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Media Monitoring Report

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Referendum Monitor

No return to war, vows south Sudanese leader

Agencies Juba, 13/10/10 - South Sudan's president, Salva Kiir, vowed on Wednesday there would be no return to war in Sudan, despite mounting tensions as a referendum on southern independence approaches.

"There is no reverse to this peace agreement" and no going back to war, said Kiir, first vice president of Sudan and president of the semi-autonomous south.

"We have suffered a lot and we don't want to see people suffering again," Kiir added, speaking at the launch of a political conference for over 20 southern parties in Juba.

"We want peace and no return to war," he said. "No drop of blood should be shed again."

The three-day conference in the southern capital is aimed to establish "common principles" between all political leaders to support a "free, fair and transparent referendum," Kiir added.

"Therefore let us all work for a peaceful settlement of all issues so as to guarantee mutual respect and good neighbourliness."

Kiir shared a stage with his fellow Vice-President Ali Osman Taha of the north's ruling National Congress Party.

But he also called on the north to implement an agreement on the contested border area of Abyei, which is due to hold a simultaneous referendum on whether to join the north or the south.

"We do not want Abyei to become a potential trigger for a conflict again between the south and the north," Kiir said.

FVP Salva Kiir hits reconciliation trail

The Citizen et al/ Agencies Juba, 14/10/10 - First Vice-President and President of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), Salva Kiir Mayardit, has asked all the political leaders to "let bygones be bygones" and unite their ranks to "deliver the people of southern Sudan to the referendum and beyond."

"In the spirit of reconciliation, I appeal to all of you to forget the past and let us seize the moment to guarantee the responsibility of taking our people to their final destination," FVP Kiir in his opening remarks before the South-South Dialogue Conference that kicked off in Juba yesterday.

At least 25 political parties from both south and north of the country are taking part in the conference aimed at forging consensus on conducting a free, fair and transparent referendum.

The conference, according to the FVP, would prove wrong the myth that the south would emerge into a failed state should it secede. "Southern Sudan is more prepared than any country that gained independence excepting South Africa," he declared.

"The safety of northern Sudanese in the south is my personal responsibility, whatever the outcome of the referendum," *Al-Rai Al-Aam* daily quotes the FVP as saying. He also said that southern Sudan is open to all political parties to articulate their messages.

Sudantribune.com reports meanwhile that the FVP called on Southern Sudanese political parties leaders to prioritize conduct of the referendum on self-determination scheduled for January next year.

"The conduct of the referendum must be given equal attention by all political leaders. It should not be left to two parties (NCP & SPLM); it is a responsibility of all leaders and people," Kiir said seeking to mobilize all the efforts for on this historical vote.

The SPLM remains committed to principle of cooperation and partnership with all stakeholders, he told political leaders declaring all political parties to freely campaign and sell importance of the two options without using influence.

Kiir, in his speech, stressed that his government "allows people to freely campaign about the two options". "If there are people wanting to campaign for unity, they are allowed because it is also their right," he further said.

He also said the pardon issued for the renegade SPLA officers who rebelled against his government last April aims to gather all the southerners and involve them in the referendum which will decide the future of the south and to create a suitable atmosphere for it.

On his part, Vice-President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha said that the south-south dialogue is an advanced step to unify the visions of the southern Sudanese political forces towards the challenges ahead.

The conference was attended by international organizations, the UN, Sudanese and African politicians including Sudan's 2nd Vice President, Ali Osman Taha, Former Kenyan President, Daniel Arap Moi, and Former Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa.

Ex-militia leader arrives for talks in South Sudan

AP Juba, 14/10/10 - A former militia leader arrived in Southern Sudan's capital Thursday to hold peace talks with the president and army leadership, part of an effort by the southern government to project unity ahead of a looming vote on self-determination.

Maj. Gen. Gabriel Tanginye, who is holding talks with Southern Sudanese President Salva Kiir, was one of original members of the southern rebellion in the early 1980s. But he then ended up allied with the north for much of the civil war and is now a high-ranking officer in the northern Sudanese army.

Last Wednesday, Kiir issued a pardon for senior southern army officers who fought against the southern army. The pardon included Tanginye.

