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United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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South Sudan vote continues smoothly (*Aljazeera.net*)

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/2011/01/201111143230487286.html>

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Balkanisation strategy in Sudan (*Gulf News*)

<http://unhq-apps-03.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2011-01-10GVEL-8CYNH2>

UK Sudan... Tears Begin to Flow (*Asharq Al-Awsat*)

<http://unhq-apps-03.un.org/dpi/nmu.nsf/ac/2011-01-10GVEL-8CYPN9>

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Highlights

Second day of voting closes peacefully

Local dailies 11/1/11 – Polling on the second day closed at 6:00 pm in a peaceful atmosphere. Reportedly, turnout on the second day was less than the previous day.

Interior Minister Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid, who toured polling centres, confirmed that the police forces would continue shouldering their legal duties to maintain security and stability in various states.

Neither observers nor local police so far registered any polling-related incident, according to **Akhir Lahza** 11/1/11.

The SSRC announced that the number of voters who voted in the North on the first day of polling reached 14% out of the registered voters while in the South it is estimated at 20%, according to **Al-Sahafa** 11/1/11. SSRC Chairman, Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil, who visited several polling centres in Khartoum yesterday, said the process is proceeding smoothly.

The SSRC also announced that release of the final result of the process depends on whether there are appeals or not, if there are no appeals it will be released on 7 February otherwise on 14 February, according to **Ajras Al-Hurriya** 11/1/11.

Sudan referendum to meet required turnout - organisers

Reuters 11/1/11 - Huge turnout at south Sudan's independence referendum has defied gloomy expectations and is almost guaranteed to reach the 60 percent of voters needed to make the poll valid, organisers said on Tuesday.

Thousands of people took part in the third day of voting in a referendum expected to see the war-ravaged, oil-producing but poor region emerge as Africa's newest state.

The largely peaceful vote in the south has been marred by four days of clashes between Arab nomads and southerners in the contested border region of Abyei.

"It is proceeding very, very smoothly. There doesn't seem to be any fear of not reaching the 60 percent limit. As a matter of fact we think it will do a lot better than that," said the chairman of the vote's organising commission, Mohammed Ibrahim Khalil.

Khalil, a northern lawyer based in Khartoum, told Reuters some polling centres had already received between a quarter and a half of the voters registered in their district in the first two days of the week-long vote.

"There were times when we thought we would not be able to get the job done. But everyone worked hard. If you come and have a look at the commission premises you will find people there all day and practically all night," said Khalil.

The commission's deputy head Chan Reek Madut told Reuters high turnouts meant organisers would probably not have to extend the voting period. "Saturday should be the last day (of voting)," he said in the southern capital Juba.

SRSB monitors Torit polling

The Citizen Torit, 11/01/11 –SRSB Haile Menkerios commended the referendum process saying that it was very unlike last April's elections where a lot of complaints had been raised on issues of missing names.

Mr. Menkerios, who was visiting Torit town in Eastern Equatoria to monitor the polling exercise, called upon the Torit community to maintain the tranquil spirit. He said that UNMIS would continue to provide all the necessary technical assistance to the referendum body for a peaceful and successful exercise.

UN commends referendum process in Jonglei state

Sudan Tribune.com 10/1/11 - Benjamin Mkapa, the Chairman of UN Secretary-General's Panel for the Referenda in the Sudan, praised the organization and ability of southern Sudan referendum officials on a short visit to Bor, the capital of Jonglei state.

"We are very perfectly impressed by the organization on the first day of voting," said Mkapa in a press conference after meeting Jonglei state governor, Kuol Manyang, referendum officials and touring polling centres in town.

The former president of Tanzania visited Jonglei state as part of UN observation into the conduct of south Sudan referendum that began on Sunday.

In Bor on Monday, Mkapa was received by Jonglei state governor Kuol with state cabinet at Bor airstrip before holding a brief meeting in the council of ministers hall. Mkapa then visited Bor secondary school, popularly known as Malek SS and proceed to meet the referendum state high committee.

