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Media Monitoring Report

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Referendum Monitor

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Highlights

Kiir says independence of South Sudan is all but certain

Sudan Tribune website 17/9/10 - The First Vice President of Sudan and the president of South Sudan Salva Kiir suggested that maintaining the unity of the country is increasingly appearing to be an unrealistic outcome after the 2011 referendum.

"At the moment all signs point to the fact that on January 9, 2011 Southern Sudanese people will vote overwhelmingly for their own independence," Kiir told an audience at the Washington Convention Center in the US capital.

Kiir accused his former rivals at the National Congress Party (NCP) of dragging its feet on the referendum process and warned that the January 9th date must be honored under any circumstances saying the timing is "sacrosanct".

The Southern leader called on the international community to make clear "that no disruption or delay to these referenda can be tolerated" adding that recurrence of war and violence is likely should a postponement occur.

"There is without question a real risk of a return to violence on a massive scale if the referenda do not go ahead as scheduled," he said.

"The weight of our history, the depths of our peoples' suffering and corresponding expectations, the promises of their leaders both in the North and South, and the guarantees of the international community create no space for wavering on this," Kiir added.

Kiir expressed concern over calls that the South must concede some of the oil it is producing to the North for it to gain its independence.

"There are rising calls that the South must make accommodations and compromises if it expects the North to accept its independence," Kiir said, adding that he was troubled by the notion that the South would have to "buy its freedom" by surrendering its oil rights.

Kiir said his government was working out final details on finding a mutually acceptable formula on how the North and South Sudan will split the country's oil revenues. He urged the world and the U.S. in particular to take a leadership role in facilitating the negotiations.

U.S. President Barack Obama will join other world leaders at a U.N. summit on Sudan next week in a sign of mounting concern that the January vote could reopen a 20-year conflict responsible for 2 million deaths, mostly from hunger and disease.

Kiir is not expected to meet with any senior U.S. official during his visit as he was not offered any such summit according to Rep. Donald Payne who delivered opening remarks at the convention.

The South Sudan president urged the world to accept the referendum outcome despite any possible flaws that may emerge.

"Southern Sudan is not like Switzerland," Kiir said. "It is not realistic to demand perfection."

Meanwhile, Chairman of the Editorial Board of the *Citizen* newspaper, Nhial Bol, in his regular column "straight talks" has praised Kiir's remark at Washington convention, saying "Kiir is now talking". "Kiir's remark is encouraging acknowledgement of the truth on the ground. Majority of our fellow citizens are out to vote for something that would end Northern domestic colonialism over the South". "Kiir's remark signaled that the leadership of the people is prepared to respect the decision of the people of the South including unilateral declaration of Independence in case of failing to meet the referendum deadline". "President Kiir is now talking the language we have wished to hear. We should not waste breath arguing for dead unity of Sudan".

In a related development, *Al-Akhbar* 19/9/10 reports NCP leading figure Mandour Al-Mahdi has described remarks by GoSS President Kiir and GoSS VP Machar to the effect that "unity is no longer the option" as "unfortunate" and are inconsistent with the spirit of the CPA which requires the two partners to work for unity.

President Obama refuses to meet Kiir

Al-Tayar 19/9/10- Washington-based diplomatic source revealed that US Administration senior officials have turned down a request by Sudan's FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit for special meeting with President Obama, Secretary of State Clinton, Vice President and Defence Minister, saying the meeting on Sudan on the sidelines of the UNGA would be sufficient.

Kiir began a visit to the USA where he will also tour several American states and cities.

Government endeavours to preserve North-South link – Minister

Akhir Lahza 19/9/10 – Cabinet Affairs Minister Luka Biong has revealed that the Government is setting up mechanisms to preserve strong relations between the North and the South should secession take place. "Secession does not mean we will fold the South like a carpet and carry it away," he said, adding the South could maintain a strong link with the North.

