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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

## Referendum Watch

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# Highlights

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## **SSRC says South Sudan referendum on time**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 21/10/10 – The South Sudan Referendum Commission announced yesterday that the referendum on South Sudan self-determination would be held on time and released timetables for the process: voter registration will start on 14 November and end on 1 December; preliminary release of voter register on 6 December; 13 December will be the deadline for submission of appeals and 18 December appeals will be decided; 25 December deadline for submission of appeals to Courts and 30 December appeals will be decided; final voter register will be released on 4 January; voting will commence on 9 January; referendum campaigns from 7 November to 7 January.

*Xinhua* (Khartoum) 20/10/10 reported that the SSRC announced on Wednesday that a referendum would be held on Jan. 9, 2011 in southern Sudan to decide the fate of the semi-autonomous region, according to the state-run SUNA news agency.

The message sent by SUNA also said that the registration of voters will start on Nov. 14, behind the schedule stipulated by a referendum law adopted by the Sudanese parliament last year, which said that the registration should be completed three months before the referendum.

"The Commission for Referendum decides officially Nov. 14 as the date for registration and Jan. 9 as the date for voting," the message said...

## **Kiir warns against violence during referendum campaigns**

*Sudan Tribune website* 20/10/10 - The President of the semi-autonomous government of Southern Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit on Wednesday, issued a statement warning that policies inciting violence during campaigns in the forthcoming referendum on self-determination for people of south Sudan, would not be tolerated.

"All state governments and institutions must create conducive environment for all proponents without distinction on the basis of their choices," said president Kiir in a six page document received by Sudan Tribune on Wednesday.

Kiir warned that any campaign that incited violence would not be tolerated. "The government of southern Sudan will fund both advocacy groups campaigning for unity and secession and assure them to freely campaign for options of their choices without holding any fear. This is what I have been saying and I repeated it during the opening session of all political parties' conference which ended on Sunday. I said a high leveled ground will be provided for all to campaign freely," said Kiir.

The president of the regional government said that he wanted all political parties to be empowered to play a role in educating voters for all processes of registration and polling as well as campaigning.

Kiir said that in the event that if the south secedes all citizens and their property should be

protected.

Calling for regular consultation among political leaders and parties before, during and after the conduct of referenda, he emphasized the need for the two regions to improve their relationship. “I have said many times in several meetings and occasions that south Sudan will exert all necessary efforts to maintain close and improved relations with the north if it secedes because it will not move from its original geographical location.”

“If it separates, it will not be shifted to the India occasion or to anywhere else a part from its current geographical location. It will remain here in the same geographical location. The same to the north unless something magical occurs, hence the need to maintain close and improved relations with all her neighbors,” said Kiir.

### **Parties sign code on free referendum**

*The Citizen* 21/10/10 – Over twenty national and southern Sudanese political parties and an equal number of key civil society and faith-based organizations adopted and signed the “Common Code of Conduct for the Referendum and Popular consultations”.

The Code outlines common principles and standards to guide the political parties as they approach the referendum in southern Sudan as well as Abyei. The Code also deals with the popular consultations in southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile states.

### **Presidency to meet on Saturday and Sunday – SPLM Arman**

*Akhbar Al-Youm* 21/10/10 – SPLM Deputy Secretary General Yassir Arman revealed to the newspaper yesterday that the Presidency would meet on Saturday and Sunday.

Arman said the two committees from the NCP and the SPLM are continuing their consultations to prepare for the Presidency and Addis Ababa meetings. Arman added that the Presidency and Addis Ababa meetings derive their importance from the fact that they are the two biggest meetings to be convened ahead of the upcoming referendum and they have attracted a lot of regional and international attention.

Meanwhile, Arman said FVP and GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit would meet with US Senator John Kerry on Friday and Saturday and will meet today in Juba with Egypt’s Foreign Minister and Intelligence Chief Ahmed Abu Al-Gheith and Omer Suleiman.

### **Sudan’s defense minister denies calling for referendum postponement**

*Sudan tribune website* 20/10/10 - Sudan’s defense minister denied having called for postponement of referendum on self-determination for southern Sudan scheduled to take place on 9 January 2011.

Minister Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein reiterated his support for the referendum on self-determination if the parties overcome the obstacles of border demarcation and identification of who can participate in Abyei’s vote, the official SUNA reported today...

### **SPLM accuses Sudan Armed Forces of troop buildup**

*Sudan Tribune website* 20/10/10 - An official from south Sudan’s ruling party on Wednesday

said that there is a sharp increase in number of Sudan Armed Forces in the contested oil region of Abyei on the north-south border.

Speaking to Sudan Tribune from the regional capital of Juba, Deng Arop Kuol, of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) who governs south Sudan said that forces controlled by the Khartoum government were increasing.

“Troop building up is on the rise. It is rising sharply at borderlines. They have increased deployment in Nyamba, Difra, and Heglig and in all other areas around oil fields in the area.”

The official described security situation in the area as “relatively calm”. Tensions have risen recently since the President of Southern Sudan asked the UN to form a buffer zone each side of the north-south border ahead of the referendum. This has been rejected by Khartoum. Both sides accuse the other of amassing troops on the border.

