

15 October 2009

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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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# Highlights

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## Political parties sign “Juba Declaration”

**Local dailies** report that political forces and civil society leaders who attended the recent Juba conference, signed yesterday the “Juba Declaration”. According to **Al-Sahafa**, the parties called on the NCP and other political parties to come on board to contribute efforts to resolve Sudan’s crisis and to achieve peace. The signing ceremony was attended by Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi, PCP leader Hassan Al-Turabi, Communist Party leader Mohamed Ibrahim Nugud, Umma Party Renewal and Reform leader Mubarak Al-Fadil Al-Mahdi and SPLM Deputy Chairman Rieck Machar. **Al-Ayyam** reports that the Juba Declaration for National Dialogue was signed by more than thirty political parties, civil society organizations and unions. The SPLM described the Declaration as a step toward national consensus.

Addressing the ceremony, GoSS VP Riek Machar said that FVP Salva Kiir has renewed calls upon the parties that boycotted the Juba Conference to join the move for national dialogue and consensus, **Al-Ahdath** reports.

## Nineteen die in traffic accident on north Sudan highway

**Local dailies** report that 19 people were killed and 27 others injured in a traffic accident involving a bus and a light truck on the Khartoum-North Sudan highway. The bus driver was trying to overtake a lorry when it rammed into the light truck.

## Sudan’s Kiir urges US Obama not to ease pressure on Khartoum

**Sudan Tribune website** 14/10/09 — In a letter to US President Barack Obama, FVP Salva Kiir asked the US to keep pressure on the NCP, the **Washington Post** reported.

The letter comes as US Special Envoy Scott Gration is seeking a relaxation of some sanctions imposed on the East African nations and giving out some “cookies” to Khartoum as he described it.

The **Washington Post** said that Kiir wrote to Obama last month, saying that Al-Bashir continues to foment violence in the region in an apparent reference to rising tribal violence in the south which he has accused Khartoum of standing behind it.

“There has not been any transformation or reform at the centre,” Mayardit wrote, referring to Khartoum. “The status quo prevails. . . . Significant change in policy in relation to Sudan should only come when there is change in the reality of Sudan” Kiir said in the letter.

Last month it was reported that told Gration he is concerned that the envoy’s approach is emboldening the ruling party to dictate unfavourable terms for the south’s secession vote, such as demanding 75 percent turnout.

However, the US official backed the ruling party’s argument, saying it had legitimate concerns about the referendum. Gration urged southerners to trust the government that waged a brutal war against them for 20 years.

## Crisis over Halayeb Triangle resurfaces

Many residents of the Halayeb Triangle area have welcomed the recent decision by the National Elections Commission to list the area as an electoral constituency, **Al-Sudani** reports. Citizens of the area say they are prepared to actively participate at the polls should the Egyptian authorities agree.

Unidentified Egyptian officials said that the NEC decision on the Halayeb Triangle is not

justified. They argue that all historical evidence proves that the contested area is Egyptian territory.

### **Chiefs to screen voters in rural southern Sudan**

Chiefs in southern Sudan have been granted authority to screen voters, especially in the rural areas of southern Sudan where citizens do not have identity cards, *The Citizen*. An SPLM Deputy Secretary-General in charge of the Southern Sector, Anne Itto, reportedly said that the chiefs will determine who votes in areas where the national IDs are non-existent. She pointed out that the voter should not be deprived of the right to vote due to lack of identity cards.

### **Elections-related training**

UNESCO has launched a training course on elections reporting in Juba, the *Khartoum Monitor* reports. The course is held in collaboration with the UN Women's fund and the International Media Support Organization. The head of the UNESCO office in southern Sudan said that the course aims at building the capacity of reporters to enable them to cover the forthcoming elections in a professional manner.

Meanwhile, UNMIS reported yesterday that a week-long training session in election security issues was completed by 200 Southern Sudan Police Service (SSPS) officers in Juba on 9 October, according to *reliefweb.int*.

The training was organized by the Central Equatoria State (CES) government in collaboration with UN Police in an effort to ensure free and fair elections when voters go to the polls in April of next year.

Drawn from all six of the state's counties, the young recruits will be deployed in violence-prone areas to respond swiftly to any outbreak of fighting that could hamper an orderly ballot.

At a ceremony marking the end of the session at the state government's training centre, CES Minister of Local Government and Law Enforcement Charles Jongo said police officers will be better equipped to help citizens participate in the national elections and promote democracy in Sudan. "We will continue to train police and send them to the rural areas so that the elections are not tampered with," he said.

SSPS Deputy Director for Training Brig. Ali Jackson Elia reminded recruits that the charged political climate of an election campaign could result in loss of life and destruction of property if law enforcement officers were not adequately prepared. "To ensure democracy through fair elections, the police need to be ready," he noted.