After which, the UN SG's representative "expressed deep appreciations and thanks to governor Kuol Manyang for warm and very African welcome" accorded to him today.

"We have been assured [that] the security situation in the state is good. We are confident that the polling will proceed fully and peacefully," he said adding that polling staff "coped very well" with high turnout on the first day of referendum voting...

Clinton praises Sudan for south polls, urges aid

AFP Abu Dhabi, 10/01/11 - US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton praised on Monday the Sudanese government for allowing the secession referendum in the south, and called on Arab states to aid both sides.

"I give credit to the government in Khartoum for having agreed in 2005 to let the people of the south to vote on their own future," Clinton told university students in Abu Dhabi in a programme to be broadcast on the Arab television channel, MBC.

"This could be a great example of a peaceful outcome to a longstanding conflict," she said. She said that both north and south Sudan will need a lot of support.

"If, as is expected, southern Sudan votes to have its own country, then I hope we will all in this broader region, and certainly the United States, will help," she said...

Misseriya to stage peaceful demonstration today

Al-Rai Al-Aam 11/1/11 – The Misseriya announced that they will stage a peaceful demonstration today in the town of Mujlad to hand over a petition to the Presidency protesting atrocities of the SPLA and Ngok Dinka against the tribe.

Misseriya leader Mohamed Al-Ansari said the SPLA has established three camps north of the Abyei territory. He said the government should protect the Misseriya and stop atrocities against the tribe because they are residents of the territory, stressing the need for the SPLA to pull back south of 1/1/56 line.

Al-Intibaha 11/1/11 reports that the federal interior minister, GoSS interior minister, South Darfur governor and Abyei Chief Administrator will hold an important meeting on Sunday to discuss solution to the tension between the Misseriya and Dinka in the territory.

Federal Interior Minister Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid has criticized the Abyei Chief Administrator for beefing up police elements in the Area, saying the Administrator has no right to do so and the step contravenes the Abyei roadmap.

Meanwhile, the SPLA is preparing to deploy 6000 soldiers at borders between Abyei and Warrap state to prevent possible Misseriya attack, according to *Al-Intibaha*.

Misseriya leader Omer Al-Ansari revealed that the UN is aware about the SPLA breaches but stressed the need to follow proper procedures to verify the violations, reports *Al-Raed* 11/1/11. The federal interior ministry, GoSS, southern Kordofan governor, JDB representatives and Abyei Administration will hold an important meeting tomorrow to contain repercussions of the recent clashes between the Misseriya and the Dinka.

According to *Al-Ahram Al-Youm* 11/1/11, over 3,000 Misseriya members including 13 tribe leaders gathered in the town of Mujlad and declared the territory part of the North.

UN Mission has sent a fact-finding team to the Area to investigate causes of the clashes, *Al-Ayyam* 11/1/11 reports. UNMIS deputy spokesperson Kouider Zerrouk said the Mission has no information about casualty figures, saying the fact-finding team which arrived in the Area comprises military, human rights and civil affairs officers. He added that the Dinka and the Misseriya will meet on 12 February in Difra oil field and the federal and GoSS interior ministers will also meet on 17 February.

UN steps up patrols in Sudan's Abyei

AFP 10/1/11 - UN peacekeepers have stepped up patrols in the troubled Sudanese region of Abyei where dozens have been reported dead in clashes between rival tribes around a controversial referendum, a UN spokesman said.

"We are extremely concerned about reported clashes around Abyei and the resulting casualties," UN spokesman Martin Nesirky told reporters.

The rival Misseriya Arab and Ngok Dinka peoples of the disputed territory have reported at least 33 dead in the past three days.

Nesirky said the UN mission in Sudan, UNMIS, "is in the process of confirming these numbers and in the meantime the mission is pursuing the containment of the situation both politically and on the ground by enhancing patrols and engaging with the top leadership" of the rival groups.

