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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

## Elections Watch

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# Highlights

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## **NCP rejects elections postponement**

The NCP has rejected the opposition's call for postponement of elections, accusing the Juba Alliance of seeking to overthrow the Government through elections delay, **local dailies** report. According to **Al-Rai Al-Aam**, Presidential Assistant and NCP Secretary for political and organizational affairs, Nafie Ali Nafie, addressing an electoral rally in Al-Gezira yesterday as part of Al-Bashir's campaign said that the NCP presidential candidate would win 80% of votes on the first day of the process. "The time of uprising and revolutions is gone. The opposition should participate in a free electoral competition," he said, adding that elections would take place on schedule.

**Al-Sahafa** reports Nafie Ali Nafie has lashed out against the opposition's push for an electoral delay, describing the demand for postponement and formation of a national Government as "daydreaming". "There will be no reconciliation with the political forces which supported the ICC indictment unless they declare repentance," Nafie said, according to **Al-Raed**.

## **URRP criticizes UN for assisting in printing elections cards**

Umma Reforms and Renewal Party (URRP) said it is determined to lodge a complain to the UN based on the NEC statement about the participation of UNMIS Chief Electoral Officer Ray Kennedy in printing elections cards inside Sudan, **Al-Sudani** reports. In a letter signed yesterday by its leader and presidential candidate Mubarak Al-Fadil Al-Mahdi, the URRP called on UNSG for the need to investigate the circumstances of the Chief Electoral Officer's behaviour which could open the door for elections rigging.

## **Sudan opposition want elections moved to November, slams UNMIS official**

**Sudan Tribune website** 13/3/10 - A number of presidential candidates in Sudan has jointly called on the April elections to be postponed by seven months till next November and submitted a proposed formation for the National elections committee (NEC).

The Umma Party runner for president Al-Sadiq Al-Mahdi hosted a meeting at his residence in Omdurman agreed on steps that need to be taken for achieving democratic transformation and establishing an "impartial" board to monitor the work of the NEC in terms of administration and finances, creating a body consisting of presidential nominees with rotating head, rescheduling elections to resolve a number outstanding issues.

The NCP representative at the summit Ibrahim Ghandour promised to convey the demands to president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir and arrange a meeting with them to discuss their requests.

Absent from the meeting were the candidates from the Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) Yasir Arman, Democratic Unionist Party Hatim Al-Sir, Sudan Communist Party Mohamed Ibrahim Nugud. It was not immediately clear why they did not attend.

The participants also called for the neutrality of the state media, protecting the candidates, enabling parties to address uniformed forces in their barracks, providing access to transportation and telecommunications and funding parties.

They also proposed that the NEC monitoring commission to be composed of Amin Mekki Madani, Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil, Al-Tigani Al-Karib, Ibrahim Moniem Mansour, Ambroze Rung,

Abdel-Rahman Abdu, Mustafa Majak and Lual Deng.

The parties also expressed concern over alleged switching the process of printing voting slips from abroad to presses inside Sudan that belong to the NCP — a move they would lead to duplicate papers and ballot box stuffing.

The Umma Reform and Renewal Party (URRP) leader Mubarak Al-Fadil said in a statement that the NEC acknowledged this with the consent of Ray Kennedy, Chief Electoral Affairs Officer for the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).

"This requires investigation from the UN Secretary General on the actions of the UN official and his contribution towards fraud. We will submit a complaint to the UN Secretary General based on the response of the [NEC] commission memo"

The commission said a bid for printing the voting slips was advertised and two Sudanese companies secured it and that due to time constraints one set of the cards was diverted from a Slovenian company to a Sudanese one stressing that at each step this process was made with the participation of UNMIS elections office.

### **PCP rejects elections delay**

**Al-Khartoum** reports Popular Congress Party (PCP) leader Adam Al-Tahir Hamdoun has rejected the call for postponement of elections, saying any delay would result in delay of referendum. He added that despite the irregularities that accompany the process, delay of elections is unjustifiable since the political parties have made necessary preparations. He said the NEC invited many countries to participate in monitoring the elections.

### **Finish special envoy appeals for peaceful elections in Sudan**

**Khartoum Monitor** reports Finnish Special Envoy for Sudan Pekka Haavisto has called on the Sudanese parties to avoid violence and conduct a peaceful election to achieve democratic transition and implement the CPA signed in 2005. Haavisto is in Khartoum to discuss the upcoming elections and the implementation of the CPA with the Sudanese Government. He met with SPLM officials and key opposition parties. He stressed the need for equal access to media for all the political parties and was also concerned about threats of violence towards political campaigners occurred in different parts of the Sudan. "The recent adoption of an electoral code of conduct is an important step towards credible electoral process in the Sudan" he said. Haavisto also said he is pleased to notice that the EU elections observers are already on the ground.