"There will be no more bullets fired against one another in Southern Sudan," said Tanginye, speaking through a translator. "The reason why we have been fighting for a long time is this referendum, and now it is coming. Why would we fight again?"

When asked whether he, a senior official in the northern Sudanese army, supported independence in the south, Tanginye diplomatically noted that he "went to the bush" to fight twice, and that he would not have fought for nothing.

"The visit of Maj. Gen. Gabriel Tanginye is a sign of the unity of Southern Sudan," said ruling party spokesperson Ezekiel Gatkuoth. "All these men (who had defected from the southern army), all these political parties (who ran against the ruling party), they are coming back."

Al-Bashir's recent statements may contribute to unity – SSLA Speaker

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 14/10/10 – The Speaker of the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly says the SPLM has taken no official position in support of either of the options of the 2011 referendum. James Wani Igga pointed out that support for any one of these options is but a personal view.

“President Al-Bashir has to prove his commitment to the concessions he pledged in the CPA implementation as a measure aimed at making unity an attractive option,” Igga said in reference to the president’s 12 October speech before parliament. He said that the president should instruct NCP delegates participating in talks on post-referendum arrangements to consider those measures. Igga seemed confident that these statements were discussed seriously they might make unity the preferred option.

The Speaker of the SSLA pointed out that the SPLM position is still in support of unity on a new basis and for respect for the wishes of the people of southern Sudan, whatever the outcome of the referendum. Mr. Igga further stated that the position of the SPLM would be determined during the SPLM Liberation Council meeting.

Sudan FM says 'won't object' to independence vote

AP Ankara, 13/10/10 - Sudan's foreign minister says that the government "won't object" if the country's south votes to split from the north in an upcoming referendum.

Ali Karti said Wednesday during a visit to Ankara that if "a majority of southern Sudan wants to separate from the north then we won't object."

Government leaders have so far said only that they would respect the southerners' decision. But, Karti adds that his government would have to deal with the large number of southern Sudanese that live in the north, and find ways to share oil and address Sudan's debt.

Quoting the *Kuwait News Agency, KUNA, Al-Rai Al-Aam* daily reports that the minister also said that the Sudan government would ensure that the referendum is totally transparent and fair in order to guarantee that no “minority” group would determine the fate of southern Sudan. “We would not allow the minority groups advocating for secession to shape Sudan’s future,” he stressed.

Remaining 20% of border demarcation exercise to soon be finished

The Citizen Khartoum, 14/10/10 – The SPLM says that the remaining 20% of the border demarcation exercise could be finished ahead of the 2011 January referenda. Agok Makwar, a prominent member of the SPLM said at a symposium in Khartoum on the border issues yesterday that the remaining period is quite enough for completing the exercise and pointed out that the exercise should not obstruct the conduct of the referenda.

The chairman of the north-south border demarcation committee said on his part downplayed the differences within the committee saying that the viewpoints of both parties are correct but differences are created as a result of the different interpretations of some terminologies.

Misseriya send memorandum to the US Embassy on Abyei

Reuters, Al-Raed, et al Khartoum, 14/10/10 – Speaking at a press conference in Khartoum following their arrival from talks in Addis Ababa over Abyei, Misseriya leaders called on the NCP and the SPLM to distance themselves from the oil rich area, adding they can decide on the future of the disputed region if left alone with their neighbours, the Dinka Ngok.

"They (NCP & SPLM) have distorted everything. They have caused so many unnecessary

problems. The people (of Abyei) were living amicably," said Hussein Jalal-Eddin, deputy chairman of the Misseriya Forum. He further told reporters that Gration understood their point of view. He added that the proposals they received during the talks in Addis Ababa were changed every time without knowing who was behind such decision.

"We are not war mongers, we are for peace, and our slogan was no return to war," said Rahma El-Nur, Deputy Administrator of Abyei.

The tribal leaders said they sent a memorandum to the US official calling him to manage direct dialogue between them and the Dinka to sustain mutual respect and promote peaceful coexistence between the two parties.

According to *Al-Rai Al-Aam*, the Misseriya representatives said they have tabled an 8-point proposal for the talks. They say the message has reached the international community and that they are convinced that the Permanent Court of Arbitration's ruling on the Abyei boundaries are not viable.

