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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

## Headlines

- VP Taha calls for North-South dialogue (**Dailies/websites**)
- Seventy people killed in fresh clashes in Jonglei (**Al-Intibaha**)
- Famine hit Unity State (**Al-Intibaha**)
- SPLM demands Abyei oil revenue share (**Al-Sahafa**)
- Jonglei assembly to question commissioners on insecurity (**ST**)
- UN helps southern Sudan clean up disease-causing waste (**UN News**)
- US said to be planning deeper engagement with Sudan (**Reuters**)
- Amnesty International warns Uganda over receiving Bashir (**ST**)
- Juba Declaration second stage to be discussed (**Al-Ayyam**)
- Egypt treading carefully on the border dispute with Sudan (**ST**)
- Network to submit nominees for rights commission membership (**Al-Ayyam**)
- South Sudan gunmen kill three Kenyan soldiers - minister (**AFP**)
- Irish aid workers released after 100 days in captivity in Darfur (**Times Online**)
- Two police officers killed in South Darfur (**ST**)
- Sudanese official holds talks with Eritrean President (**ST**)

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# Highlights

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## VP Taha calls for North-South dialogue

VP Ali Osman Taha, in an interview to Sudan TV broadcast live yesterday, reiterated the Government's commitment to self-determination for southern Sudan, *Local dailies* report. According to *Al-Ayyam*, he pledged a fair referendum, saying it is a significant guarantee for a sustainable peace. Taha also expressed optimism that the solution for Darfur crisis was approaching. With regard to the Three Areas, Taha said the popular consultation has nothing to do with self-determination which is granted to the South only. He called for national dialogue between the North and the South which he described as one of the most important factors for unity.

**AFP** 17/10/09 reported Taha as saying that the list of voters in a referendum on south Sudan's independence would not be drawn from the contested results of the last census, Vice President Ali Osman Taha said on Saturday." The list of people who go to vote (in the referendum) does not depend on the outcome of the last census," Taha said in an interview on Sudanese public television.

The former enemies in north and south Sudan announced on Friday that they had reached agreement on details for a referendum in January 2011 on the south's full independence.

Under the deal, independence will be granted if backed by 50 percent plus one vote in a referendum. But at least two-thirds of registered voters will have to cast ballots for the result to be valid.

The registration of voters for the referendum in southern Sudan, a vast underdeveloped region that is bursting with natural resources, would begin in July 2010, Taha said. The influential leader welcomed the efforts of Egypt, Libya and Qatar in negotiating a resolution to the conflict between the Khartoum Government and rebel forces in the Darfur region of western Sudan.

Despite these efforts abroad, "I think the solution to the crisis in Darfur is (above all) in the hands of the Sudanese and the citizens of Darfur," said Taha, who called on all rebel movements in Darfur to join the peace process.

**Sudan Tribune website** 16/10/09 reported Machar told the press at Juba Airport upon his arrival from Khartoum on Friday that the NCP had also dropped its proposal of 90% to 2/3 (66%) of quorum required from all the registered voters in order to recognize the outcome of the referendum.

SPLM Deputy Chairman further said that his delegation agreed that southerners based in northern Sudan and abroad would be allowed to vote during the referendum.

He said they have also agreed that the exercise of the referendum can be repeated within sixty (60) days in case the first exercise fails to attain the 2/3 voters turnout.

In the agreement also included several other issues among which are the qualifications of voters and voting centers in addition to composition of the referendum commission.

Machar also said the NCP had proposed that all Southerners that reside in the north should

automatically lose their citizenship in northern Sudan and be treated as foreigners if the referendum vote results into independence of the South. The same fate would also apply to northerners that reside in the South.

He added the SPLM has refused to discuss in the referendum law the fate of southerners or northerners, saying the issue would also be discussed together with the other issues in the post-referendum dialogue.

The SPLM's position is that the referendum law should not be tied to the post-referendum issues, he said.

The two parties should not only discuss what would happen to the post-referendum issues if the South chooses independence, Machar explained, adding that they would also discuss how Sudan needs to look like in case the South would vote for unity.