NCP rejects ICC Prosecutor's attendance of NY's conference

Al-Tayar 19/9/10 – The NCP announced that any participation of the ICC Prosecutor Louis Moreno-Ocampo at the conference on Sudan scheduled for 24 September in NY would be unacceptable. NCP leading figure Rabie Abdul-Atti said Sudan's Government position on the ICC is clear, it would not accept discussion on Sudan in presence of the ICC.

DUP says Presidency is to blame for failure to delay referendum

Al-Akhbar 19/9/10- Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) leader Mohamed Osman Al-Mirghani said his party's position on the importance of keeping Sudan's unity is firm, stressing the need for civic education among southerners in the South, the North and Europe about the upcoming referendum exercise.

Al-Mirghani, who was speaking to the London-based *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* newspaper, said the Presidency did not heed to the Referendum Commission's advice to postpone the process for

technical, political and legal constraints so it would bear the full responsibility of the consequences of its result.

Border demarcation facing difficulties – Foreign Minister

Al-Rai Al-Aam 19/9/10 – Foreign Minister Ali Karti has revealed ongoing talks between the North and South to agree on arrangement to keep oil facilities in the North until the South is able to rely on themselves, saying 70% of the oil is located in the South.

Karti, who was speaking in an interview to Egyptian *Al-Shrooq*, admitted the existence of obstacles facing the process of demarcating the border between the South and the North. “Despite the agreement between the two partners but the matter remains largely problematic,” he said.

On Abyei Area, he said the partners had not yet reached an agreement but they have showed good will to continue efforts to resolve it.

Meanwhile, *Akhir Lahza* 19/9/10 reports that the North-South Border Demarcation Committee will hold its 6th regular meeting on Monday in Khartoum to discuss the Presidency’s directives with regard to the need to continue its work on the ground to complete the demarcation process. Committee Head Prof. Abdullah Al-Sadiq said teams had been set up and hoped that the demarcation on the ground would begin in October. “If the demarcation on the ground begins on time the committee could achieve the task within one-and-a-half month,” he said.

Referendum Commission SG criticizes claims of Commission failure

Al-Akhbar 19/9/10 – Referendum Commission Secretary General Ambassador Mohamed Osman Al-Nujoomi has revealed that the Commission had worked out a budget proposal and would be submitted to the Federal Government and GoSS for consideration. He said the Commission proposed a budget of \$180 million for the referendum process, saying the Commission would meet tomorrow for debate on the budget. He said the Ministry of Finance would review the budget proposal and then forward it to the Presidency for approval. He said he expect the International Community to fund the process, citing consultations with USAID and UN.

Mr. Al-Nujoomi has criticized the voices which continue to accuse the Commission of failure.

Referendum commission calls on citizens to prepare for registration

Sudan Tribune website 18/9/10 - The Southern Sudan Referendum Commission called on citizens to prepare for voter registration tentatively scheduled to take place next October.

Chan Rec Madut, Deputy Chairperson of the referendum commission said that the country’s historic vote on self determination for the people of Southern Sudan is still set to go ahead.

Madut, who chairs the Juba-based referendum bureau, said activities and plans to conduct referendum are underway in the southern states despite stand-off between the two regions to effect appointment of the secretariat.

"As of now, referendum activities in all the ten states of southern Sudan continue to go on. High

executive committees in the states have already been formed and are consulting with counties to complete formation of subcommittees. They are also making operational budgets for submission to the commission. Some of them have already finished and others are finishing up," explained Madut from Juba.

He called on the citizens to prepare for voter registration. "While the commission is setting up, it is important that our citizens prepare for voter registration," he said.

"Media and civil society organizations as well as community activists need to increase efforts in sensitizing local population to adequately prepare for voter registration," added the official.

Madut dismissed fears connected to delay associated with conduct of referendum." So far, no decision has been made to delay conduct of the referendum by the two parties. We have said this time and again that our people should not listen to unofficial messages.

"If they need any information about referendum, they should come to us or go to relevant authorities rather than becoming concerned from the street talks. Street talks needs to be verified from relevant authorities, because most of the talks from the streets sometimes come from no authority, just to raise attentions of the concerned. They must be meticulously listened and verified," he warned.

