

18 April 2011

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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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# Highlights

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## **Presidency refers border budget to ministry of finance**

*Al-Ahdath* 18/4/11 – an informed source in the Ad hoc Technical Border Demarcation Committee between the North and the South has said that the budget worked out by the committee for carrying out its demarcation work is estimated at SDG 19,743,940 millions but pointed out that the figure is not final as it could be increased.

The source confirmed that the budget has been approved by the Presidency and was referred to the federal ministry of finance, adding the amount is reasonable and the government could afford it.

## **Sudan's Abyei region awash with arms and anger**

*AFP* 18/4/11 - As Sudan's leaders struggle to reach a deal on its bitterly contested status ahead of southern independence in July, armed young men roam the streets of Abyei, the flashpoint border town where resentment towards Khartoum runs high.

General Mario Kuol, Abyei's southern-appointed acting chief administrator, accuses the Sudanese army (SAF) of failing to intervene.

"Before Tajalei village was burned, on March 5, I heard that the Arab militias were coming to attack the area. I informed the JIU (joint forces) commander from the SAF that he had to protect the villages, because we had withdrawn our police," he said.

Three hundred buildings were destroyed in Tajalei alone, according to satellite images released by a US monitoring group, which one Sudan expert said this month were reminiscent of the devastation caused by the janjaweed militia in Darfur.

Observers, including the UN Mission in Sudan's force commander, have since warned of a build-up of military weapons in Abyei that could escalate the violence in the disputed area.

General Kuol complains that northern police have kept the main road linking Abyei to the north closed since December, and that forces backed by Khartoum are occupying a swathe of the region that includes the Diffra oil field.

"Three-quarters of the northern part of the Abyei area has been occupied by Arab militias. They have taken it as their own land. But the land belongs to the Dinka," he said.

Tensions have been boiling since January, when a plebiscite due to be held alongside the south's referendum on self-determination, to determine Abyei's own future, was shelved with the two sides at loggerheads over whether the Misseriya, a tribe of Arab nomads, should be eligible to participate.

The Misseriya, who were a key proxy militia of Khartoum's army during the 1983-2005 civil war against southern rebels, migrate to Abyei each dry season to find water and pasture for their

livestock.

They insist they should have the same voting rights as the pro-southern Dinka Ngok, who live there all year, and fear their migration routes could be blocked by a new international border.

At least one of the three main routes was blocked by the southern army this year, according to a UN source, who said both sides had been "very lucky" that last year's rains have provided enough water to see the Misseriya through the dry season, which is about to end.

This week, a technical committee is due to meet in Abyei town in the latest bid to implement a peace accord signed by the north and south in January, which calls on all forces to withdraw from the area except for special joint units of northern and southern troops and UN peacekeepers. Somewhat predictably, no one is expecting much to come from it.

"Now the military build-up is such that I doubt whether these technical committees will be able to withdraw the armed groups," said Charles Abyei, the chairman of the region's legislative council, who believes the north is simply "using" the Misseriya to control the region's oil.

"Even the youth in Abyei have taken up their weapons. Everyone here is armed. It is a critical situation," he added.

For many of Abyei's youth, carrying a gun is the inevitable consequence of a lack of other opportunities in this underdeveloped area, which has no mains power supply and no hospital, despite its oil wealth and fertility.

Years of neglect by Khartoum, on top of the strong cultural and political links to the south, mean that whatever the status of the negotiations come July, Abyei's residents will celebrate southern independence.

"Even though Abyei is still in the north, for us it doesn't mean anything. We are with the south," said General Kuol.

### **North Sudan offers to bear the country's external debt in return of joining relief initiative**

*Sudan Tribune website* 17/4/11 - North Sudan has proposed to undertake the country's entire external debt in exchange for inclusion in an international program providing insolvent countries with debt relief, officials indicated on Sunday.

A delegation from the Sudanese government on Sunday started meetings in New York with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to explore the possibility of addressing the country's external debts problem.

Sudan's minister of finance and national economy, Ali Mahmoud, who heads the delegation, described the talks as successful, adding that the delegation intends to hold bilateral meetings with the Arab group and the World Bank on the sidelines of the meetings.

Meanwhile in Khartoum, the spokesman of Sudan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Khalid Musa, said that the government had gone to the meeting with the option of one side bearing the entire

debt in exchange for the IMF's acceptance to include Sudan in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC).

Musa echoed his country's complaints that political rifts with the West have prevented Sudan from joining the 40 countries currently under HIPC, which provides them with debt relief and low-interest loans to cancel or reduce external debt repayments to sustainable levels.

