to meet Ethiopia's annual fuel demand

Sudantribune.com Addis Ababa, 07/08/10 I- Sudan Petroleum Corporation (Sudapet), the state-owned oil producing giant, heads toward becoming Ethiopia's only Benzene supplier, ending the age-long fuel imports of the country mainly from the Middle East.

The Ethiopian Petroleum Enterprise said today that the Sudanese oil company will begin supplying 100% of Ethiopia's annual benzene consumption as of next month.

UN refugee agency "concerned" over access and security in Darfur

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 07/08/10 - Problems of security and access have "seriously curtailed humanitarian activities in Darfur", says the deputy commissioner of the UN's refugee-protection arm, UNCHR.

"We are deeply concerned about the threats faced by humanitarian workers and the increasing frequency of abductions," said UNHCR's Deputy High Commissioner Mr. Alexander Aleinikoff, according to a press release seen by **Sudan Tribune**.

Aleinikoff, who arrived in Sudan yesterday on a six-day visit during which he will travel to southern Sudan and western Darfur, held meetings with government officials on refugee and IDP issues. The UN official noted that "security and access have seriously curtailed humanitarian activities in Darfur".

EU appoints new envoy to Sudan

The Citizen Khartoum, 08/08/10 – The European Ministerial Council has decided to appoint Rosalind Marsden as the new European Envoy to Sudan, replacing Turin Brail. Rosalind will assume her office on 1st September.

State lifts pre-publication newspaper censorship

Local dailies Khartoum, 08/08/10 –Director of the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) Mohammed Atta declared pre-publication censorship on local newspapers has been lifted with effect from yesterday. He pointed out that this step was necessary because they felt that the reasons why censorship was imposed in the first place no longer exist. He cited these reasons as erroneous information on Sudan's relations with the neighbouring states, pro-secessionist rhetoric

and instigation to tribal conflict.

He told the *Sudan Media Center* that he hoped that editors would have a spirit of responsibility and that self-censorship would prevail in their work with an eye at the need to preserve national security and integrity.

Mohammed Atta warned however that the NISS would maintain the right to impose censorship should they feel there is need to do so.

Japan donates \$6.6 million to WFP

Khartoum Monitor Khartoum, 08/08/10 – The WFP is set to receive a donation of \$6.6 million from the Japanese Government later today. The signing ceremony takes place at the WFP offices in Khartoum and will be officiated by the Japanese Ambassador to Sudan and Corinne Fleischer, the Deputy Regional Director and Acting Head of the WFP.

Referendum Monitor:

Partners to resume post-referendum talks today

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 08/08/10 – As parties to the CPA gear up to resume talks today on post-referendum arrangements, informed sources report that the two sides have agreed that southern Sudan would continue to use the petroleum pipeline to the north even in the event of secession. The sources say however that the talks to be resumed today may hit a deadlock on the issue of the country's debts as the SPLM is said to insist that it would only be responsible for that part of the country's foreign debts that were spent on southern Sudan.

Meanwhile SPLM Deputy Secretary-General Yassir Arman has called on the NCP to “raise its bid for unity” by being courageous and proposing a series of constitutional amendments that would restructure the government.

In a separate development, SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum says a meeting of the SPLM Political Bureau may have to be delayed because the schedule coincides with the meeting of the partners on post-referendum issues. He also pointed out that the SPLM would seek clarification from the South Sudan Referendum Commission on whether statements attributed to one of its members on possibilities of a delay in the referendum was the official position of the Commission or not.

Parties to announce six-months delay of the referendum on Wednesday

The parties to the CPA have agreed on a postponement of the 2011 referendum, informed sources intimated to *Al-Akhbar*. The sources say that the two sides agreed during their talks in Cairo to a six-month delay of the referendum and that this would officially be announced next Wednesday. Meanwhile, the sources add, each side is currently briefing its respective leadership of the reasons for the decision to delay the exercise.