Machar earlier explained that such a post-referendum united Sudan would need re-structuring of the Sudanese state itself, saying all these issues would be discussed outside the referendum bill.

A special committee of the Southern Sudan cabinet comprising of different political parties was formed to study the details of the draft bill on Saturday before it could be initialed by the two co-chairpersons, Dr. Machar and Ali Osman in their next week's meeting on Monday.

The bill would then be presented to the national Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) before it goes to the national Council of Ministers and Parliament for final endorsement by the current last session before the end of the year.

On the Abyei referendum, Machar added that the two parties have also presented their respective proposals on the composition of its commission.

He further added that the two parties are as well working on the bills for popular consultations for Southern Blue Nile and Nuba Mountains.

However, *Sudan Vision* reports NCP Political Secretary Ibrahim Ghandour as saying that the agreement reached over the referendum law doesn't mean that the way has been paved for separation of the south but to confirm that the referendum will take place as scheduled.

### **Seventy people killed in fresh clashes in Jonglei**

More than seventy people - 50 SPLA elements and 20 Lou Nuer - were killed in fresh clashes yesterday in "Fatai" area in Jonglei state where the SPLA is trying to disarm the Lou Nuer, *Al-Intibaha* reports. The paper said many civilians were wounded but the Lou Nuer were able to take over ten SPLA's machinegun-mounted tanks. Sources said the casualty figure is expected to rise as the fighting between the SPLA and the Lou Nuer is still continuing.

### **Famine hit Unity State**

*Al-Intibaha* reports native administration leaders and politicians in the Unity State as saying that the area is hit by an acute food shortage and called on the international community and NGOs to intervene to deliver food aid. The native leaders also stressed the need to bring those responsible for the recent clash between Paulino Matip troops and SPLA to justice.

## **SPLM demands Abyei oil revenue share**

**Al-Sahafa** reports the SPLM has demanded that the South should be paid its share of revenues from Abyei oil in accordance with the CPA provisions. The SPLM also linked its participation in the upcoming elections to the implementation of the Juba Conference's recommendations and the amendment of nine laws. It accused the NCP of lack of sincerity in the implementation of the CPA and warned against attempts to rig the elections. SPLM Deputy Chairman James Wani Igga who took part in a symposium yesterday in Khartoum said the SPLM would not go back to war but it would continue to push for the implementation of the CPA provisions. Igga stressed the need for resolving the Darfur crisis.

## **Jonglei assembly to question commissioners on insecurity**

**Sudan Tribune website** 17/10/09 – Jonglei state legislative assembly will have "opinion" on county commissioners allowing crimes with impunity, speaker of the house says.

Speaking to reporters here Friday, Hon. Peter Chol Wal also says plans are underway, with the help of United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), to dispatch parliamentary committees to various counties to embark on comprehensive peace building and good neighborliness among the tribal communities of the state.

"When we ask commissioners once there is problem in their areas, they say 'we don't know'", Hon. Peter Chol said.

"If a commissioner is not able to know who is disturbing that community, we shall have opinion on him," he added.

According to the Speaker, members of parliament from different constituencies will help finding out reliable information in regards to why it is hard to identify and apprehend perpetrators of insecurity between or among communities of the state.

In a related development, students at Dr. John Garang Institute of science and technology challenged UNMIS human rights officers on Saturday in a lecture meant on protection of basic rights.

The students accused UN Right body of protecting armed civilians by advising South Sudan Government against forceful disarmament.

"Armed civilians abduct children, kill innocent people and loot property and so, any form of disarmament is necessary," a student said adding "but the UN advises against forceful disarmament. Whose right is being protected?"

UNMIS Human Right officer identified as Eki, based in Bor, dismisses students' claim that UN opposes disarmament. But when asked, to explain what the Human body thinks, Eki says the government has both responsibilities – to protect the civilians and disarm without committing crimes against other suspected armed groups..