However, Musa said that the delegation had "sensed seriousness on the side of the international community in searching for appropriate mechanisms to move forward in relieving the debts in agreement with the creditors."

The World Bank has said that Khartoum needs to introduce wide economic reforms in order to qualify for relief of multilateral debt.

Former governor of Sudan's Central Bank, Sabir Mohamed Al-Hassan, announced in statements reported by the daily newspaper Al-Sahafah that north Sudan would not mind bearing the entire external debt if the country's creditors recognize its inclusion in HIPC.

### **NCP says Agar's call for autonomy violation of agreement**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 18/4/11 – The NCP has criticized the call by Blue Nile state governor Malik Agar on the US Administration to support efforts by the residents of the state to achieve autonomy. The NCP also described the call by the DUP leader Mohamed Osman Al-Mirghani and SPLM's Yassir Arman for confederation between the North and the South as "futile".

"Confederation is an old proposal. It could have been considered before the referendum but now there is a new state unfolding and it can only be discussed after the completion of creation of this state. Talk about confederation at this point of time is premature" NCP official Ibrahim Ghandour told reporters yesterday.

Ghandour said Blue Nile governor Malik Agar's call upon the US Administration to support their demand for autonomy tantamount to breach of the peace agreement.

### **Greater Equatoria demands federal system in South Sudan**

*Sudan Tribune website* 17/4/11 - Greater Equatoria conference reiterated its support to southern Sudan government and called to implement a federal system in the to-be-independent state next July.

The Equatoria Conference kicked off in Juba on the 14th April 2011 ended on Saturday 16 with key resolutions and pledging support to Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of southern Sudan who is facing several rebel groups before to proclaim the independence on 9 July.

"Equatoria pledges full support to the current GoSS president having driven the people of southern Sudan to the Promised Land in the recent concluded referendum," said the final communiqué read by the deputy governor of Central Equatoria state, Manase Lomole Waya at the closing session.

"Federal system of governance should be adopted in the new Republic of South Sudan after the declaration of the independence" the communiqué further stressed. The governor also urged to provide security to all the states equally.

Over 3,000 Equatorians converged in Juba from 24th -19th April 2011 to attend a three-day conference under the theme "Justice, Unity and Prosperity". The conference also brought Equatorians from the Diasporas USA, Canada, Australia Europe and East Africa. The vice president of GoSS Riek Machar Teny who officially closed the conference told the presence that "the topics discussed are important and some of the resolutions will catch up in their respect line ministries and committees".

As the deputy chair of the SPLM Machar emphasized that "SPLM is committed to federalism and decentralization hence the new Republic of South Sudan will be built in a democratic governance."

He also disclosed that the deployment of the southern Sudanese army units which were part of the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) SPLA to western Equatoria state and borders to stop atrocities committed by LRA atrocities in the region.

Machar also talked about the tribal clashes between the Mvolo of W. Equatoria state and Yirol West of Lakes state, saying President Kiir formed ministerial committee headed by the Minister of defence Nhial Deng Nhial to investigate the source of the conflict.

He further revealed that over 1000 anti-riot police forces will be deployed in the buffer zones of the conflict to prevent further clashes. But he also urged the state governors to strengthen their police services in order that the federal police are not involved in state affairs.

The conference urged the South Sudan government to not prioritise the relocation of the national capital from Juba "since the far rural people of southern Sudan need basic services (Good hospitals, Access to quality education system, Security, infrastructure etc" said the final resolutions of the three-day meeting.

But the South Sudan Vice-President said "the relocation of the capital city came as a result of Juba being shared by three governments (GoSS, Central Equatoria State and Juba County)".

The governor of the host state Clemet Wani Konga said in his speech that people of southern Sudan complain that Central Equatoria doesn't give land, "yet land in Juba is being grabbed by senior military officials before allotted to the people."

In his closing remarks the governor of Western Equatoria state Bangasi Joseph Bakosoro said "Equatoria loves the government of southern Sudan since 1980s to date none have taken up arms to overthrow the government of southern Sudan from Equatoria region"...

### **GoSS receives request to strip Amum of immunity**

*Al-Intibaha* 18/4/11 – the SPLM-DC has officially requested the GoSS to lift immunity from SPLM SG and GoSS Minister of Peace Pagan Amum to be tried for his claims that the SPLM-DC keep militias. SPLM-DC spokesperson Peter Adok said his party requested lifting of immunity so that Amum could appear before court to respond to the suit filed against him.

Adok denied that his party keeps militias, adding that their party's political activity is peaceful.