Misseriya representatives reportedly sent a memorandum to the US Embassy in Khartoum yesterday explaining their position as a tribe towards the issues discussed at the Addis Ababa meeting.

N. Sudan officials say cannot hold Abyei vote on time

Reuters Khartoum, 14/10/10 - Sudan has run out of time to hold a referendum on the future of its oil-producing Abyei region by a Jan. 9 deadline and must delay it or find another way of settling the issue, northern officials said on Thursday.

"It is very clear that right now it is not possible to have the Abyei referendum on 9 Jan 2011. We all agree that this is no longer practical," Dirdiri Mohammad Ahmad a senior member of Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP) told journalists.

"We agreed that the next talks we will try to look for other alternatives."

Sudan's minister of international cooperation, Jalal Yousuf Al-Digair, told the same news conference that the government would be open to a proposal to delay the referendum by a few months.

Meanwhile residents of the Abyei region will not accept a delay to a vote on the future of their oil-producing area and may hold their own vote without the government, the area's administrator said on Thursday, also according to *Reuters*.

"A delayed vote is unacceptable. The people of Abyei are still holding out for the referendum to be held on Jan. 9. If the government does not give them that option we can have a self-run referendum," said Deng Arop Kuol, a member of south Sudan's dominant Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

Juba Forces push for urgent formation of a 'national mechanism'

The Citizen, Al-Sahafa et al Khartoum, 14/10/10 – Opposition forces have raised the alert on what they termed a looming threat to the country, affirming their determination to salvage the country from wars that might be imposed by sore points in the country. The National Consensus Forces called for efforts to guarantee fundamental freedoms and rule of law in the north and the south as key constitutional requirement and called for a free and fair referendum. They pushed for the formation of an urgent national mechanism and finalization of the Darfur peace process within a national framework so that the issue does not blow up after the referendum.

In a press release issued following their meeting yesterday at the PCP offices, the opposition parties called for the formation of a national mechanism to seriously look into the differences between the parties to the CPA to help improve north-south relations. They further called for creating necessary guarantees for unity on the basis of a democracy with respect for human rights and the rule of law

Speaker proposes extension of parliamentary term beyond December 2010

Al-Rai Al-Aam Khartoum, 14/10/10 – The Speaker of the National Assembly is proposing an extension of the current parliamentary term beyond December 2010 when the House is expected to close to business. Speaking before parliament that is just back from recess this week, Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir proposed that the House remain in session throughout the referenda period in order to “monitor the referendum and issue bills related to its outcome.”

UN could police parts of north-south Sudan border

Reuters United Nations, 13/10/10 - U.N. peacekeepers could create limited buffer zones in hotspots along the border of north and south Sudan before a referendum on independence is held in the south of the country, Security Council diplomats said on Wednesday.

Their remarks came in response to a request by South Sudan's President Salva Kiir during a U.N. Security Council trip to Sudan last week for peacekeepers to be deployed along north-south border.

"Nobody thinks it's realistic to put UNMIS (U.N peacekeepers), even if we had masses more troops, along the north-south border in a country that large," one council diplomat, who did not want to be identified, told reporters.

"But I think one thing we can and should consider ... is looking at augmenting UNMIS in certain hotspots along the border where a buffer presence could be established."

NCP preaches unity in South Sudan's Yambio

Sudantribune.com Yambio, 12/10/10 - A high level delegation headed by Fateh Izadin from Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP) arrived in Yambio on Monday October 11, 2010 and was received by the WES State NCP Chairman, Awad Saily Kisanga.

Upon arrival, Fateh said that the "NCP visit was to brainstorm and discuss the referendum as the co-signatories to the 2005 landmark peace deal."

He stated that, "unity will be the best option to boost the development of the country further."

"It is high time to discuss the benefits of the two options being it unity or secession of the country," added Fateh.

"As the Political figure in the Khartoum State, the biggest state in the Sudan, hosting over 1 Million Southern Sudanese, no Southern Sudanese will be intimidated despite the outcome of the Referendum."