### **NCP using UNAMID planes in campaigning – Umma Party**

The National Umma Party accused UNAMID of exceeding its mandate in Darfur by participating in the NCP's electoral campaigning, **The Citizen** reports. The party stated that NCP is using UNAMID planes for transporting its cadres within the region.

### **Russian envoy praises Sudan's cooperation with international observers**

**Sudan Tribune website** 13/3/10 – The Russian special envoy said Sudanese authorities are well cooperating with international community in the preparation and monitoring of the forthcoming general elections next month.

Mikhail Margelov is in the country since three days for talks with the Sudanese officials on preparations for the elections but also is accompanied by a big businessmen delegation which conducts meeting with the Sudanese official on different development projects.

"One has the impression that the Sudanese authorities and political forces can turn an attentive ear to what is being said to them by the international mediators and the representatives of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council," Margelov said.

"They can drop some stereotypes that hindered their cooperation with the United Nations Organization in the past and they are prepared to interact with various international organizations," he added.

Margelov has held a series of meetings with the Sudanese government officials, and the ruling National Congress Party as well as the opposition forces. He also met with the newly appointed head of the UN Mission in Sudan...

### **Lack of Sudan voter awareness a major concern - EU**

**Reuters** 11/3/10 - A lack of Sudanese voter education is the major concern for the European Union's chief elections observer, who launched her mission on Thursday to monitor Sudan's first multi-party polls in 24 years.

Veronique De Keyser, a member of the European Parliament, will lead more than 130 observers from 22 countries to assess the presidential and legislative elections in April, key for a 2005 north-south peace deal which ended more than 20 years of bloody civil war and promised democratic transformation.

"If the people don't understand really what is the meaning of the vote this could be for me at least the major trap, the major pitfall," she told reporters in Khartoum. "And it's difficult because ... some people have never voted," she said, stressing this was not deliberate and that the EU has pledged money for voter education. "So at the beginning of the process we have to admit that it will not be perfect but we have to pay attention to that," she said, adding the road to democracy was long.

But De Keyser said they could document past problems and that they could not come before being invited by authorities. She said their team could not cover every part of Sudan, Africa's largest country, but that it would be able to detect any massive attempts at fraud.

"I cannot tell you that an incident cannot occur... but at least to see very well organised attempt to fraud -- that is possible with our methodology," she said.

Voting will last three days from April 11 and the result is expected on April 18.

### **EU observers say confident of monitoring Sudan elections**

**AFP** 13/3/10 - European Union election observers in Sudan said on Thursday they are confident of being able to detect any irregularities in next month's multiparty polls, the country's first since 1986.

The EU's mission comprises 138 observers, 58 of whom are already in Sudan, with another 80 to arrive just before the legislative, regional and presidential elections slated to take place from April 11 to 13.

They will be deployed across Africa's largest country to help monitor 26,500 polling stations.

"It is obvious we cannot cover each voting centre," the EU mission's chief observer Veronique De Keyser said at a press conference in Khartoum.

"We will draw our conclusions not only from observation, but from the tendency in a place and from a strict observation of the data," she added.

"We have a lot of confidence in our conclusions from a statistical point of view... We will be very strict, sticking to the facts and being vigilant about whatever could happen during the electoral process."

The EU mission will coordinate its work with the Carter Foundation, another international body authorised to observe the Sudanese electoral process, but its conclusions would remain independent, De Keyser said.

### **Gosh warns of non-acceptance of electoral results by the west**

NCP candidate for constituency (5) in Merowe and former NISS DG Gen. Salah Gosh, addressing an electoral rally in northern Sudan, has warned of the consequences of non-acceptance of Sudan's elections results by the west if the NCP wins, *Al-Watan* reports. He said the Islamic thought developed by the Salvation Government in the Sudan is viewed by the west as a threat.

According to *Akhir Lahza*, Gosh has accused the SPLM of organising the ranks of the Darfur movements and supporting them with weapons and blamed the SPLM, the international community and foreign organisations for aggravating the Darfur problem.

### **Today last day for receiving monitoring applications – NEC**

The NEC has announced that today will be the last day for receiving elections monitor applications submitted by the civil society organizations, *Khartoum Monitor* reports. NEC head of Elections Monitoring Mohamed Abdul Daiem said the Commission had received thousands of applications from civil society organizations to monitor elections across the country and the applications are being considered.