Madut said differences between the two parties to the comprehensive peace agreement, the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) are cleared.

"Nobody is talking about delaying conduct of referendum at this point. That decision has not yet been made," said Madut.

Sudan's Referendum Act requires amendment - official

Sudan Tribune website 18/9/10 - With just over a hundred days to Sudan's much-anticipated referendum's scheduled date. A senior official has suggested the possibility of having the 2009 Referendum Act amended, citing the short timeframe in which to accomplish several crucial processes.

Enacted in December last year, the South Sudan Referendum Act (SSRA) provides guidelines on how the referendum will be conducted.

Alfred Sebit Lokuji, the Chairperson of Central Equatoria State (CES) Referendum High Committee told participants attending a two-day referendum stakeholders' meeting in Juba, that a great deal of resources were being directed towards the outcomes, rather than the processes of the referendum, such as voters' registration, civic education and institutional capacity building.

"If the process to the referendum loses the confidence of the party signatories of the CPA [Comprehensive Peace Agreement], then we are bound to have problems. We need to focus on the referendum processes rather than the outcomes, which appear to be pre-determined," said Lokuji.

Lokuji further decried the deliberate delays in the voters' registration exercise, initially slated for July, which are now been earmarked for October.

According to the SSRA, preliminary voter's registration lists are to be displayed for at least seven days, pending anticipated court objections that may arise. Later on, a second list will be displayed before the final voter's registration list, to be exhibited 90 days before the actual referendum polling day.

"Looking at the short length of time left and given the fact that voter's registration has not yet even started, one can easily predict the likely scenarios that may unfold in the run-up to the forthcoming referendum, including the possibility of amending the Referendum Act," Lokuji warned.

Sudan Tribune has learnt that the CES referendum committee, an entity created by the Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau, still operates without an office, and with no new staff appointments made.

Lorna Sadia, a member of the committee, said they are required by law to form a polling center committee, tasked with the voters' registration process, balloting and training of personnel.

"We are behind schedule. How do you expect us to operate normally without an established office? Some of these things are impossible to achieve within the time we have," Sadia told Sudan Tribune.

Asked what the committee proposes as a solution to these challenges, Sadia urged all referendum stakeholders to strive towards bridging the existing information gap, through the exchange of referendum-related ideas.

Blue Nile popular consultation commission formed

Al-Sahafa 19/9/10 – The Blue Nile State Legislative Council held a session yesterday where it formed the area's Popular Consultation Commission.

The session was attended by a number of officials, parliamentarians, political party leaders and civil society organizations.

Sudan VP Taha calls on the US to stop weakening Bashir

Sudan Tribune website 16/9/10 - The United States must stop seeking to isolate Sudan and weaken president Omer Al-Bashir, Vice president Ali Osman Taha said in a statement released by the Sudanese embassy in Washington.

Taha, who is due to take part in the U.N. summit on Sudan that will take place next Friday, stressed that credit for signing the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the North and South goes to Al-Bashir.

"The credit goes squarely to one man, Omar El-Bashir, being a military man himself was able to convince his lieutenants by the CPA security arrangements and more important deliver on them in a way no civilian leader could have done," he added.

"The main concern of the Government of National Unity and the North in general is stability and how to prevent the return of violence regardless of the referendum outcome. And that is why

efforts were focused on developing the ten tamazuj, or intermingling states between the North and South that is manned by one third of Sudan's population and have huge natural and mineral resources. By improving services and creating opportunities and mutual interest, the chances of violence returning will be diminishing," he said.

Taha called on the U.S. to assist in resolving post-referendum issues still outstanding particularly the border demarcation.

"Most important [for the U.S.] is to work towards closing the door before the return of violence by addressing post-referendum issues like the 2,100 km-long border demarcation before voting takes place. If left unaddressed it could be an inflaming point," he said.