SPLM criticises Commission's statement on possible referendum delay

The Citizen Khartoum, 08/08/10 – The SPLM has rejected as unacceptable any attempt to postpone the south Sudan referendum before the completion of the organs of the Commission and the appointment of the Commission's Secretary-General. SPLM Deputy Secretary-General, Yassir Arman, yesterday criticized in a recent statement by the Referendum Commission's Spokesperson, Tarig Osman, calling for “procedural postponement” of the referendum. He pointed out that this shows that the commission is affected by the strict control the NCP has on the mass media.

In a related development, NCP Political Secretary Ibrahim Gandour told a rally organised by the Youth Council for Support of Unity in Khartoum yesterday that the NCP is committed to the conduct of the referendum as per the timeframe set out by the Referendum Commission, reports *Al-Ahdath*. The paper muses that the statement is an indication that the NCP would accept a delay in the conduct of the referendum should the Commission so advise.

According to *Al-Sahafa* (Saturday 07/08/10 edition), Tarig Osman Al-Tahir, a member of the South Sudan Referendum Commission, said that the delay in the work of the Commission is mainly due to the delay in the selection of a Secretary-General. He was responding to a question by the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly on why the Commission was dragging its feet on a number of areas of its duties. He had pointed out that the delay in the selection of the Secretary-General would make it difficult for the Commission to stick to beat the timeframe for the conduct of the referendum and may require a short postponement. "The remaining time is not enough to hold the referendum," commission member Tarig Osman told *Reuters*.

He said the registration of voters should be completed and published three months before the plebiscite according to the referendum law, and that was impossible in the time left.

"We have only two choices -- skip some of the procedures, which would be unacceptable because it could affect the endorsement of the referendum," Osman said. "The other choice is a limited delay to the referendum timetable to complete the procedures."

The delay would last no longer than six months, he added.

AEC concerned over delays in Abyei referendum body, border demarcation

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 06/07/10 - Sir Derek Plumbly, Chairman of the Assessment and Evaluation Commission (AEC) has raised concerns over delays in forming the Referendum Commission of Abyei region as well as standstill on the demarcation of the north-south borders.

Addressing the National Assembly on 05 August, Plumbly said that the fact that the Abyei Referendum Commission is yet to be appointed was "a matter of real concern," warning that this existing situation contributes to "increased insecurity" in the disputed region.

"The Abyei referendum is timed in the CPA to coincide precisely with that of the people of the South, and it is therefore a matter of real concern that the Abyei Referendum Commission has not yet been appointed," he said, adding that "the lack of forward movement on Abyei, despite the PCA ruling last year, is contributing to increased insecurity there."

Plumbly underlined the importance of political actions to finalize the demarcation of the north-south borders. "Action at the political level to resolve these outstanding questions without further delay, in addition to continuing technical work to survey and demarcate the line on the ground, is clearly now of the utmost importance," he told parliamentarians.

In contrast, Plumbly expressed satisfaction with the popular consultation process in southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, telling his audience that the AEC was impressed by "the evident seriousness with which the process is being taken locally; and by the quality of the partnership between the parties in both states."

Plumbly also said he had "no doubt" that the remaining provisions of the CPA could be completed before the end of the Interim Period, explaining that his confidence stems from his belief that "nobody in Sudan wants to see a return to conflict" and that he was "struck by the extent to which mutual self-interest and interdependence point in the positive direction".

Plumbly concluded his address by stating that the remaining phases in the CPA would "require accelerated effort, an enhanced intensity of engagement and a renewed spirit of accommodation".

Preparation for January referenda poses big challenge for UN in Sudan

Xinhua, 07/08/10 – UNMIS Force Commander Major-General Moses Bisong Obi said here on Friday that preparation for the January referenda poses a big challenge for UNMIS, and stressed the need for increased aviation resources and freedom of movement in order to secure the African country for the upcoming referenda.

The statement came as Obi was briefing the UN Security Council on the situation in Sudan during an open debate on UN peacekeeping operations.

"UNMIS is in a very crucial period in its mandate implementation as Sudan approaches the referenda that will determine its future," he said.

Obi said that although the two referenda are the national government's responsibility, both north and south have requested assistance from UNMIS with this important historical event.