The young officers are also undergoing a 12-week basic training course. UN Police Deputy Commissioner Tim Ecklund urged them to refrain from using force as much as possible in dealing with crowds at campaign rallies and other public events.

"No one can doubt your strength, but we must ask you to allow people to vote," said Deputy Commissioner Ecklund. "Don't use the stick but reason with them instead. This is why we ask the police to do the job not the military."

### **Minister responds to Global Witness report on Sudan's oil revenues figures**

*Sudan Vision Khartoum, 15/10/09* - Minister of Energy and Mining, Al-Zubair Ahmed Al-Hassan, asserts that the recent Global Witness report that raised doubts on Sudan oil revenue figures was authored by unidentified parties in Sudan. He said that authors of the report visited Khartoum, Juba and Nairobi before publishing their report.

The Minister said that the authors of the report aimed at shaking confidence between the concerned authorities at the Ministry of Energy and the Central Bank.

**Rai Al-Shaab** reports that lawmakers from the SPLM and Darfur said they were not satisfied by the Finance Ministry's response over the Global Witness report.

The Ministry's response on the Global Witness report was endorsed in parliament by a simple majority vote, reports the **Sudan Vision**.

### **New splinter group emerges from SPLM-North**

**Al-Ahdath** reports that a splinter group from SPLM-Northern Sector was formed yesterday and is seeking registration as a political party. At a press conference yesterday, the "National SPLM" group accused SPLM mainstream of failure to honour the SPLM Manifesto and realise the vision for a New Sudan as envisaged by the late Dr. John Garang. Widaa Mohamed Bayin, head of the group's Leadership Bureau, said that the group intends to launch a general convention to elect a leader next month.

### **Southern Kordofan demobilises 660 PDF ex-combatants**

The DR Commission in Southern Kordofan yesterday began the demobilization of some 660 female ex-combatants from a total target of 3,000 the Popular Defence Forces (PDF) combatants, **Al-Ahdath** reports. Representatives of the UN have described the DDR operation in Sudan as the world's largest. The ceremony was attended by the state's health minister representing the Government and representatives of UNMIS DDR, UNDP and the PDF Coordinator in the state. UNMIS DDR Chief described it as a "great event", and added that the number of the demobilized male and female has exceeded seven thousands.

### **DDR Commission reintegrates ex-combatants in Wau**

**Radio Miraya** 14/10/09 -- The DDR office in Western Bahr El Ghazal State launched last Wednesday a reintegration exercise targeting demobilized ex-combatants in Wau. The programme will continue up to October 26<sup>th</sup> and targets the eighty-eight combatants from Western Bahr-el-Ghazal State who were demobilized in Central Equatoria State.

### **SPLA reopens Juba-Bor road**

The Juba-Bor road has been reopened after about two weeks of closure, thanks to SPLA and SSPS patrols deployed along the road, **Al-Sudani** reports. Sources report that calm has returned to the area following stability of the situation in Jonglei state and that some 500 trucks carrying consumer products from neighbouring countries have reached Bor town.

Meanwhile, state authorities in Jonglei are preparing to conduct reconciliation conferences between the Mundari and the Dinka-Bor.

### **Farmers in Western Equatoria flee farmlands in fear of LRA attacks**

**Miraya FM** 14/10/09 – Western Equatoria State Governor Jemma Nunu Kumba has appealed for swift action on the dire humanitarian situation in the state. Governor Nunu told **Miraya FM** that LRA activities have severely affected food production in the state as farmers fled their farmland in fear of LRA attacks. The Governor said that Western Equatoria had a relatively viable food security situation before the LRA came to the area. She said that the government is doing its best to make the environment safe for aid agencies to operate. She said there was a lot of pressures on host communities as thousands of people seek refuge in big towns.

### **Minister slams opposition parties over regular attack on SPLM**

**Sudantribune.com** Khartoum, 14/10/09 — GoSS Information Minister and Spokesperson, Paul Mayom Akech, has strongly slammed some opposition political parties for their continued

attacks on the SPLM. Mayom said he is disappointed to see that the opposition has continued condemning and alleging that there is "leadership poverty" in the current administration of the semi-autonomous region.

He further said he does not understand why individuals dishonestly accuse government of doing nothing while lots of developmental projects are being implemented across the south.

"These statements are nothing but baseless and unfounded because they are a fabrication of the desperate opposition group mainly those that are sponsored by enemies of stability in southern Sudan," he emphasized.

The minister also revealed that Government will soon present the Freedom of Information Bill (FIB) to southern Sudan Legislative Assembly for enactment to enhance access to public information.