The Sudanese official also urged Washington to ease pressure on Sudan for the sake of stability.

"The United States is asking Sudan government to settle Darfur problem, ensure conducting the referendum on time and recognizing its outcome, which has multiple political, economic and social repercussions if the South is to secede. Equally it has to ask itself how that could be done while it is adopting policies aimed at weakening the country and its president, who effectively controls the decision of war and peace," Taha said.

"At stake is not only Sudan, but the regional ripple effect if the country is to disintegrate as a result of the incessant campaign to demonize it and weaken it through sanctions and isolation. It is high time for a fresh start of US-Sudanese relations" he added.

Speaker says 60% referendum turn-up is a threat

The Citizen 19/9/10 – The Speaker of the Juba-based Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly James Wani Igga has warned that the 60% voter turnout enshrined in the Referendum Act 2009 is a big threat to legitimacy of the referendum results.

Addressing the House special session to create awareness on the referendum Act before recess, he said the MPs should persuade their electorates to overwhelmingly turn out for the vote.

"I wish to say that we must master the referendum Act, the 60% is a big threat," he said. "This is not easy to achieve, it is the most difficult thing".

Ethiopian Government vows to recognize independent South

The Citizen 19/9/10 – SPLM Spokesperson for the Northern Sector Yen Mathew said the Ethiopian ruling National Party has pledged to acknowledge the rights of the Southerners should the majority voted for an independent southern Sudan in the upcoming referendum exercise. "The good news is that Ethiopia has agreed to respect the rights of the South Sudan if it becomes independent from the North", he revealed, adding that the South is becoming a key factor for development in the region.

Being a member of the AU, Mathew explained, Ethiopia would continue to influence the International Community to watch over the referendum challenges that might arise. "We hope our people will walk to their final freedom which they can decide themselves," he said.

NCP says composition of southern national anthem violates pact

Radio Miraya 17/09/10 – The NCP has described the selection of a national anthem for southern Sudan ahead of the 2011 referendum as a violation of the CPA. The SPLM, however, said that the technical committee for choosing the anthem was not mandated by the party to do so while SPLM-DC leader, Lam Akol, noted that only the GoSS had the right to announce a national anthem for the south.

Other Highlights

NCP rejects report of Independent Human Rights Expert

Al-Tayar 19/9/10 - NCP leading figure Rabie Abdul-Atti has rejected the report of the UN Independent Human Rights Expert Mohamed Chande, describing the report as “politicized and inaccurate”.

According to **Sudan Tribune website** 17/9/10, The United Nations’ Human Rights Envoy to Sudan Mohamed Chande Osman on Saturday introduced his report to the Human Rights Council in Geneva and noted concerns over restrictions on press and political freedom as well as deadly ethnic tension in the south and proliferation of the conflict in Darfur region.

Mohamed Chande Osman, the new UN Independent Expert on the situation of Human Rights in Sudan, yesterday presented his second report since he was appointed on November 1, 2009.

The report, which covers the period from May to August 2010, stated that the human rights situation in Sudan after April’s disputed elections had been “characterized by restrictions in the enjoyment of civil and political rights, and curtailment of the freedom of expression and the press.”

Chande advised the government to continue the process of “law reform to conform to international human rights standards” and also expressed concern over the ongoing application of the death penalty, urging the government to ensure that its application occurs in “a very strictly defined set of circumstances.”

On Darfur, the report commended the Sudanese government for implementing some of the recommendations made by the Council’s Group of Experts on Darfur. However, it later said that the expert was “deeply concerned that a significant number [of these recommendations] had not been implemented.”

The report lamented that the conflict in Darfur has spawned new patterns of violence, including “armed hostilities, banditry and criminality, direct and indiscriminate attacks on civilians by all parties to the conflict, and inter-communal violence.”

On South Sudan, Chande’s report voiced concern over increases in communal violence and great loss of lives it has caused, particularly among women and children.