Violence breaks out by Sudan's north-south border

AP 10/1/11 - Violence in the disputed region of Abyei has killed at least 30 people along Sudan's north-south divide, officials said Monday. Observers fear the latest unrest could spark more fighting amid an otherwise peaceful and jubilant independence referendum in the south.

Jubilant voters flooded polling stations for a second day on Monday. The seven days of balloting are likely to produce an overwhelming vote for independence, and Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir has said he will let the oil-rich south secede peacefully.

Meanwhile, conflicting accounts emerged Monday concerning the latest violence in the region straddling the north-south divide, and both sides accused armed forces of being in Abyei in violation of the peace agreement that ended the 1983-2005 civil war.

Col. Philip Aguer, the spokesman for Southern Sudan's military, said Arabs from the Misseriya tribes and fighters from a former Khartoum-backed militia killed 20 police and wounded 30 more during an attack with anti-tank weapons and artillery in the village of Maker-Adhar on Sunday.

The Misseriya, a nomadic cattle-herding tribe, sometimes cross into Abyei with cattle. Aguer, though, said he believes the attack was planned. "They were not with cattle, they were coming for (an) attack," he said.

Bashtal Mohammed Salem, a tribal leader, meanwhile accused police of killing 10 herders in about the same general area. He also said that southern security forces have increased their presence in Abyei in violation of the agreement.

"They want to keep us out of the area and declare independence unilaterally," he said. Aguer said the Misseriya were accompanied by uniformed men known as the Popular Defense Forces, a former militia that has been integrated into Sudan's military. There was no immediate comment from the Khartoum-based government on the allegations.

A U.N. official said the southern government has asked for help in evacuating the wounded police. The official was not allowed to be identified because the information hadn't been made public.

Meetings on Wednesday are to include the interior ministers of the south and north to regulate the presence of police in the area...

About 60 killed in Sudan's Abyei clashes - referendum official

Xinhua 10/1/11 - More than 60 people have been killed in Sudan's disputed region of Abyei over

the past three days in a series of clashes involving local Dinka police force and militia allegedly associated with the nomadic tribe of Misseriya, a senior official of the Abyei Referendum Forum (ARF) told Xinhua Monday.

The casualties included about 40 from Misseriya and 24 Ngok Dinka civilians in the clashes from Friday and Sunday, ARF acting Chairman Deng Mading said. "We are getting more reports of casualties and the figures are being updated as the fights are going on."

The Dinka forces captured two tanks in the color of the United Nations peacekeepers from the enemies on Saturday and handed them over to the southern army Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), he said. "We were checking the identity of the tanks."

The figure has not been confirmed by the United Nations. Reports over the cause of the violence are not clear with different reasons put forward by both sides.

The senior Misseriya leader Hamdi al-Doudo was reported by Sudan Tribune as saying that the clashes were triggered by the SPLA moving up to 1,500 soldiers into the area, which the Arab nomads regarded as a route to grazing fields.

But Mading said the alleged reasons are "absolutely not right."

"Actually, the invading forces are moving 3,000 troops to Abyei," he told Xinhua.

People in the oil-producing Abyei were promised a referendum on Jan. 9 on whether to join the north or south, but the plebiscite was postponed due to a dispute over whether the Misseriya, who enter Abyei for a few months each year to graze cattle, should be given the right to vote.

Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP) has demanded the Misseriya be allowed to vote, while the Sudan People's Liberation Movement which governs the south says that only the Dinka Ngok have the right to participate, thus leaving a thorny task to settle the region's future status through negotiations.

"Just as commitments were made for a southern Sudan referendum, so were binding commitments made for an Abyei referendum. We must have resolution of our status," Mading said.

"There is still time for Abyei," Mading said, "We call upon President Bashir and President Kiir to sit together and recommit them to the final resolution of Abyei which is provided for in the CPA."