### **VP Taha briefed on security and political developments in S. Kordofan**

**SUNA Khartoum, 14/10/09** - The Vice President of the Republic Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, on Wednesday received the Governor of Southern Kordofan State Ahmed Mohamed Haroun who briefed him on the political and security situation beside the implementation of development projects in the area. The Governor said that preparations have been completed for the convening of the meeting of the Wise Men's Council in the State that will be addressed by the Vice President of the Republic Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, on 20th of October in Khartoum.

The Council of Wise Men is composed of former Governors, Federal Ministers, University Professors, Veteran Administrators, Artists, Theater Professionals, Legal Experts, and Politicians from South Kordofan State. The Council is seeking to create a consensus conducive climate among the various sons of the state on issues such as consultations, elections, rekindling of the social fibers and the priorities in development fields.

### **Al-Lafa returnees free from the danger of mines**

**UNMAO 14/10/09** - The people of Al-Lafa can now look forward to the reconstruction of their community, after UNMAO and its partner Mines Advisory Group (MAG) cleared over 44,000 m2 of land in the eastern state of Kassala.

The town of Al-Lafa has been a key priority for the government of Sudan, since it hosted an official visit from the President last November. Al-Lafa will house 2,500 displaced persons who were affected by the conflict in the area, and a new access road to an official border crossing between Sudan and Eritrea will be built.

However, the heavy presence of anti-tank and anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war was hampering the reconstruction efforts in the area. At the request of the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), UNMAO tasked its partner Mines Advisory Group (MAG) to survey and clear the area.

NMAC was able to provide MAG with the minefield record for the suspected area, which allowed the team to reduce the time spent chasing suspected areas and move right onto the real hazardous areas instead.

Once the technical survey was completed and two minefields were registered, MAG moved on to clearance operations and over a two-month period released 44,000 m2 of land and destroyed an impressive amount of 430 mines.

### **British Minister visits Sudan for talks on CPA and Darfur**

**Reuters Khartoum, 15/10/09** – The NCP and the SPLM must resolve their differences quickly to avoid derailing the CPA ahead of the first multi-party elections in decades, visiting UK State Minister for Development, Gareth Thomas, said in Khartoum yesterday.

He said his message to both sides was they had to have the "courage to compromise" on their differences to ensure the elections, set for April 2010, were free and fair.

Thomas said the government recognised it would be "challenging" to hold elections in Darfur but was committed to include it in the vote.

On aid NGO's, Thomas said he was encouraged that some new aid agencies had registered in Sudan. But he said Khartoum needed to show more appreciation for aid workers working in dangerous conditions. "I think the government does recognise that there has been an impact on capacity (by the expulsions)," he said.

In a meeting with Presidential Advisor Dr. Ghazi Salahuddin, State Minister Gareth said that the UK is concerned about the situation in Darfur and would contribute \$150 million next year to contribute to the peace process, **Al-Sahafa** reports. On his part and in answer to a question, Presidential Advisor Ghazi Salahuddin said that Sudan is not concerned over whether or not the UK is satisfied with the humanitarian situation in the country.

In a related development, **SUNA** reports that the visiting state minister held talks yesterday with NEC Chairman Abel Alier. Alier briefed the British minister on the electoral process in Sudan, the measures adopted in the demarcation of the geographical constituencies and preparations for the voter register. The NEC chairman said that conditions are conducive for the holding the elections country-wide, including in Darfur. The British minister affirmed his country's support to Sudan.

### **Government criticizes extension of arms embargo panel**

Presidential Adviser Ghazi Salah Al-Din has criticized the extension by the UN Security Council of the mandate of the panel set up by the UNSG to monitor an arms embargo on Sudan, **Al-Ahdath** reports. But MFA spokesperson Muawia Osman has downplayed the extension, saying it is a routine measure.

### **Darfur talks in Qatar postponed until next month**

**AFP 14/10/09** — Qatari-hosted talks between the Sudanese government and Darfur rebels have been postponed until November 16, the UN mediator said on Wednesday.

Jibril Basoli told reporters in the Qatari capital Doha that he needed to head to Nigeria for a meeting of African Union leaders later this month called to consider a report on Darfur prepared by a high-level panel headed by former South African president Thabo Mbeki.

"The main reason of delaying the negotiations is the peace and security summit that will take place in Abuja," he said.

"So on the 28th of October, I won't be able to be here in Doha to launch the process so we delayed it just to give us time to attend this meeting and to come back to Doha."

Mbeki did not go into details on the panel's recommendations when he handed the report to Commission Chief Jean Ping earlier this month. But he said: "The resolution of the conflict in Darfur has to be brought about by the Sudanese people themselves and cannot be imposed from outside."

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