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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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# Highlights

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## **Sudan's Bashir pledges no return to war with south**

*AFP* (Khartoum) 20/10/10 - Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir has vowed today that there will be no return to civil war with the south as an independence vote for the region looms, just a week after saying that the only outcome he would accept from the landmark referendum due in January was a vote for unity. Bashir insisted his government was working for peace.

"There will be no return to war," the official SUNA news agency quoted Bashir as saying. "The government is working to keep the peace." The referendum result will not be the end of the world," he added.

## **UN troops will be expelled after 9 July 2011 – Assembly Speaker**

*Al-Sahafa* (Khartoum) 20/10/10 – National Assembly Speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir has hinted that the Sudanese Government might adopt a confrontational approach with the international community during the coming period. "The era of concessions and international pressures is over" he said. He declared Sudan's rejection of renewing the mandate of UNMIS and its troops beyond July 2011, accusing the Mission of incapacity, bad reputation and involvement in corruption in southern Sudan.

Speaking before Parliament yesterday, Al-Tahir noted that Sudan would enter a period of stability, whatever the outcome of the referendum. "There would be no further peace agreements beyond July 2011 and the Darfur peace would have been achieved by then and the Sudan would enter a final era of stability where there would be no more interim periods or concessions, whichever way the southern vote goes at the referendum," he said.

The Speaker said that Sudan had faced huge pressure from the United Nations Security Council, the US and the EU in the past, adding that such pressure had never been exercised against any other country in the world. "From now onwards, we will never succumb to any pressures especially from the Security Council" he said. He added that the mandate of the UN troops in the south will come to an end on 9 July and there would be no room for renewing the mandate and advised the SPLM to expel them should secession take place so that they do not become a burden on the South. "If the UN and its troops enter a country they do not get out of it" he said, and described them as "notorious" because of indulging in moral and financial corruption in African countries. He stressed that the Government would neither accept the addition of new mandate to UNMIS troops nor extension of the existing one.

Al-Tahir pointed out that the "African nature" of UNAMID has prevented it from following UNMIS' footsteps but called on the hybrid mission to cooperate with the government to maintain security in Darfur until the situation is normalized.

*Al-Raed* 20/10/10 reports Al-Tahir as telling the Parliament that the mandate of the UN peacekeepers in Sudan would not be extended under any circumstances and accused them of incapacity to defend themselves, saying their record in Africa is bad, citing financial and moral corruption.

“The reputation of the international troops in Africa is bad because of financial and moral corruption,” he said, according to *Al-Watan* 20/10/10. He said the UN troops in the South are incapable of defending themselves and their objectives are inconsistent with the goals for which they have been established.

*Al-Ahram Al-Youm* 20/10/10 reports that Al-Tahir has directed the Government to expel UNMIS peacekeepers immediately after the referendum results are released, adding that any extension or adjustment of existing mandate would be unlawful and unconstitutional. He described UNMIS troops as a mere group looking for salaries and livelihood.

*Al-Sudani* 20/10/10 reports Al-Tahir has described the peacekeepers as a “burden on the state”. He said these forces would be expelled immediately if unity is confirmed, calling on the GoSS to follow suit if the South opts for secession. He accused the peacekeepers of promoting agenda and policies of the UN and France to put pressure on the Sudan, adding from now onwards Sudan would never succumb to the unjust UNSC’s resolutions.

“They have come to the Sudan only to aggravate the situation to advance a foreign agenda aiming at destabilizing the country,” Al-Tahir told the Parliament, according to *Al-Wifaq* 20/10/10.

“They have come to harm the Sudan. There would be no room for extension or adjustment of their mandate,” he said, according to *Al-Rai Al-Aam* 20/10/10.

### **South Sudan army blasts UN; wants troops monitored**

*Reuters* 19/10/10 - South Sudan's army accused the United Nations on Tuesday of failing to report a massive build-up of northern troops around sensitive border areas, warning war could erupt.