## **Buffer zone of 400 police between Lakes and W. Equatoria states**

*Sudan Tribune website* 17/4/11 - The governor of Lakes state Chol Tong Mayay has said that a 400 strong police force will be deployed along the border between Lakes and Western Equatoria to prevent further clashes between communities.

Tong returned to Saturday after a one week meeting in Juba with government of South Sudan officials from Lakes' Yirol West county and Mvolo county of Western Equatoria.

"I was invited to Juba to attend the AU delegation meeting on post war construction and development by government of Southern Sudan."

The governor said he and his Western Equatoria counterpart Joseph Bakasoro have agreed that the government of South Sudan will deploy over 400 policemen as a buffer force in an attempt to avoid further clashes between the border communities.

Tong said that as clashes between Mvolo and Yirol West county the Bar-naam Bridge was large part of discussions.

He explained that the committee was formed by GoSS president and Nhial Deng Nhial, the minister of SPLA affairs was assigned as a chairman of investigations committee to investigate Mvolo and Yirol West County clashes.

## **SPLA attacks Shiluk, killing 62**

*Al-Ahram Al Youm* 18/4/11 – A senior UN official revealed that the SPLA attacked the Shiluk area of "Dor", killing 62 people including 55 civilians, adding that aid workers were denied access to the area. The UN official who spoke on condition of anonymity indicated that the SPLA had fired on civilians while they were trying to flee across the river. He said the SPLA forces came to the village the following day and fired indiscriminately, looted houses and rustled cattle.

## **NCP-NUP dialogue fails to agree on government participation**

*Sudan tribune website* 17/4/11 - Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir who chairs the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) will meet with the leader of the opposition National Umma Party (NUP) Sadiq Al-Mahdi to discuss the pending issues in their dialogue over the political reforms in the country.

Despite calls for political mobilization to overthrow the regime of the ruling NCP, Sadiq Al-Mahdi engaged a peaceful process for political transition saying an uprising might lead to the dismantlement of the Sudan.

The ruling NCP in North Sudan announced on Sunday the conclusion of ground-level dialogue with the opposition NUP, saying that the results will be referred to a meeting between its leader President Omar Al-Bashir and the NUP leader Al-Sadiq Al-Mahdi.

The NCP's political secretary Ibarhim Gandoor told reporters today that the agreements reached during the dialogue "do not include participation in a broad-base government," adding that this issue, among other pending points, would be discussed during Al-Mahdi-Bashir summit whose date is yet to be fixed.

Meanwhile, many within the NUP's ranks appear unhappy with the dialogue, which they see as futile, whereas NCP officials have repeatedly suggested that the dialogue was making progress and had reached an advanced level.

Al-Mahdi has consistently defended his position to hold a dialogue with the NCP, saying that his party was only negotiating over what he termed as the "national agendas", specifying them in a new constitution, a solution to the conflict in Darfur region, a remedy to economic malaises, a way out of the International Criminal Court's indictment of Al-Bashir and a national government incorporating "not only for the NUP and NCP but for all Sudanese people."

However, Al-Mahdi warned that the NCP would have to face a popular uprising if it failed to reach an agreement on these issues.

In an interview with Al-Arabiya TV, the opposition leader warned that he does not expect that his meeting with President Al Bashir would come out with positive conclusions.

"We still disagree about core issues, yet we are planning to resolve the situation with the ruling party soon whether we agree or not," he said.

Among the pending issues the two parties failed to agree on is the issue of Darfur administrative status and the implementation of Islamic law on the non-Muslims.

The Umma supports the establishment of a regional authority in the restive region while the NCP reject such idea. Also, the opposition party says the Sudanese Christians should be treated differently but the NCP makes the Islamic state his slogan after the separation of the South Sudan.

The Umma party also rejected the results of April elections and asks for the formation of a national government, a demand that the NCP refuses to consider.

### **GoSS seeks final settlement to LRA issue**

*Al-Sahafa* 18/04/11 – GoSS Vice-President Riek Machar says efforts are underway to reach a final deal with the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Joseph Kony, in order to put an end to his activities in southern Sudan. This followed calls by delegates at the recent Equatoria States conference calling for justice in the region and an end to LRA activities.

The VP said that the recommendations of the conference are challenges that the GoSS would seek to address.

Delegates had called for support for development projects and underlined the need to preserve stability and south Sudan unity.

### **Interview: "Washington promises much, delivers little" – Al-Bashir**

*Sudan Vision* 18/4/11 - President Al Bashir said the US administration promises much but delivers little, adding that despite the achievements of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) the US is still talking about a goodwill stage.