Militia leader in Unity state says respect ceasefire after Friday clashes

Sudan Tribune website 10/1/11 - Colonel Gatluak Gai, a leader of the armed militia allegedly operating with backing of the Sudan Armed Forces, in the southern state of Unity on Monday said would respect and support the recently signed permanent cease-fire between General Athor and the semi-autonomous regional government of south Sudan.

Colonel Phillip Aguer, the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army spokesman on Saturday said armed elements identified as loyal to Gatluak Gai attacked an SPLA post at Tor Bieth in Mayom

County, Unity state, killing six soldiers capturing of 32 others and severely injuring 13. It is claimed that of the 32 captives, 15 were flown to Juba on Saturday.

The senior military officer denied any losses to their forces but individuals whose relatives were in the clashes on Friday and Saturday said 14 were SPLA members were killed. Bul Athian, of Aweil, the capital of Northern Bahr el Ghazal lost his brother in the attack.

"I hear them [SPLA officers] saying nobody has been killed but my own brother Kuot Athian has been killed during the clash which occurred on Friday at Tor Bieth between forces loyal to the so called Gatluak Gai and the SPLA. He was fighting on the SPLA side because this attack occurred at their post. He is an SPLA forces in Unity State," said Bul.

Speaking to the Sudan Tribune from Malakal, Abiel Riing Majak, a member of the negotiating team who spoke on behalf of General George Athor Deng, hailed the position taken by Gatluak in accepting the ceasefire.

"I very much supported Colonel Gatluak Gai for showing readiness to accept the ceasefire. This is a firm step toward ending post elections conflicts so that the future of our people is collectively decided," said Abiel

Gai announced his willingness to accept the ceasefire in an hour long telephone meeting he had with General Athor, who appears to be rebel commander responsible for the conflict with the regional government on Monday. Both General Athor and colonel Gatluak changed their allegiances after failing the last April elections.

Gai was a supporter of the former Unity state gubernatorial candidate, Angelina Teny who went to the poll independently against Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement's (SPLM) official nominee, the incumbent Governor Taban Deng Gai, after failing to secure approval of her candidacy by the 27 member political bureau - the highest political structure in the SPLM structure in January last year.

Teny promised to appoint Gai county commissioner in the event that she won the election, unfortunately the National Elections Commission announced results in favour of the SPLM nominee, prompting him, among others, to contest the outcome and subsequently became a leader of the rebel armed group active in the western part of Mayom County in May 2010.

George Athor, who formerly served as a top military officer in the SPLA, became a rebel commander after losing a gubernatorial race for Jonglei. Like Angelina, Athor failed to get secure endorsement of his candidature by the SPLM political bureaus.

Speaking to the Sudan Tribune from his base in Khorfulous, Athor said that he was confident that the colonel will accept the ceasefire because he is one of his zonal commanders.

"We talked today with Colonel Gai. Our discussion was about the recent ceasefire which we signed with government of south Sudan. This agreement covers forces under our zonal command. Gatluak Gai is one of our zonal commanders in western Upper Nile and David Yauyau in south eastern Upper Nile in Pibor," explained General Athor in what seems to confirm allegations that Gatluak Gai and David Yauyau are rebels commanding officers loyal to him.

Athor said that during the one hour long telephone discussion they seemed to reach some understandings which would encourage colonel Gatluak to accept the ceasefire. "It was a good discussion over some contentions issues," said Athor without giving any details.

Gathering reactions to this interview, Sudan Tribune spoke with the SPLA spokesman in the regional capital of Juba, Colonel Phillip Aguer who welcomed what he described as "change of heart."

"There is nothing we are looking for in south Sudan other than peace. We need peace and stability in south Sudan. Gatluak call for a ceasefire was welcomed. It is as if God has touched him to change his heart. We do not have a problem with him because it was he who launched an attack on our position after we signed the ceasefire with General George Athor, whom we believed was the overall rebel commander. When we signed the ceasefire last week with him [General Athor], we thought Gatluak was one of his officers but we were surprised when he attacked our position," explained Aguer.