Senior southern army officer Mat Paul said the separate north Sudan army was preventing the U.N. peacekeeping mission (UNMIS) monitoring a ceasefire and U.N. officials were not owing up to their lack of access.

"This year, the build-up of SAF (northern army) started in June in Southern Kordofan and other areas and we've been raising this several times with the U.N." said Paul, who is the SPLA's representative in the joint north-south ceasefire monitoring commission (CJMC) chaired by the United Nations. "They...just keep quiet so there is no monitoring," he said.

Paul told *Reuters* the north had moved tens of thousands of troops south into areas including oil-producing Heglig and Unity and other sensitive border areas including Southern Kordofan, Abyei and Raja -- a site of previous clashes.

He said the atmosphere was very tense with the soldiers accompanied by tanks and helicopters stationed nearby. "The troops look to be on the verge of war," he added.

The senior SPLA officer said they had raised SAF's troop build up in three consecutive CJMC meetings since August but the U.N. mission had told them they could not investigate because the northern army would not allow them.

The UNMIS spokesman was unable to comment. UNMIS chief Haile Menkerios said on Monday that there was "overall tension" but the peacekeepers had not investigated the troops amassing because they had heard the complaints only in the media.

"I really regret this is what the UN is saying -- it is not correct," said the SPLA's Paul. "They need to double up their efforts in order to stop the parties going back to square one."

A U.N. spokesman in New York, Farhan Haq, said UNMIS was redeploying troops to hotspots including Abyei but declined to comment on whether UNMIS was able to investigate troop movements in violation of the ceasefire.

### **Buffer zone intended to gauge Khartoum's reaction –Ambassador**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 20/10/10 – Sudan's Former Ambassador to UN Abdul Mahmoud Abdul Haleem said reports about creation of a buffer zone between the North and the South is intended to test Khartoum's reaction, describing it as a negative message. Abdul Mahmoud called on the Security Council and influential countries to assist the two partners to reach understandings.

### **UNMIS forces have the right to deploy in Abyei - SAF**

*Al-Intibaha* (Khartoum) 20/10/10 – Sudan Armed Forces Spokesperson Lt. Col. Al-Suwarni Khaled has dismissed recent media reports that the deployment of UNMIS forces in Abyei might be the start of its redeployment along the north-south border. He pointed out that the 10,000-strong UNMIS presence in the region is intended to monitor the implementation of the CPA and does have the right, as per the Abyei Protocol, to redeploy to the Abyei region.

He pointed out that the UN has not issued any additional resolution for the deployment of additional troops in Sudan.

### **Intensive talks between NCP and SPLM on referendum**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 20/10/10 – VP Ali Osman Taha has held intensive consultations with a committee set up by GoSS President Salva Kiir to prepare for the coming Presidency meeting. The Committee, headed by Nhial Deng, also held talks with other NCP senior officials including Presidential Adviser Gen. Salah Gosh.

SPLM Yasir Arman told reporters that the consultations focused on the need to conduct the referendum on time and it should be free and fair. He said the SPLM committee would also make preparations for the Addis Ababa meeting called by the Ethiopian Prime Minister. He revealed that the SPLM Chairman Salva Kiir Mayardit would arrive in Khartoum within 48 hours.

According to *Al-Ahdath* 20/10/10, a decisive summit meeting will be convened in Addis Ababa on 27 October called by Ethiopian Prime Minister Melez Zenawi who has also invited President Al-Bashir and his FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit to participate. The meeting will be convened in presence of US envoy to Sudan Scott Gration, US Senator John Kerry and former South African President Thabo Mbeki.

## **Sudan says referendum may need to be postponed**

*Sudan Tribune website* 19/10/10 - Sudan's defense minister Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein became the most senior official from the National Congress Party (NCP) in control of the north, to explicitly suggest that the referendum in the South has to be moved back from its original date of January 9, 2011.

"According to the reality on the ground, yes. Border issues and Abyei must be resolved within the framework of one nation because doing so in the framework of two countries open the door for foreign interference," Hussein told reporters in Cairo following his meeting with Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak.