### **Al-Bashir pledges clean drinking water for Northern Kordofan**

*SUNA* 13/3/10 – NCP candidate Omar Al-Bashir has affirmed his concern with the provision of clean drinking water in Northern Kordofan State. Addressing a mass elections rally in Al-Obied (Northern Kordofan), Al-Bashir said work was now under way for the implementation of 22 water projects in the State, adding that due concern would be given to the maintenance and rehabilitation of water sources and the establishment of new water stations covering all localities of State.

### **Independent candidates' salaries in N Bahr el Ghazal suspended**

*Miraya FM* 13/3/10 -High Elections Committee in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State has said that more than 40 state legislators who are running as independent candidates in the upcoming elections claimed that their salaries were suspended due to their political views.

According to the Acting Team Leader of the State Elections Committee Madut Wol Abiem, only eight state parliament members have lodged so far an official written complaint on the matter.

However, Acting Secretary for Political Affairs and Mobilization in the State, Kerbino Unguech Angui, labeled the complaints as false allegations.

### **Woman candidate pledges Support to freedoms and democracy**

*SUNA* 12/3/10 - the Sudanese Socialist Party presidential candidate, Ms Fatima Abdul-

Mahmoud, said that her election programme includes working to change some laws that restrict freedoms and democratic transformation.

Interviewed by SUNA, Fatima said that she plans to organize workshops for scholars and specialists to come out with recommendations that will contribute towards formulating a new Personal Law.

She said that her election programme focuses on establishment of distinguished foreign relations and preservation of the sovereignty of Sudan. She called for allocation of a percentage from the oil revenues for the interest of the Sudanese citizen...

### **Al-Bashir may be challenged by a single candidate - Sadiq Al Mahdi**

**Miraya FM** 13/3/10 -The Chairman of Umma Party, Sadiq Al Mahdi, revealed in an interview with **Radio Miraya** that the opposition parties may name a single candidate to challenge the NCP presidential candidate Omar Al Bashir. Al Mahdi said the issue of one candidate as well as the possibility of reaching a consensus on other important matters will be discussed in an imminent meeting.

### **SPLA on high alert in anticipation for LRA attack during elections**

SPLA spokesperson Kuol Diem Kuol said the army is put on maximum alert in anticipation for LRA attacks during elections in Bahr el Ghazal and West Equatoria states, **Al-Ayyam** reports. "We got information that LRA militias are regrouping on CAR soil to attack southern Sudan areas during elections," he Kuol said.

### **Acting Chief Editor summoned for criticising NCP candidate**

Faiz Al-Sileik, the Acting Chief Editor of **Ajras Al-Hurriya**, appears before the National Press and Publications' Council's grievances committee to defend the paper over a recent article in which one of the paper's reporters criticised NCP candidate for president, Omar Al-Bashir, the paper reports.

Al-Sileik pointed out that in his article, the reporter did not criticise the incumbent in his capacity as President of the Republic but rather in his capacity as one of 12 presidential hopefuls. He said that he assumes this is acceptable against the backdrop of an elections season and that the article did not contain objectionable criticism.

### **South Sudan's presidential challenger launches Juba campaign**

**Reuters** 13/3/10 – Lam Akol, the sole challenger to south Sudan's incumbent president Salva Kiir, launched his campaign in the region's capital Saturday, promising an end to corruption if he wins April's election.

"The (southern) government has failed," said Akol speaking in a local Arabic dialect in the south's capital Juba.

"Corruption has defeated people in the government. That is why it needs new people," he told a small crowd.

"We have been faced with unconstitutional bans and threats against our members," he said.

Akol is based in Khartoum and has openly said he is supporting the SPLM's former foe, President Omar al-Bashir, for the national presidency.

Observers in the south view Akol's chances of beating Salva Kiir as slim.

His anti-corruption stand may draw some support from southern Sudanese who have seen much of the aid and oil money promised to rebuild their war-ravaged infra structure pocketed by corrupt officials.

A handful of serious graft cases, some acknowledged by the government, have raised their heads in the past five years but no official has been jailed.

Akol himself is a contentious figure. In 1991 he first split from the southern insurgency movement saying it was undemocratic and formed a separate armed group. A few years later he signed a peace deal with the north before rejoining the SPLM.

### **Washington supports elections running in April - Gration**

**Miraya FM** 14/3/10 - The US special envoy to Sudan, Scott Gration, said last Saturday that the United States supports timely elections in Sudan scheduled for April. In a press statement in Doha, Gration called the Sudanese Government not to accept any postponement. Earlier, the JEM and other prominent Darfuri opposition movements demanded the postponement of elections.

