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Media Monitoring Report

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Headlines

- Sudan condemns Israeli attack against Flotilla of Freedom (**Sudan Vision**)
- Divisions within SPLA (**Al-Intibaha**)
- Athor advises civilians, NGOs to leave Bentiu before attack (**Al-Intibaha**)
- Renegades coordinate attacks on South Sudan army (**Reuters**)
- Al-Bashir, Kiir discuss formation of new government (**Al-Ayyam**)
- GoSS provides SDG 20 million for referendum (**Miraya**)
- GoSS displeased by USG Holmes statement (**Al-Rai Al-Aam**)
- National Assembly elects Atem Garang as Deputy Speaker (**Miraya**)
- Sudan says South Africa's president misquoted on arresting Bashir (**ST**)

Pre-Referendum Watch

- Eritrean diplomat says his country first to support South Sudan's self-determination (**ST**)
- US urged to intervene in Sudan's 2011 referendum – ICG (**ST**)

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Highlights

Sudan condemns Israeli attack against Flotilla of Freedom

Sudan Vision 1/6/10 - Sudan strongly condemned the Israeli attack against the Flotilla of Freedom heading for Gaza ferrying unarmed civilians from different countries.

Sudan called on the international community, governments, organizations and peoples to line up against the Zionists and to show the force of the law against Israel for committing humanitarian and genocide crimes against the Palestinian people and their supporters.

Statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs called for the solidarity of the international community to prevent Israel from committing crimes with impunity.

The statement said that the forces of the Zionist enemy, in a new chapter of Israeli crimes, proceeded to attack the Flotilla of Freedom, which includes unarmed civilians from different countries.

The statement indicated that the said crime is different from the Israeli series of heinous crimes carried out every day as long as they enjoy the protection of the super powers and collusion by large governments including the suspicious silence of the United Nations.

The statement said that Sudan's government strongly condemned Israel's repeated crimes and calls upon the international community to rally against Israel and show the force of law by preventing Israel from committing crimes against humanity and genocide.

Divisions within SPLA

Al-Intibaha 1/6/10 – SPLA commanders who hail from the Nuba Mountains, Greater Equatoria as well as the Nuer yesterday refused to fight on the side of the SPLA in its war against defectors in Unity state, George Athor and Galwak Gai. The commanders described events in the state as tribal war between the Dinka and the Nuer and they have no interest to involve themselves in such a war. The commanders have also called for the removal of the state governors and the politicians who have used the army to settle accounts.

Meanwhile, SPLA dispatched 7,000 soldiers from Rumbek to the Unity state to attack Gai but clashes between the Dinka and the Nuer led to the defection of 1500 Nuer soldiers who protested the Dinka domination of the leadership of the SPLA and the intelligence.

Athor advices civilians, NGOs to leave Bentiu before attack

Al-Intibaha 1/6/10 – renegade Gen. George Athor yesterday advised civilians, NGOs, northern traders and truck owners to leave the town of Bentiu before an imminent attack by his forces.

Meanwhile, sources said 380 SPLA soldiers from Attar camp south of Malakal defected and joined Gen. Athor.

Renegades coordinate attacks on South Sudan army

Reuters 31/5/10 - Three top officers who quit south Sudan's army over alleged fraud in national elections are coordinating attacks in the oil-producing region, a renegade general said on Monday, but the army played down the threat.

"Southerners are not happy with what happened during the elections," said George Athor, a senior general who complained of fraud after losing in the April elections and went on the run on April 30.

"I have many people who joined me, one of them is Colonel Galwak Gai and the other is David Yauyau, and we have others in other areas," he added.

Yauyau, who told Reuters he was coordinating operations with Athor, carried out an attack in Jonglei state a week ago, forcing the United Nations to evacuate 10 staff. The south Sudan army (SPLA) said Gai attacked it in oil-rich Unity state on May 28.

"Militia commander Galwak Gai came and attacked our position," said SPLA Spokesman Kuol Diem Kuol, adding that only one soldier was wounded but they had found two attackers' bodies and took four prisoners.

Gai's telephone was out of service on Monday.

Kuol said Gai was on the run and his 360 soldiers were scattered, and loyal troops were searching for Athor. "We are advising him to surrender ... if he resists then we will capture him by all means," he said.

Kuol said that in separate incidents, eight people were killed and 27 wounded in Lakes state when the SPLA intervened to try to stem tribal clashes over tit-for-tat cattle raids.

"The local youths in the village immediately fired on our forces while they were still in the trucks," Kuol said. "That force went down and started to defend themselves."

Escalating tribal clashes and other signs of insecurity have restricted aid operations in the south, where almost half the population is short of food.