## **UN helps southern Sudan clean up disease-causing waste**

**UN News Centre** 16/10/09 - Some 16,000 volunteers will take to the streets of Juba, the capital of southern Sudan, next month in a United Nations programme to tackle health hazards caused by public dumping of waste in a rapidly growing metropolitan area that has endured repeated fatal outbreaks of cholera, water-borne diseases and malaria.

The project is part of a £20 million United Kingdom-funded project to improve the sustainable use of natural resources in Africa's largest country, to be carried out by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) over the next three years. UK Minister of State for International Development Gareth Thomas was visiting Juba today to launch the segment that aims to establish long-term waste management capacity in Southern Sudan.

"The Juba clean-up not only marks the beginning of an important project that will have concrete and positive impacts on the population of southern Sudan – it also takes forward UNEP's collaboration with Sudan to improve environmental management as a critical pre-requisite of sustainable development," UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said in Nairobi, Kenya.

The clean-up, which will be replicated in the nine states of southern Sudan, will be coupled with a sustained awareness-raising campaign to encourage the citizens of Juba to adopt an environmentally friendly attitude towards the disposal of waste in the city.

UNEP's country-wide programme seeks to help the people of Sudan, a country ravaged by several current and recent conflicts, to achieve sustainable peace, recovery and development by improving the management of natural resources.

The recently established UNEP office in Juba will also provide technical support to the Government to manage its forests and other valuable natural resources in a sustainable manner, and work to build the capacity of Government ministries to tackle environmental issues.

After a peace agreement in 2005 ended two decades of war between the Government in Khartoum, in the north, and southern Sudanese rebels, UNEP conducted a post-conflict environmental assessment, making 85 recommendations and outlining a detailed \$120- million action plan over three to five years.

## **US said to be planning deeper engagement with Sudan**

**Reuters** 17/10/09 - The United States plans deeper engagement with Sudan's Government, rather than further isolating Khartoum as President Barack Obama advocated last year, a U.S. official said on Saturday. The policy change envisages a mix of "incentives and pressures," but there are no immediate plans to ease sanctions on Khartoum, which the United States has accused of genocide in the war-ravaged western Darfur region, the official said. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was due to unveil the new approach on Monday but there could still be changes, said the U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The planned policy change reflects the beliefs of Scott Gration, whom Obama appointed in March as a special envoy Sudan, the U.S. official said. Gration has argued that Sudan's many problems can only be resolved with the cooperation of the government of President Omar Hassan al-Bashir. "His point has been that you are not going to be able to bring peace to Sudan unless you work with Bashir," the official said.

The U.S. official said he did not expect direct talks with Bashir, but that "my understanding is that the Administration is not planning any immediate lifting of sanctions." The intent was to test Khartoum's willingness to take steps to end the conflict in Darfur and implement a 2005 North-South peace agreement on a specific timeline before there is any move toward dropping sanctions, the official said. "Getting off the terrorism list is something that could happen if and only if they have taken the right steps," he said, referring to a U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism. "The issue is not engagement or non-engagement, it is the terms of engagement," said Jerry Fowler, President of the Save Darfur Coalition. "The burden of proof is on the

government of Sudan. There must be concrete and lasting progress before relations can improve." During his campaign last year, Obama called the violence in Darfur genocide and a "collective stain on our national and human conscience." He said he wanted stiffer sanctions on the Khartoum government. In January, Clinton said the Obama administration was considering the creation of no-fly zones and other sanctions. But in July, Gration told lawmakers in Congress that sanctions against Sudan were counterproductive and that he did not know of any intelligence to justify Sudan remaining on the list of state sponsors of terrorism.

According to ***Sudan Tribune website*** 16/10/09, the US Administration will reveal its long awaited comprehensive policy review on Sudan that appears to put a higher dosage of engagement than the previous Administration, say multiple US media reports.

The US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, and the administration's special Sudan envoy, Scott Gration, are to unveil the policy Monday at a news conference at the State Department, the officials said.

The Washington Post said that the new policy that calls for a campaign of "pressure and incentives" to pressure Khartoum into pursuing peace in the troubled Darfur region, settling disputes with the autonomous Government in southern Sudan and providing the United States greater cooperation in stemming international terrorism.