## **Other highlights**

### **HAC Commissioner relieved from his post**

President Al-Bashir has relieved Hassabo Mohamed Abdul Rahman from his post as HAC Commissioner, **Al-Khartoum** reports. Dr. Suleiman Abdul Rahman (Director of National Fund for Health Insurance) is appointed the new HAC Commissioner.

### **Ugandan rebel leader may be in Sudan, Uganda says**

**Reuters** 13/3/10 - A Ugandan rebel leader wanted for war crimes may be in Sudan, whose President Omar al-Bashir is wanted by the same war crimes tribunal, Uganda's president said.

President Yoweri Museveni said on Friday that Joseph Kony, leader of the Lord's Resistance Army rebel group, was forced out of the Democratic Republic of Congo about a month ago. He fled to the Central African Republic and from there to Sudan's Darfur region, he said.

"I was told by our intelligence that he disappeared to Central African Republic. He again left that place and our forces say he disappeared with a small group which is wandering in Darfur," Museveni told a news conference at his party headquarters.

Museveni said Uganda would prefer to try Kony himself if he is captured. "If we got Kony, we would try him here, not in The Hague. Here we shall hang him but if you send him to The Hague they will just put him in a hotel," he said.

### **South Sudanese army, nomads clash, three killed**

**Reuters** 12/3/10 - Northern nomads attacked a south Sudan army base, killing three people, the SPLA said, escalating tensions in the oil-rich border region less than a month before the first multi-party elections in 24 years.

"The Misseriya (nomads) have yesterday attacked our forces again," SPLA spokesperson Kuol Deim Kuol told Reuters on Friday. "They killed two SPLA soldiers ... (and) a body from the Misseriya was found."

Four other southern soldiers were also wounded, he said. A similar attack happened in early February on the same army base in oil-producing Unity state close to the north-south border where northern nomads seasonally graze cattle.

Analysts worry a widely expected vote for independence could cause conflict if the border, which could cut off southern pastures vital to northern pastoralists, is still unclear.

"The south seceding is a threat to their livelihoods and, as the referendum approaches, rising tensions could result in a further loss of life," said Maggie Fick, an analyst from the U.S.-based Enough Project.

An agreement signed earlier this month between the herders and southern officials, including from Unity State, says that the nomads may now bring in five small guns to accompany large herds and three guns if they are moving with smaller groups.

"But they (the nomads) are coming with too many guns, they are not implementing this," Kuol said. The agreement also states that the herders are to pay a 5 Sudanese pound (\$2.24) levy for each cow grazing in the south, Kuol said.

The attack was probably a result of southern officials trying to stop nomads with large numbers of guns from entering the south and also partly in revenge for those killed in last month's fighting, Kuol said.

Northern nomadic groups were used by Khartoum in the war as proxy fighters against the southern rebels. But in some areas they also formed close trading links with southern communities.

### **Darfur donor meeting in March eyes \$2 billion**

**Reuters** 11/3/10 - A donor conference for Darfur this month is intended to raise \$2 billion for infrastructure, health, water and other projects in the war-ravaged Sudanese region, the Egyptian hosts said Thursday.

Projects being proposed at the one-day development and reconstruction conference on March 21 in Cairo include building two cement plants, 520 km (300 miles) of roads and 120 villages for displaced people, documents distributed by Egypt showed.

"The conference aims at sending a clear message to the international community that development is a key factor in achieving peace and stability," an Egyptian statement said...

### **Sudan arrests Somali Islamist leader while trying to escape to Eritrea**

**Sudan Tribune website** 13/3/10 – Sudanese security services arrested a Somali Islamist leader while he was attempting to cross border to Eritrea, a Somali outlet reported today from Mogadishu.

Muse Abdi Arale, the secretary for defence of Hizbul Islam group has been arrested in Sudan while trying to enter Eritrea with money embezzled from the rebel group.

Sheikh Hassan Mahdi, a senior official from Hizbul Islam told Mareeg Online that the Sudanese police arrested Arale while he was trying to cross the eastern Sudan border and reach Eritrea.

Muse Arale embezzled the money from the group and travelled from Mogadishu by car to Kenya from where he entered South Sudan and then reached Khartoum secretly.

Led by Sheik Hassan Dahir Aweys, Hizbul Islam is facing a leadership crisis since the defection of Sheikh Hassan Abdulahi Al-Turki, a notorious Islamist guerrilla leader to Al-Shebab early this year.

### **Over 100 suffer acute watery diarrhea in Gezira state**

More than 100 people have suffered acute watery diarrhea in Alti area in Al-Gezira state because of drinking water from the Blue Nile reportedly contaminated at that particular area, **Al-Ayyam** reports. Director of Alti hospital Dr. Hafiz Al-Khidir confirmed the cases of watery diarrhea in the area.