According to ***Sudan Tribune website*** 31/5/10, SPLM former candidate for the Presidential elections, Yasir Arman, speaking to Sudan Tribune yesterday accused the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) military intelligence and security services of supporting the rebelled generals in the South saying they implement plans to destabilize the southern region.

"We have very accurate intelligence about continued efforts by the military intelligence and security services to undermine stability in southern Sudan," he said. "These schemes threaten the whole peace agreement," he added.

He further disclosed that they had discussed the issue with the National Congress Party. "This operation is designed to evade the referendum through igniting internal wars in the south," he stressed.

However the Sudanese army rejected the accusations saying the renegade generals do not need to SAF weapons to rebel.

The SAF "do not need to arm militias in the south at this time," said Alsoarmi Khaled Saad the official spokesperson of the Sudanese army in statements he made to Al-Aayam newspaper.

He pointed out that the UN was monitoring arms movement in the areas of ceasefire. He further challenged the southern Sudanese army (SPLA) to reveal the names of individuals

allegedly supported by the Sudanese army (SAF) and the amounts of money the army paid.

The Southern Sudan will conduct a referendum on self-determination next January on whether to remain within the current Sudan or to declare an independent state. The ruling National Congress Party says it would work to convince southerners to vote for unity while many SPLM leaders call openly for separation.

In Khartoum, the First Vice President and President of Southern Sudan Government Salva Kiir Mayadrit on Monday met with southern Sudanese figures members of the National Congress Party and former militia leaders who integrated to the Sudanese army.

Riek Gai, leading NCP member and former presidential adviser, said the meeting aimed to create a conciliatory spirit among the people of southern Sudan in this very sensitive period ahead of the referendum.

The delegation included Gen. El-Tom Al-Nur Daldoom, Gen Gabriel Dank, Gen. Thomas Abor, Gen. Gordon Dom Chol, Gen. John Doerr, Gen. Brigadier Gai James Gai and Gen. Brigadier Tor Gayn.

Al-Bashir, Kiir discuss formation of new government

Al-Ayyam 1/6/10 – President Al-Bashir and FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit hold a lengthy meeting yesterday for discussion on formation of new government. Reportedly, Kiir will submit a list of SPLM leaders who will occupy ministerial portfolios in the new government.

Akhbar Al-Youm 1/6/10 reports that the NCP Council of Leaders will hold a meeting tomorrow Wednesday to be chaired by President Al-Bashir to endorse the formation of new government. Reportedly, the NCP Shura (consultation) will also hold a similar meeting on Saturday.

In a related development, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** 1/6/10 reports NCP official Dr. Kamal Obeid as saying that there were consultations and understandings between the NCP and the signatory movements on a number of issues including participation in the upcoming government. Obeid said consultations were continuing with the political forces, except the opposition, to form the new government.

GoSS provides SDG 20 million for referendum

Miraya website 31/05/10 - Southern Sudan's Vice President, Riek Machar, has said that the GoSS would be formed only after the formation of the federal government. He said that the GoSS has allocated SDG 20 million for the referendum, adding that the federal government and the international community would provide the remaining cost equally. He also disclosed that the head of judiciary in Southern Sudan will be Deputy Chairman of the Referendum Commission.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Legal Affairs in Southern Sudan, Micheal Makuei has criticized the National Congress Party (NCP) for insisting on deploying federal police officers in Southern Sudan for the referendum, saying that the NCP "does not trust" southern forces. He remarked that so far southern forces have managed to secure the census survey and a general election, adding that security in the south falls within the jurisdiction of southern security forces.

GoSS displeased by USG Holmes statement

Al-Rai Al-Aam 1/6/10 – GoSS has expressed displeasure over USG John Holmes' statement describing the humanitarian situation in the South as "disaster". The newspaper has learned that the SPLM lodged an official protest to UN demanding Mr. Homes to correct what it

described as “negative statements” about the South. In his response to the SPLM, Mr. Holmes explained that the media had focused on the political aspect of his statement instead of the humanitarian side, the objective of the visit.

National Assembly elects Atem Garang as Deputy Speaker

Miraya website 31/5/10 - The National Assembly on Monday elected Atem Garang as Deputy Speaker. The Parliament also discussed the formation of a peace and unity committee, an amendment to reduce the number of committees from 20 to 17 and to increase the number of deputies to 3, with one deputy position reserved for women.

Sudan says South Africa’s president misquoted on arresting Bashir

Sudan Tribune website 31/5/10 - The South African President Jacob Zuma was misrepresented by media when he was quoted saying that president Omer Al-Bashir would be arrested if he was to attend the FIFA World Cup Finals, hosted by Johannesburg, taking place next month on its territory, Sudanese foreign ministry said on Monday.