The report said that the south continues to experience “tensions between ethnic groups, competition over resources, resistance to disarmament and occasional acts of indiscipline by armed state agents such as members of the Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Army are the most

common causes of the violence in the South.”

Chande’s report also said that he was “deeply troubled by the violence and widespread human rights abuses that characterized the post-election period in Southern Sudan.”

The report finally urged the authorities in Sudan to “promptly address the deficit in the protection of human rights” and recommended that the Human Rights Council remain “engaged” Sudan until it was assured of “tangible and lasting improvement in the human rights situation on the ground.”

Sudan’s ambassador to the council, John Ukec Lueth Ukec, responded to Chande’s report by saying it is “relatively balanced” in comparison to previous reports.

However, Ukec complained that Sudan continues to be “inundated” with various human rights mechanisms such as the Independent Expert, the United Nations Mission (UNMIS), the Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and various other United Nations human rights monitors.

He suggested that the council should “devote the same effort used on targeting Sudan to further building and developing national capacities through technical assistance.”

Ukec concluded by reiterating Sudan’s demand to terminate the mandate of the independent expert.

“Sudan has arrested political opposition leaders, journalists and students ahead of a critical referendum early next year on whether the south should secede, a UN rights investigator said on Friday, according to *Reuters* (Geneva) 17/9/10.

Many detainees have alleged they were tortured or denied the right to challenge their custody in court, said Mohamed Chande Othman, an independent expert on human rights in Sudan.

Othman - whose mandate Sudan called for ending on Friday - also urged Khartoum to lift restrictions on the press in the run-up to the referendum set for Jan. 9, 2011.

"These developments represent a serious setback and are of particular concern as the country prepares for the referendum," Othman said in a speech to the UN Human Rights Council. "It is essential that authorities uphold human rights principles as a way of ensuring a peaceful and credible referendum," he said.

Othman, a justice on Tanzania's court of appeals, said much of the information in his latest report covering May to August came from the joint UNAMID and the UNMIS.

Othman has also called for an inquiry into a militia attack on civilians in North Darfur on Sept 2. Eyewitnesses told Reuters on Friday that Darfuri men were shot dead at point blank range during the raid on a busy market in which at least 39 people were killed and almost 50 injured.

Sudan's ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva, John Ukec, said in a speech that Othman's report was "relatively balanced". But it was imperative for the Council to eliminate his position at its current session which ends on Oct. 1, he said.

Arab League to hold conference on south Sudan development

Sudan Tribune website 18/9/10 - The League of Arab States (LAS) is undertaking efforts to organize a conference on development in southern Sudan to be held in the Gulf state of Bahrain on 25 November 2010, Sudan's Foreign Minister Ali Karti has announced.

On September 17, Karti told reporters upon his arrival at Khartoum airport from Cairo where he attended the summit of Arab foreign ministers that the LAS was going to hold a conference on development projects in southern Sudan.

Karti revealed that the conference had been named "Juba 2" and would be launched in Bahrain on 25 November this year, adding that efforts to organize the conference were already underway. Karti further said that the Arab league had affirmed support for Sudan's unity and appealed to all Arab countries to support Sudan in order to enable it to surmount the challenges ahead.

The minister was keen to point out that the LAS was already conducting feasibility studies for development projects in southern Sudan, in addition to the projects it has already implemented.

Karti also said that Sudan had invited Arab countries to participate in a conference on the development of eastern Sudan.

UNSC delegation cancels October trip to Sudan

Ajras Al-Hurriya 19/09/10 – A delegation of the United Nations Security Council scheduled to visit Sudan next month has decided to cancel the trip because Sudan insists that the delegates meet with its leader President Omar Al-Bashir. Representatives of two Permanent Member states of the Council noted that they have directives from their states not to take photographs with the Sudanese leader who faces an ICC arrest warrant for "fears that such photos may be used for internal propaganda purposes" by Sudanese authorities.