GoSS loses legitimacy after secession

Akhir Lahza 11/1/11 – SPLM-DC Chairman Dr. Lam Akol said the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) would lose its legitimacy immediately after secession. He said after secession the present GoSS would have no legitimacy to speak on behalf of the people of the South or to enter into long-term agreement with any quarter.

He added that after secession the constitution would be inconsistent so a transitional government would be needed in which all the southern political parties would participate to prepare for elections to form a new government.

Annan stresses importance of solving Abyei issue in three months

Miraya 10/1/11 - The former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, said that the bigger challenge facing southern Sudan after the referendum is the building of a nation, and that will not happen without co-operation with the North. In an exclusive interview with Radio Miraya, Annan called on the people to be patient and vote peacefully, stressing the importance of finding a solution to Abyei issue in three months.

Sudan denies Bashir offered to carry the country's entire debt

Sudan Tribune.com 10/1/11 - The Sudanese government moved quickly to deny statements attributed to president Omer Al-Bashir in which he offered to have the north take over all the country's debt if South Sudan decides to secede in the ongoing referendum.

Earlier today former U.S. president Jimmy Carter told CNN that Bashir made the offer when the two men met together over the weekend.

"I spoke with President al-Bashir. He said the entire debt should be assigned to north Sudan and not to the southern part," Carter told CNN in an interview.

"So, in a way, southern Sudan is starting with a clean sheet on debt. They'll have to make some arrangement for other sources of income, of course," he added.

But the Sudanese presidency spokesperson Emad Sayed Ahmed issued a statement carried by the

state news agency saying that Bashir simply told Carter that dividing the debt burden will not be of any help to the North or the South because both sides lack the resources to make the necessary payments.

Bashir therefore told the former U.S. president that the needed solution is to forgive the debt altogether as part of the program known as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC).

The statement underscored Bashir's appreciation to Carter and his initiatives carried out in Sudan through the years.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) puts Sudan's external debts at about \$35.7 billion, of which less than half is the original amount borrowed and the rest is divided between interest and late payment penalties. According to IMF, the figure is projected to reach \$37.8 billion in 2010.

The US would build southern Sudan – SPLM

Al-Shurouq TV 10/1/11 - Luka Biong, a senior SPLM official says the US would play a lead role to help build the future of a nascent state in southern Sudan and will be the lead investor in the region. He accused the NCP of fuelling the conflict in Abyei and of "politicising" the Abyei problem.

Speaking on *Al-Shurouq* television yesterday, Biong pointed out that southern Sudan would depend more than ever on its northern neighbour for development.

He pointed out that the first step the GoSS would take should the south secede is to convene a south-south dialogue that would lay the foundations for an interim constitution that would be based on separation of state from religion. He also said that the new state, should it emerge, would adopt the English and Arabic languages as official languages.

On the oil industry, Biong pointed out that southern Sudan would still use the oil pipelines to the north at the moment because it does not have the capabilities to construct alternatives.

He assured that the south would not be a source of concern for the north. He called on President Al-Bashir to make a bold decision in order to resolve the issue of Abyei.

SAF denies links to armed men arrested in Juba

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 11/01/11 – The Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) has denied statements by the SPLA that a Ugandan and Sudanese soldiers with possible links to the SAF were arrested in Juba and 700 rounds of AK-47 ammunition in their possession seized in Juba on 9 January. SAF Spokesperson Al-Suwarni Khaled said that the SAF is not connected in any way to the arrested or to the recent clashes with Galwak Gai's forces in Unity State as claimed by the SPLA spokesperson.