Field Marshal Omar Al Bashir said that ongoing incidents and conflicts in some southern Sudan regions are internal problems, affirming his government's commitment to support the stability of new state in the south.

In an interview with the "The Guardian" at his office yesterday, Al Bashir discussed the International Criminal Court (ICC), Darfur peace strategy and the Israeli air strike among other issues.

On the South Sudan, he said that his government had offered to provide full support and expertise for stability in the south.

Al Bashir also renewed accusations towards Israel for attacking Sudan and its citizens, while denying allegations about smuggling weapons into Gaza Strip.

With regard to the situation in Darfur, Al Bashir explained the historical background of the conflict in the region and stages of its development, arguing it started as an inter-tribal conflict before it has been internalized and exploited to serve western interests.

Al Bashir tackled efforts to finalizing peace as well as a new strategy for Darfur peace adopted by the government, Doha negotiations and Darfur-Darfur Dialogue (DDD).

Regarding the allegations of the International Criminal Court (ICC), he said Sudan is not a member of the court and that its prosecutor, Ocampo's political allegations were illegal, citing Ocampo's recent claims that Al Bashir has USD 9 billion in a British Bank.

The president said the British treasury and said bank denied such allegations, accusing the ICC of double-standards dealing, ignoring what is going on in Palestine, Iraq and other region.

As for potential change in Sudan – according to arguments by some western circles, Al-Bashir said, "We came by the will of the people. We were elected by 69 percent. The West and some circles have been talking about a change in Sudan for more than twenty years, but the fact shows that Sudanese people are even more committed to their government."

The president added, "We believe in change, change for the better, so let us form a broad-based government." He reiterated adopting dialogue with all political parties to achieve development in Sudan.

He further underscored the importance of holding dialogue, drafting a permanent constitution for the country, while inviting all parties to be involved in preparing the constitution.

## **Southern Kordofan Elections Focus**

### **VP Taha to visit southern Kordofan today**

*Al-Sahafa* 18/4/11 – VP Ali Osman Taha is to visit southern Kordofan state today to address several mass rallies in the towns of Taladi, Abu Jibeiha, Rashad, Dalami and Abasiya. Taha will also inspect utilities currently being implemented in the area.

*SUNA* 17/4/11 reported that advisor of southern Kordofan governor Mohieddin Al-Tom had underlined the importance of Taha's visit at this juncture. According to Al-Tom, the state is witnessing the implementation of a number of projects in the spheres of water, health and education besides many other important projects top of which Al-Fula electricity station considered as the biggest electricity project using hydro-generation system in the country, and which is set to produce 405 megawatts, at a whopping total cost that exceeds 680 million dollars

### **SPLM (South Kordofan) urges international community to intervene to save peace agreement**

*Al-Sahafa* 18/4/11 – The SPLM has called on the international community to urgently intervene to save the peace agreement from collapsing, saying the NCP has provided arms to tribes and militias in southern Kordofan state to destabilize the area during elections.

SPLM Chair in the state Gamar Dalman said NCP candidate for gubernatorial post Ahmed Haroun had toured the areas of Al-Abasiya, Al-Hamra and the western sector even before launching his elections campaign, adding that the SPLM is in possession of concrete evidence that Haroun provided arms and ammunition to some tribes in the area.

Dalman urged the international community to intervene to salvage the peace agreement and also called upon the national, regional and international civil society organizations to monitor elections in southern Kordofan. **Dalman has described UNMIS performance in Kadugli as “weak”.**

### **Investigation begins in incidents in southern Kordofan**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 18/4/11 – The inquiry committee, which was sworn yesterday in before state governor Ahmed Haroun, began investigation in recent incidents in El-Fied Um Abdallah village in Rashad Locality in southern Kordofan. The committee is made up of prosecutor Abdullah Mohamed Nur, legal advisor of Division (14) and representatives of police, JIUs and NISS. The committee is empowered to inspect arrest and investigate.

### **1000 SPLA elements join NCP in southern Kordofan**

*Al-Raed* 18/4/11 – over 1000 SPLA elements have declared their defection from the SPLM and joined the NCP. The elements have reportedly taken the oath of allegiance to the NCP in front of its candidate and incumbent governor of southern Kordofan state Ahmed Haroun in the town of Abu Jibeih. The breakaway group said they had taken the step because the SPLM had failed to meet their aspirations and declared their full support for the NCP candidate Ahmed Haroun who had already kicked off his elections campaign in the area.

### **Elections in Southern Kordofan state on schedule – NEC**

*Miraya FM* 16/4/11 - The National Elections Commission (NEC) said that recent violence in Southern Kordofan would not have an effect on the timetable for the upcoming legislative and executive elections in the state.