"The referendum is not a goal but a tool to consolidate and promote security and stability," the top military official said and warned that his government will not recognize the South should they proceed with unilateral declaration of independence (UDI).

"This [UDI] is illegal and will not be recognized by the African Union or the other [organization] because it would contradict the peace agreement and its procedures" Hussein added.

"The problem relates to less than 20 percent of the border region," he noted, emphasizing "the necessity of... demarcating the borders to prepare the ground for the referendum, so there is no excuse for fighting in the future."

But a Southern official was quick to dismiss the call for a postponement describing it as a "non-starter full of wishful thinking".

Arop Madut Arop, the Abyei area legislator told Sudan Tribune in a phone interview on Tuesday that such remarks from NCP officials especially at this critical time were simply "kicks from dying horses".

"The national government was responsible for the enactment of the Referendum Act which was passed. They formed the southern Sudan Referendum Commission which is now operational. Apart from the other technical aspects that may be required, they have nothing to do with the smooth conduct of the January referendum," Arop said.

He added, "Why don't these people [national government] allow the referendum bureau headed by Justice Chan Reec to do its work normally? This is just interference."

The UN's top official in south Sudan told reporters on Tuesday that the vote could still be held on time.

"We remain confident that the timeframe so far discussed, that we can deliver what is required," said David Gressly, the regional controller in the south for the United Nations Mission in Sudan, responsible for monitoring the peace agreement.

"We do have the airlift capacity to do this," he added. "However the commission does have to conclude on a number of decisions."

## **South Sudan's renegade General Athor sets conditions for his return**

*Sudan Tribune website* 19/10/10 - Representatives of a dissident general from the southern army – the SPLA – said Tuesday that he would not disrupt the south's referendum on independence in January but would not leave hiding until his demands were met.

General George Athor Deng, the former deputy chief of staff for SPLA political and moral orientation, began fighting the southern government after April's elections when he failed to win the governorship of Jonglei state as an 'independent'.

Clashes between the SPLA and rebels loyal to Athor have killed at least 58 people since they began in May.

Representatives, claiming to be Athor's commanders told a press conference in the south's capital Juba that the renegade general accepted the amnesty offered to him by Southern Sudan President Salva Kiir 7 October.

Athor's representatives declined to elaborate about their demands. They said that releasing those who had been arrested by southern authorities would be good for "confidence building"...

## **John Kerry plans to go to Sudan - Clooney**

*Boston.com Washington*, 13/10/10 - Massachusetts Senator John Kerry hopes to travel to Sudan before the high-stakes referendum on independence slated for January 9, according to actor and Sudan activist George Clooney, who had an hour-long conversation with Kerry this week.

"Senator Kerry has been very much involved and is very proud of how much he has been involved," Clooney told reporters Tuesday night at the Council on Foreign Relations. "He wants to go before the referendum and takes as many senators as he can."

Kerry's spokesman Frederick Jones could not confirm an upcoming trip, but said: "Of course Senator Kerry is very concerned about the situation on the ground and he'd like to do whatever he can to make sure the referendum is conducted fairly and peacefully,"

## **Southern students calls for relocation of universities before referendum**

*Sudan Tribune website* 19/10/10 - The union of Southern students at the three Southern universities in Khartoum on Tuesday called on the regional Government of Southern Sudan to speed up relocating them to their original locations in the South before the referendum.

Speaking at a press briefing in Juba, student union leaders from the universities of Juba, Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile which were relocated to the north at the height of the civil war, said students were uncomfortable at the prospect of continuing their studies in the north should the south secede.

The students asked that the universities be returned to their original locations before the referendum takes place in just over 80 days time...

## Other Highlights

### UN investigating death of British national in mine explosion in South

*Sudan Tribune website* 19/10./10 - A United Nations-led inquiry has started into the death of a British national working with the Mines Advisory Group (MAG) who died after an explosion in Kapoeta, capital of Eastern Equatoria state Friday 15 October.