Deputy Governor of WES Sapana Abui who is the chairman of State Referendum Committee said that it was "fair" for all parties to have to opportunity talk about the referendum.

Abui said that he hopes, "the referendum shall be conducted as stipulated in the 2005 peace accord".

He urged the delegations to feel at home in the state while sharing their messages about the referendum.

The SPLM State Secretary, Manasseh Deboi Agoli, was not so welcoming. He condemned the NCP's visit saying "it has brought bad image and negative impact on the NCP."

Manasseh said that, it was too late for NCP to make unity attractive in the south because since the signing of the CPA, the NCP has confined themselves to the national capital, Khartoum.

Manasseh urged the delegation to tell President Omer Hassan al-Bashir that, "NCP has failed to make unity attractive in Sudan; therefore separation is the only option for total peace and freedom for southerners in 2011."

Deputy Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly, Stephen Elisa Kayanga said "should southern Sudan vote for unity that means the Christians will be imposed with the Sharia Law of the Muslims, returning life back to square one".

"We have tried unity several times up to CPA era, all developments are in the northern Sudan [...] why not try separation this time?" he said.

Kayanga predicted that, "as southern Sudanese, [we] need good relationships with other countries after our separation. No war will occur between southern Sudan and northern Sudan."

The delegation comprised of seven members spent one hour in Yambio before returning to Juba listening to concerns raised by citizens in Western Equatoria over the issues of the upcoming referendum and the apparent readiness of the south to vote for separation.

Other Highlights:

UNMIS apologises to journalists over Juba incident

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 14/10/10 – The United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) has sent a formal apology to a number of Sudanese journalists who protested intimidation in Juba during the United Nations Security Council delegate's tour in the country.

UNMIS expressed regret over the manner in which the journalists were treated in Juba. In the letter, the Office of the UNMIS Spokesperson further assured that the Mission has taken firm steps to ensure that such a situation would not occur again in the future, noting that it is the Mission's policy to give equal access and fair treatment to all media professionals regardless of their background and affiliation.

Two military aircrafts land at Kurmuk Airport

Al-Intibaha Khartoum/ Kurmuk, 14/10/10 - Informed sources reports that the UNMIS office in Damazin reported to the mission head offices in Khartoum on reports of some activities at the Kurmuk airfield. UNMIS would reportedly inform the CPA Assessment and Evaluation Commission of reports that two chartered aircrafts had ferried heavy military equipment from Juba to Kurmuk where SPLA imposed a cordon around the airport during offloading of the shipments. The consignment was reportedly transported to unknown locations. Sources say the aircraft seemed to have come from the USA.

SPLM on course to close offices in the north

Al-Sudani Khartoum, 14/10/10 – Top members of the SPLM bureaus in the north and south of the country are at loggerheads because of the perceived support by the party's southern chapter for

separation. Party Secretary-General Pagan Amum has reportedly ordered the Northern Sector to pack its assets and transfer them to the secretariat in Juba. Party members in the Northern Sector considered the transfer of assets, including 12 motor vehicles, as a declaration of closure of the party's offices in the north.

Pibor's Yauyau militias reluctant to talk peace

The Citizen Khartoum, 14/10/10 – The County Commissioner for Pibor, Jonglei State, says the leader of the Yauyau, a local armed group, is unwilling to talk peace and is asking for guarantees for a position in the GoSS and the Jonglei State Government.

Commissioner Akol Adikir said that David Yauyau, the man who turned rebel after losing a Jonglei State legislative seat last elections, wrote a letter to authorities in Pibor outlining his demand and “seems not willing to come” to peace talks.

The Pibor Chiefs' Conference of 7th October 2010 had resolved to contact and convince Yauyau and his group to bury the hatchet but he responded with a letter demanding assurances for government positions if he is to join the peace talks.

Sudan signs 1.3 billion Euro energy deal for Darfur

Al-Ayyam Khartoum, 14/10/10 – The Federal Ministry of Science and Technology signed yesterday a Memorandum of Understanding with the French solar energy company, Solar Euromed. Through the deal, the French company would produce some 250 megawatts of electricity for the states of Darfur. The 1.3 billion Euro project would be funded through the federal government and the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority.

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