Last Friday Zuma speaking to lawmakers said that his country will honor its obligations under international law which effectively means that Bashir will be arrested since he is subject to an arrest warrant by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes allegedly committed in Darfur.

"South Africa respects the international law and certainly we are signatories [to ICC Statute] and we abide by the law," Zuma.

Pressed again whether Bashir would or would not be arrested if he entered South Africa, in view of the fact all African heads of state had been invited to the major soccer event Zuma reiterated his position.

"In my response, that’s the first thing I answered. I answered very clearly that South Africa respects the international law. And that answers the question,"

But Sudanese foreign ministry spokesperson Muawiya Osman Khalid said that Zuma’s stance was consistent with the African one which calls for a moratorium on ICC proceedings, as it would leads to a continued deterioration of the situation.

Khalid said that media distorted Zuma’s remarks to serve an agenda. He further added that is position is a wise one and avoid making preference of justice over peace or vice versa else it would quash both objectives.

South Africa has made it clear several times since Bashir’s indictment in March 2009 that he is vulnerable to apprehension. This was despite the African Union (AU) decision in July of last year to halt cooperation with the ICC in executing the warrant.

However, South Africa issued a formal statement afterwards saying it cannot abide by that resolution.

South African president said that the position of the AU is not to scrap the warrant but to defer it for 12 months with a UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution to give time to fix the crises in the East African nation.

“We reconcile our participation in the process while the leader of that country [Sudan] has the warrant of arrest, on the basis of the African Union decision,” Zuma said.

"The AU took a very deliberate decision and requested the international court to postpone the action against Bashir, given the fact that we're dealing with a situation of violence, that if it acted immediately, it could reverse the situation in Sudan," he added.

"That was done collectively by the African leaders and the message was sent. It was correct to do so, because our view was that if you did that, that situation could have got worse. That's what the AU has said. The AU has not said we must not arrest Bashir".

"It looked at the situation and felt it was necessary to move cautiously on this matter. That's what we've done. And that's why we're reconciling the two points," he said.

Pre-Referendum Watch

Eritrean diplomat says his country first to support South Sudan's self-determination

Sudan Tribune website 30/5/10 - The Eritrean Consul-General in the Southern Sudan's capital, Juba, said his country was the first to support the principle of self-determination for the people of Southern Sudan.

Alem Negash made the remarks during the celebration on Eritrea's 17 years of independence, which was organized by the Eritrean community residing in Juba.

He said self-determination is a recognized right of a people worldwide, saying Eritrea was the first IGAD-member country that supported the call for self-determination of the people of Southern Sudan in mid 1990s shortly after it gained independence from the rest of Ethiopia.

Negash further commended the good relations between Southern Sudan and Eritrea. Commenting on the upcoming referendum due in seven months, he said it was the right of the people of Southern Sudan to go to polls in January next year to determine their future destiny between unity and separation.

Speaking during the same occasion, the minister of Trade and Commerce and acting minister for Regional Cooperation, Dr. Barnaba Marial Benjamin, expressed his appreciation on behalf of the government for the bilateral cooperation between the two regions.

US urged to intervene in Sudan's 2011 referendum - ICG

Sudan Tribune website 31/5/10 - Sustained and high level leadership from the international community-including the United States is essential in ensuring that events leading to Sudan's referendum unfold peacefully, David Mozersky, Horn of Africa Project Director at the International Crisis Group said.

In a mouth-watering testimony delivered before the Subcommittee on African Affairs, Senate Committee in Foreign Relations last week, Mozersky said the forthcoming referendum will be a critical moment for Sudan's future to be reshaped, for better or for worse.

Describing the US as the guarantor of the 2005 CPA, and the author of the Abyei Protocol, Mozersky said the U.S. government has a unique and important responsibility to help provide leadership and support to the people of Sudan in the months and years ahead.

Analysts widely contend that southerners will vote for secession, if the vote is free and fair.

However, as the referendum date draws closer, pressure is still mounting on issues that need to be resolved, including resolving the north south border dispute that has raged on for decades.

According to political analysts, failure to address some of these contentious matters could sow the seeds for future conflict and governance and capacity challenges in the South that could be exacerbated post-referendum.

"There is a genuine risk of a return to large-scale North-South conflict in the run-up to the referendum and the fault lines for the coming months are becoming clearer," the testimony entitled, "Assessing Challenges and Opportunities Facing Sudan" party reads.

Over the past years, relations between the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and their southern counterparts, the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM) have been characterized by mistrust, with both accusing the other of delaying the implementation of the CPA.

As such, political analysts contend that the response of the U.S. Government and the broader international community will be critical towards seeing that the referendum is held on time per the terms of the peace agreement.

Already, the SPLM is opposed to any form of negotiations that are likely to delay the conduct of referendum for possible southern independence.