Despite medical attention Stephen “Darby” Allan died a few hours after the incident, which occurred around midday local time.

Allan, 52, one of MAG’s Technical Field Managers, was working with a mine clearance team, in Kapoeta. The explosion occurred at a clearing site but nobody else was injured...

### Darfur negotiating teams get one more week to finalize a deal

*Sudan Tribune website* 19/10/10 - The two negotiating teams over peace in Darfur have agreed to extend talks for one week in order to settle the outstanding issues between the government and the rebel Liberation and Equality Movement (LJM).

The two parties were supposed to conclude today the direct talks and submit their conclusions to the steering committee co-chaired by the Qatari state minister for foreign affairs and the joint chief mediator.

However, the two sides agreed at the level of the steering committee, which includes head of the five negotiating panels and the heads of the government delegation and LJM rebels, to seek vigorously solutions on the outstanding issues within a week.

If the two parties failed to reach a compromise on the disputed issues, they will demand the mediation to consider these matters and to propose a compromise.

Tadjadine Bechir Niam, LJM secretary for peace negotiations, told Sudan Tribune yesterday that the talks on wealth sharing and the IDPs return achieved great progress. He also underscored that the power sharing and security arrangement committees do need important effort to concretize a peace deal.

### OP-ED - The UN role in the coming stage

By *Mahjoub Mohamed Saleh*, the Chairman of the Board of Directors and Editor-in-Chief of *Al-Ayyam* daily.

UNMIS’ role in monitoring the implementation of the CPA remains weak because we expected it to play a greater role during the recent crisis between the two partners in which they have exchanged accusations and counteraccusations especially on a military buildup at the border. Based on its mandate, UNMIS is more qualified than any other body to help resolve that controversy by coming up with the final say on whether there was a real threat of confrontation on the border areas or that the heated exchanges were mere partisan rhetoric.

With its 10,000-strong force and a large civilian component deployed in the south and the border regions including Abyei, the Mission has the mandate to deploy its personnel to those areas. Furthermore, UNMIS chairs the CJMC so the people look forward to hear what it has to say on

alleged reports of military buildup, especially given the fact that part of the Mission's mandate is to monitor redeployment of these forces. It is inappropriate for the Mission to say that it has not received direct complaints from either party. The Mission should have taken the initiative – what other indications does it need to recognize the threat other than the verbal warning in the form of FVP Kiir's request to the UNSC in Juba and the subsequent rejection of the request by Khartoum?

The next stage is more crucial. We are aware that UNMIS is in close contact with both parties and is doing its best to assist them but what is clear is that it needs to reinvigorate its monitoring and follow-up role at this sensitive stage and to verify, within the confines of its mandate, such accusations and counter-accusations because it is a neutral party to the CPA. It should also take the initiative on every issue that falls within its mandate.

UNMIS is also required to activate the meetings of the CJMC that it heads. There has also been heated controversy over the redeployment of the forces as per the CPA with the SPLA reportedly having redeployed only a third of its forces from the north but claims it has completed redeployment. Where then is the truth lies? We expect the UN to verify these claims and release the finding. There are also reports that the forces redeployed have taken up positions not far from each other. This may be a source of threat and part of the UNMIS's role is to avert such threats.

We of course do believe that Sudanese – southerners and northerners alike – are primarily responsible for calming the situation and defusing the tensions but the role of a third party becomes important due to the lack of trust between the parties to the agreement. The CPA authorizes the UN to monitor the implementation of the agreement. Therefore we look forward to a more proactive role on the part of UNMIS given the fact that the UNSC has resolved to play a bigger role following its visit to Sudan. At this time, the UNSC requires accurate information from its Mission in Sudan instead of basing its resolutions on information from the parties to the conflict. An example of such a situation occurs when a proposal for creation of a buffer zone was discussed. Although the UNSC did not take any decision on the deployment of troops at north-south border, information leaked from some Security Council members were based on the position of only one party to the conflict, in the absence of any report from UNMIS.

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