In an interview with the New York Times on Friday, Gration said that Washington would set strict time lines for Sudanese President Omer Al-Bashir to fulfill the conditions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

"To advance peace and security in Sudan, we must engage with allies and with those with whom we disagree," said a statement of the policy that was obtained by The New York Times.

General Gration summed up the administration's position by citing what he described as an old African proverb.

"If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, you have to go with someone," Gration said.

"We want to go far," he said, "and to do that we are going to have to go with Khartoum."

### **Amnesty International warns Uganda over receiving Bashir**

***Sudan Tribune website*** 16/10/09 — the Ugandan Government should honor its international obligations and arrest Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir if he sets foot in the country, a rights watchdog said today.

This week Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni was quoted as saying that he invited Bashir to a special African Union (AU) summit on refugees that starts next week in his capacity as an African head of state.

"President Al Bashir is a fugitive from international justice charged with responsibility for crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur," said Christopher Keith Hall, Senior Legal Adviser with Amnesty International Justice Project.

"The Ugandan Government has an obligation to arrest and hand him over to the ICC should he enter Ugandan territory," Hall said.

## **Juba Declaration second stage to be discussed**

**Al-Ayyam** reports the signatories to the recent Juba Declaration are to hold a meeting today to discuss the implementation of the agreement. Secretary General of the Turabi-led Popular Congress Party kamal Omar said the meeting would debate on a proposal to hold a symposium where the leaders of all the political parties who signed the Juba Declaration will speak.

## **Egypt treading carefully on the border dispute with Sudan**

**Sudan Tribune website** 15/10/09 — The Egyptian Government avoided making any public reaction in wake of Sudan's electoral commission's announcement that a disputed border region will be counted as a geographical constituency in the April 2010 elections.

The Kuwaiti based **Al-Jarida** newspaper quoted unidentified Egyptian foreign ministry officials as saying that "Cairo will temporarily maintain silence" on the matter.

"Khartoum's step is subject to evaluation and we are seriously looking at it" an official told the newspaper.

The Egyptian ambassador to Sudan Afifi Abdel-Wahab downplayed the dispute in press statement saying there is nothing new and that the situation will be resolved through dialogue.

The Halayeb triangle that overlooks the Red Sea has been a source of tension between the two countries as early as 1958, shortly after Sudan gained independence from British-Egyptian rule.

## **Society Network to submit nominees for rights commission membership**

**Al-Ayyam** reports the civil society network is determined to submit a petition to the Presidency before Wednesday containing its vision and nominees for the Human Rights Commission's membership. The Network said that the list of its nominees which was agreed upon after consultation with the political parties and the Parliament would be made public during the coming days. The network warned that it would boycott the Commission should its list of nominees is ignored.

## **South Sudan gunmen kill three Kenyan soldiers: minister**

**AFP** 17/10/09 - Southern Sudanese gunmen have killed at least three Kenyan soldiers in cross border raids, the information minister of the semi-autonomous south said on Saturday.

But a Kenyan military spokesman flatly denied that any incident had taken place involving his country's troops.

Clashes broke out on Thursday, but reports are only just emerging from the remote border region between southern Sudan and north-west Kenya, Southern Sudanese Information Minister Paul Mayom told AFP.

"The border area between southern Sudan and the Lokichoggio area of Kenya has witnessed some skirmishes, largely among the Toposa people of Sudan and the local Turkana people of Kenya," he said.

"It is not clear how the Kenyan army became involved in these skirmishes but the reports show that three personnel were killed," Mayom added.

Kenyan military spokesman Bogita Ongeru denied the losses.

"We don't have a base in that named area. We have not had any incident involving our soldiers and we have touched base even with those in other areas and there is no incident reported," he told AFP.

"I don't know where these people are getting such information. On our part there are no such reports."

Raids to steal cattle and resources are frequent in the region, where automatic weapons are common. The south's minister of regional cooperation has flown to Nairobi to resolve the situation, while extra troops from the southern Sudanese army have been sent to the area to boost security, Mayom said.