"UNMIS planning and preparation is in full flow for providing support to the referenda," he said. "Technical reconnaissance of the 79 County Referendum Bases is completed and logistic and engineering planning is at full tilt in order to set up the bases ready for occupation."

Obi explained that UNMIS needs more resources, particularly aviation assets in order to ensure safety in the period leading up to the referenda. Planes are necessary because the roads in south Darfur are often impassable.

Obi indicated that the inability to move UNMIS components around Sudan is also highly problematic. "Freedom of movement is a constant challenge to us in the force and for all elements of the Mission," he said. "These incidents range from deliberate obstruction of logistic convoys to the feeding of false information about security in certain areas."

He also cited some violent incidents aimed at harming UNMIS, like the July 26 abduction of a UNMIS helicopter and the brutal beating of its crew.

Sudan demands ruling party in south to declare official stance on unity

Al-Rai Al-Aam [via BBC Monitoring] Khartoum, 07/08/10 - The government has officially demanded that the Sudan People's Liberation Movement [SPLM] to declare its official stance on the two scenarios of south Sudan's referendum (unity or secession); asking the SPLM whether it wants a united Sudan with 1 million square miles or less.

Federal Minister of Information, Kamal Obeid, said that the government's opinion on the issue of unity and separation is clear and unequivocal in contrast to the inconsistency of the SPLM's discourse.

In a radio interview on 06 August, Obeid demanded that the SPLM declares an official stance on the issue of unity and secession, adding that the final say is up to the citizens of south Sudan. Any political force must have an opinion in favour of one of the two choices and opaqueness in politics is harmful Obeid said and called on the Sudanese people to accept the outcome of the referendum. However, he said that the referendum must be conducted in a democratic climate.

The SPLM countered on 08/08/10 with a statement by SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum saying that those statements were representative of the views of the NCP and not the government. *Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports that Amum further pointed out that the people of southern Sudan, not the political parties, are the ones to decide come the 2011 referendum.

VP Taha calls for equal opportunities in the media over referendum options

Al-Ayyam Khartoum, 08/08/10 – Vice-President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha has called on the

Ministry of Information to grant priority to strengthening the unity option but pointed out that advocates for unity and secession have to be given equal opportunities in media outlets.

North, south Sudan agree on media cooperation during referendum

Radio Miraya [via BBC Monitoring] Khartoum, 07/08/10 - The Federal and GoSS Ministries of have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) aimed at harmonising the information and standards in the process of the upcoming referendum. GoSS Minister of Information, Benjamin Marial, stressed the importance of coordination between the two ministries in all field and the need to avail all the necessary support in order to implement the MoU.

Separation is better than Garang's unity – Nafei Ali Nafei

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 08/08/10 – NCP Vice Chairman Nafei Ali Nafei says talk about the unionist inclinations of the “Garang Boys” within the SPLM is much exaggerated. He said that secession is a lot better than the unity they espouse because that unity of a “New Sudan” targets Sudan’s integrity.

Nafei, who was speaking to a number of Egyptians in Cairo en route to Sudan from Damascus yesterday, pointed out that his party has made a number of concessions especially with regards Security Arrangements in a bid to realise unity and appease the SPLM. He expressed confidence that the referendum would result in unity if monitored by regional and international actors. He warned that the NCP would not recognise the results of a referendum conducted under SPLA control or ahead of the demarcation of the north-south border.

UN may establish monitoring panel for South Sudan referendum

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 05/08/10 - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon may form a three-member panel to monitor the 2011 South Sudan referendum, a request that was made by the ruling National Congress Party and the Sudan people Liberation Movement (SPLM).

"The secretary general is considering the idea of creating a panel of three people, supported by 20 people on the ground, just to monitor [the referendum] in full coordination with other observers from the EU [European Union], AU [African Union] and the [US-based] Carter Center," Alain Le Roy, the head of UN peacekeeping operations told reporters on Wednesday.

Roy said that the panel supported by 10 to 20 people on the ground, would report directly to him but did not say who would pick the members of the committee or the criteria that will be used for selection.

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Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200