Deputy Chair of the Commission, Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, said on Friday that the Electoral body was not involved in the ongoing accusations between the National Congress Party and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement

## **Khartoum Governor donates billion pounds to southern Kordofan**

*Al-Ahram Al-Youm* 18/4/11 – Governor of Khartoum state, Abdul Rahman Al-Khedir, has donated SDG 1,300,000 for implementation of development projects in southern Kordofan besides SDG 120,000 for the NCP in the state which is contesting elections for the state's gubernatorial and Assembly posts.

Al-Khedir, however, told a rally on Sunday that the donations had nothing to do with the elections in the area. "Ahmed Haroun will sweep the elections and I will come back to celebrate the victory with you," he told supporters in Kadugli.

## **Nuba alliance denounces NCP's proposal to break up southern Kordofan**

*Sudan Tribune website* 18/4/11 - The proposed break up of southern Kordofan state has been opposed by the alliance of Western Nuba Mountains associations, societies and organizations, according to *Ajras al Hurriyah* of Sunday.

The NCP has pledged to reinstate the state of West Kordofan should the party win the state's gubernatorial elections set to begin in the first week of May.

West Kordofan was abolished and merged into southern Kordofan state in 2005 as per the provisions of the CPA.

The Khartoum based newspaper reported that the alliance said that re-establishing Western Kordofan State would ignore the opinions of citizens warning that the situation could explode and accused the NCP of being involved in serious violations in the region.

The chairman of the alliance, Kaki Kuwa said that the re-establishment of Western Kordofan would be tantamount to splitting the state on ethnic racial and ethnic grounds. "This is dangerous and will harm the social set-up", he said.

## **Other Highlights**

### **Sudan paid ransom to free foreigners abducted in Darfur - court**

*Sudan Tribune website* 17/4/11 - Sudanese authorities paid a ransom of 500,000 pounds to free nine foreigners held captive in the restive Darfur region, a Sudanese court disclosed on Sunday.

A special criminal court in Nyala, capital of South Darfur, trying Sudanese accused of abducting Latvian air crew last year revealed that "some" Sudanese authorities paid 500 thousand pounds (over 150,000 USD) to secure their release.

The investigations also show that 20,000 pounds were paid to the abductors for the release of some members of the hybrid peacekeeping mission in Darfur UNAMID.

The Latvian pilots, who work for the UN World Food Programme were abducted on 5 November, 2010 in the South Darfur city of Nyala.

Sudanese security service who usually deal with such files denied in the past paying any ransom to the kidnappers who are often former members of the government militias. The latter blame

Khartoum for not honoring promises received to fight the rebels.

### **SSLA Speaker survives attempt on his life**

*Akhir Lahza* 18/4/11 – Speaker of southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA) James Wani Iga survived an assassination attempt on his life when his convoy was attacked yesterday. Iga told Miraya FM that the attack on his convoy left several dead and injured, adding that he identity of the attackers has not been established yet.

### **Three Sudanese accused of spying for Israel**

*Al-Ahram Al-Youm* 18/4/11 – a Court in Port Sudan accused three Sudanese nationals of aiding Israel to carry out recent bombing of a vehicle which left two people killed in Port Sudan.

The accused, among them the previous owner of the targeted vehicle Fateh Al-Rahman Al-Badawi have been arrested and the security authorities are also searching for Mossad's elements who guided the aircraft to carry out the attack.

In an interview to *Al-Sudani* 18/4/11, Defence Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein said he did not rule out further Israel strikes and indicated that the agents who had assisted in the bombing are civilians, not military men.

### **SAF denies allegations of planting minefields in Darfur**

*Al-Ayyam* 18/04/11 – The Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) has denied allegations by the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) that it had planted minefields around some sources of water in the Darfur area. SAF Spokesperson Al-Suwarmi Khaled pointed out that there is no need for such action in Darfur because the armed movements have no control over any peace of territory.

The JEM had earlier said that reports have revealed that security operatives were moving large quantities of landmines to the areas of Teina and Karnoi to be planted around waterholes in those areas.

### **Gang raids residence of Omdurman police chief**

*Al-Sahafa* 18/04/11 – A machete-wielding gang of four members raided the residence of the Omdurman Police Chief Maj. Gen. Taj Al-Sir Abbas, seriously injuring him and his son.

Sources said the quartet had broken into the police chief's house with the intent to steal but the officer was awoken by the noise and the ensuing fight left the police chief and his son seriously injured. The gang got away with his cell phone.

Two of the robbers have been captured and are being investigated.

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