"This is something we condemn as the government of Southern Sudan," the information minister added.

"This is an area of traditional conflict between the communities, and we are urging them not to express their grievances through violence.

A spokesman for the southern Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the army of South Sudan, said security is being increased in the area.

"This was a matter of local Toposa raiding, and was nothing to do with the SPLA," said Major General Kuol Diem Kuol. "Security is being improved in the area to ensure there is peace."

### **Irish aid workers released after 100 days in captivity in Darfur**

**Times Online** 18/10/09 - An Irish aid worker and her Ugandan colleague kidnapped in war-torn Sudan more than three months ago have been freed, the Irish Government revealed today.

Sharon Commins, 32, from Dublin, and Hilda Kawuki who worked for the Irish aid agency GOAL were freed early today after more than 100 days in captivity, said state humanitarian affairs minister Abdel Baqi Gilani.

"They are free, they are in good health," Mr Gilani the state humanitarian affairs minister said.

The women were snatched from their compound in the north Darfur town of Kutum by an armed gang on July 3.

"No ransom was paid," Mr Gilani said, adding that local tribal chiefs had pressured the kidnapers to free their hostages.

Ireland's Foreign Affairs Minister Micheal Martin said: "I am personally delighted and extremely relieved to relay the news that Sharon and Hilda, the two Goal volunteers, have been freed by their captives and handed over to the Sudanese authorities."

The two aid workers' ordeal is the longest endured by foreign aid staff in Darfur since the conflict erupted in the western region in early 2003.

Until March, no aid worker had been held in Darfur for longer than 24 hours.

However, the International Criminal Court in March issued an arrest warrant against President Omar al-Beshir for alleged war crimes in Darfur, triggering a sharp downturn in Sudan's relations with foreign relief organisations.



## **Two police officers killed in South Darfur**

**Sudan Tribune website** 17/10/09 – Unidentified gunmen killed two police officers while they were guarding a UN World Food Programme guesthouse in south Darfur state last Thursday.

The assailants described by the police as "criminals" target armed police officers to get their arms, a UN World Food Programme official said, in a statement to **Reuters** today.

"The police told us there are criminals active in the area, targeting small groups of armed police, trying to get their guns," said WFP security officer Elisca Lagerweij. "We assume this was not an attack on the United Nations or its staff."

He also said that two international staff and two WFP guards who were inside the compound were not injured.

Further a third police officer was killed on Friday when the Sudanese security forces followed the attackers in the troubled state. While the police shot dead two of the attackers in an exchange of fire.

Despite the relative calm in the restive region, humanitarian workers and peacekeepers are still targeted by armed men who attack them regularly. The attacks on police officers however remain uncommon.

The hybrid peacekeeping mission in Darfur said today that three peacekeepers were wounded after an attack by unknown armed men near Zalingei on their convoy.

The peacekeepers were escorting a UNAMID garbage truck when it came under attack by unknown gunmen, who made off with the four-wheel-drive.

## **Sudanese official holds talks with Eritrean President**

**Sudan Tribune website** 15/10/09 — The Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki held talks today with the Sudanese Presidential Adviser, Ghazi Salah Al-Deen who paid a one day visit to Asmara for talks on Darfur conflict.

The official SUNA said Ghazi discussed the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and Government efforts to bring peace in Darfur region as well as bilateral ties between the two neighbour.

Following the meeting, the Sudanese official who is in charge of Darfur issue said he informed Afwerki "on the political developments in Sudan, including Darfur issue."

Ghazi was last weekend in the Chadian capital Ndjamena where he talked with the President Idriss Deby on ways to improve bilateral ties and end the four-year tension with Sudan over accusations of support to respective rebel groups.

Eritrea in the past undertook efforts to ease tension between Sudan and Chad. Also, Asmara is in good terms with the rebel factions and was part of regional group created by Darfur former mediators to support the peace process.

The Presidential adviser further said talks with Eritrean President also addressed the need to

support the strategic relationship not only bilaterally but also at the regional level, considering that this region is interconnected and problems affect each other.