Ministry of the Interior forms committee to disarm "Friendly Forces"

Al-Sahafa 19/09/10 – The Ministry of Interior has unveiled the creation of a High Strategic Committee on Disarmament that is tasked with the collection of arms from "Friendly Forces" which are signatories to peace agreements with the government. Mohamed Ahmed Ali, a high ranking member of the police, told a press conference yesterday that the committee is formed pursuant to President Al-Bashir's directive to clear the national capital of illegal arms.

Former rebels say troops freed abducted Chinese

Al-Rai Al-Aam 17/09/10 - The leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement, Mani Arkoi Minawi, has affirmed that his troops in Darfur have managed to free the Chinese citizen who was kidnapped a few days ago in Chadian territory and would hand him over to authorities in Chad.

SPLA calls for timely provision of security information

Sudan Tribune website 17/09/10 - The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) on Thursday called for the quick and timely provision of security information, saying that delays in passing on sensitive information to relevant authorities in the region, such as that relating to security, results in delays in crucial intervention.

SPLA Spokesperson Kuol Deim Kuol said from Juba that the latest Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) attack in western Equatoria, occurred just eight miles away from the West Darfur capital of Yambio and the information about their presence was not passed onto the SPLA forces in the area early enough.

"It was made known to our forces after the emergence of reports that civilians have sighted them moving about in the area before the attack," said Kuol. He explained that the provision of information is important as it helps in preparation and proper positioning of armed forces, in order to provide quick and timely intervention.

"You see, in Western Bahr-el-Ghazal, LRA has limited activities because once elements associated with it are sighted by the civilians; they give information very fast to our forces. This is what is required. Cooperation in coordination and provision of security is very important," he added.

Kuol pointed out that the LRA is active in the area, especially in the two counties of Nzara and Yambio because of lack coordination and information sharing. "We have deployed enough manpower but this is not what counts. What counts is not the number of security forces but provision of information on time and logistics. There is need for cooperation in this area," he added.

Kuol also expressed concern over the presence of the LRA off southern soil: "The LRA operates from the Democratic Republic of Congo and our forces have no mandate to enter DRC territory. This is one. The other issue is logistics for the movement of our forces. The last and most important of all is provision of information on time. Intelligence play central role and this is what counts."

He made an appeal following a report urging the ministry of SPLA and Veteran Affairs by the regional parliament to increase deployment of the armed forces in Western Equatoria State.

Sudanese police find large arms cache in Khartoum sewer

Al-Rai Al-Aam 18/09/10 - The police yesterday found four plastic bags containing ammunition dumped inside a sewer near Fatma Abd-al-Rahim School in Al-Imtidad area in Khartoum.

The Police Press Office stated that the bags contained 1,996 pieces of ammunition, an empty envelope and a grenade. The police said it had already taken technical measures and instituted investigations into the findings.

Southern Sudan parliament to arm boys to fight Ugandan rebels

The Citizen 18/09/10 - Southern Sudan parliament has proposed 5 million Sudanese pounds [about 2.5m dollars] for training of Arrow Boys in Western Equatoria State [southern Sudan] to fight the LRA, George Costa Faustino, and MP, told *The Citizen* on 17 September 2010.

In a telephone interview, the MP said that the Arrow Boys know the hideouts and bushes of LRA rebels. The parliament unanimously agreed that Arrow Boys should be trained by Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to break into these bushes and fight the LRA.

Asked whether, or not SPLA shall arm the Arrow Boys to replace the bows and arrows that they

have been using; Costa said: "It will be the arrangement of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA); we just discussed the way forward here in the parliament". The SPLA, he said, may accompany the Arrow Boys during such raids.

Sudanese official terms Darfur refugee chieftains "warlords"

Al-Rai Al-Aam 18/09/10 - South Darfur Governor Abd-al-Hamid Musa Kasha has described some of chieftains of the Kalma IDP Camp in South Darfur as warlords who are investing in the humanitarian crisis in the camp.

Governor Kasha told UNAMID representatives yesterday that his government would not allow IDPs to stay in the current camp location as soon as the new alternative camp being built by the government is ready.

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