Other Highlights

ICC war crimes Suspect travels in UN helicopter

Radio Dabanga (Abyei) 10/1/11 - Ahmed Harun, Governor of southern Kordofan, traveled to Abyei on Sunday in an United Nations helicopter. He participated in talks with Dinka Ngok

leaders on the security situation in the volatile Abyei region. The governor is wanted by the International Criminal Court in The Hague on 51 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity which he allegedly committed in Darfur.

Witnesses in Abyei said that they saw the UN helicopter arriving at an airstrip in Abyei used only by UN aircraft. Harun was met at the airport by vehicles belonging to the UN and the Abyei Administration.

This marked the second such visit by Harun to Abyei in recent weeks, part of an ongoing dialogue among Harun and Abyei Chief Administrator Deng Arop Kuol and other senior figures. The Interior Ministers of North and South Sudan are scheduled to meet with Ahmed Harun and Deng Arop on 17 January. Another meeting between Misseriya and Dinka Ngok leaders is scheduled to take place Wednesday in Diffra.

The spokesman of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) confirmed to Radio Dabanga that the Mission facilitated Harun's visit, including his travel via UN helicopter. He said the meeting resulted in positive steps including an agreement "to refrain from making any provocative statements." The state news agency SUNA on Sunday evening quoted Harun as saying that the security committees of South Kordofan and Abyei met and agreed on measures to "guarantee return of the situation in the area to normality" – a reference to armed clashes Friday to Sunday. The meeting included the federal Minister of Interior; Interior Minister of Government of South Sudan and representatives of the Joint Defense Forces, Harun was cited as saying.

Opposition leaders say Sudan security blocking their media interviews

Sudan Tribune.com (Khartoum) 10/1/11 - Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) has been preventing international media from interviewing opposition leaders in the latest sign of political tension sweeping the North.

The leader of the dissolved Umma Reform and Renewal Party (URRP) Mubarak Al-Fadil told Sudan Tribune that NISS agents stopped his interview with the U.S. Arabic-language TV channel Alhurra.

He said that NISS officers cut the satellite link and ordered the organizers to evict him from the studio without providing an explanation.

Al-Fadil further said that authorities prevented the BBC Arabic TV from interviewing SPLM leading figure in the North Yasir Arman.

"They don't want us to speak about the consequences and the dangers ahead after South Sudan breaks away," he said.

Observers say that the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) is growing increasingly intolerant of opposition parties especially as the latter hold them responsible for the likely secession of Southern Sudan.

The independent *Al-Sahafa* daily newspaper reported today that authorities stormed the home of Ismail Al-Azhari, the late Prime Minister and leader of the United Democratic Unionist Party (UDUP) in the 60's, to prevent party supporters from placing a black scarf as expression of

sorrow for the South going away.

A DUP official by the name of Esam Hasabu told *Al-Sahafa* that the officers tried to arrest Al-Azhari's daughter Samia and the party's media official Abeer Osman but they back down for lack of incriminating factors.

Hasabu said that CNN reporter at the scene was expelled along with other international media representatives present.

In Khartoum, sources told Sudan Tribune that NISS agents arrested BBC reporter Rasha Kashan and her crew after they finished filming a talk show but were later released.

NCP says US not serious in honouring pledges

Local dailies 11/1/11 – The ruling NCP has said that the US is not serious in honouring its pledges to lift sanctions imposed on Sudan including removing its name from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism.

NCP official Mohamed Mandour Al-Mahdi has described US pledges as “false”, urging the US Administration to leave Sudan alone. “All that we want from the US is to leave us alone, we will be able to proceed without its false pledges,” he said.

Rwanda to send more troops to Sudan

AFP 11/1/11 - Rwanda is preparing a fifth battalion of peacekeeping troops to be deployed either in the troubled western Darfur region or in south Sudan, the defence minister said Tuesday.

"We are preparing another battalion in case it is needed, Defence Minister James Kabarebe told AFP." "If they need it for Darfur we will send it there. If they need it for south Sudan we will send it there." ...

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