Asked about security situation on commercial routes linking Abyei with the south, Kuol said roads are opened and trucks are delivering goods are passing.

“Commercial trucks with goods coming to the south up to here in Juba are coming but there are reports that these vehicles and their accompanying personnel face number of challenges including harassments and intimidation,” said Kuol.

Kuol said his administration hopes to have displaced people from Abyei return ahead of the referendum.

“There are plans to return citizens to the area. We are now working closely with relevant authorities to expedite processes and procedures involving repatriation operations,” he said.

Miyen Alor Kuol, a member of the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement in the area said the security situation in the area was normal but still unpredictable.

“No one can ever give accurate information about security of this area because it has never experienced an absolute stability. Abyei has never experienced complete peace. Security situation here is ever erratic despite the fact that it has been signed in reference to peace but with zero implementation in the area,” said Alor in an interview with Sudan Tribune from Abyei town on Wednesday.

He, however, acknowledged that the situation was relatively calm in the last two months, referring to July and August this year.

“Security situation in July and August as well as in September was calm. It was normal. Locals from both sides moved freely and interacted fairly. Commercial routes connecting the two areas were opened without escort and restrictive movement,” said Alor.

Meanwhile, David Gressly, the southern Sudan regional coordinator for the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) on Tuesday said the deployment of additional troops in buffer zones along the north-south border regions of Abyei is impossible without the consent the National Congress Party (NCP) and Sudan's Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM) parties,.

Gressly's remarks, made during his usual media briefing in Juba, the provincial southern Sudan capital, come as tension remains high ahead of January's referenda on the future of the south and Abyei, Sudan's main oil producing regions.

Gressly said that although the UN is reviewing where to deploy peacekeepers but that any increase or significant redeployment would have to be agreed with both parties.

"We're constantly in the process of looking at what makes sense and what adjustments are there in terms of how we deploy our forces, and we are doing that as we speak" Gressly said.

He added, "Anything we do in this regard [deployment of UN forces] would require the consent of the parties. We are in constant contact; we have standard mechanisms for that."

To facilitate the process, Gressly added, the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) for the ceasefire zone, which is based in Juba, is now being manned from six other locations in the south region...

### **SPLM criticizes call by Parliament speaker to expel UN troops**

*Radio Miraya* 20/10/10 - The Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) Deputy Secretary General for Northern Sector, Yasir Arman, has criticized the call of Speaker of the National Assembly, Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir, for expulsion of the UN Peacekeeping Troops from Sudan by July next year.

Arman said that Al-Tahir has been deliberately making negative statements instead of using his sensitive position positively. Arman added that Peacekeepers were deployed in the country following a UN Security Council Resolution with strict mandate, and ending their mandate could only be through an agreement rather than expulsion.

Meanwhile, Yasir Arman has affirmed that the committees formed by the Presidency of the Republic to look into the post-referendum arrangements are working in good spirit, adding that the committees have prepared agendas for the upcoming presidency meeting, to be held in Khartoum on Thursday.

### **NCP lauds the outcome of the southern Sudan political parties' conference**

*Al-Ahdath* 21/10/10 -The NCP's Southern Sector has praised the outcome of the south-south dialogue conference, describing it as a good step towards the conduct of a free and fair referendum, adding that the participants have agreed to restructure the state, army and economy in the South after secession.

Secretary of Bahr El Ghazal-based NCP Secretariat Bishop Gabriel Rorec in press statements yesterday said the conference succeeded in getting assurances for the conduct of free, fair and transparent referendum and in unifying the southerners.

Rorec said if the southerners vote for independence he would establish a national congress party with a new ideology in the South.

### **US Marines to arrive in the South before the end of this year**

*Al-Intibaha* 21/10/10 - Sources have revealed that US marines are expected to arrive in southern

Sudan by the end of this year ahead of the upcoming referendum. According to the sources, the US marines will arrive in batches from Rwanda, Liberia, Iraq and a US base in Africa.

The newspaper claimed to have learned from security sources that Washington is sending the soldiers to assist the SPLA to repulse a possible North's attack on the South including an attack by the Misseriya on the Dinka.

The marines are southern Sudanese who had been transported to the USA by western organizations during the North-South war and had been trained to implement US agenda including cooperation with AFRICOM, ICC and to counter LRA attacks.

## Other Highlights

### China fails to block UN report on Sudan - diplomats

*Sudan Tribune website* 20/10/10 - Chinese diplomats made a failed attempt on Wednesday to block a U.N. report alleging that its locally manufactured ammunition was sent to Darfur in violation of an arms embargo, according to diplomats at the world body.

Last week, Beijing threatened to block the report unless the wording is changed. It fell short of using its veto power at the UN Security Council (UNSC) on a resolution to renew the mandate of a panel of experts that monitor the observance of sanctions imposed on Darfur.

China is the major buyer of Sudanese oil and has other key commercial interests.

After the meeting, a Chinese representative who identified himself by the name Zhao told Agence France Presse (AFP) the report in Beijing's opinion "is full of flaws with too many unconfirmed facts."

"Where did they get the informed sources? No evidence is given," Zhao said, adding that the report "lacks confirmed facts — how can we agree on those recommendations? We ask them to improve the work of the methodology."

The diplomats said the committee chairman, Austria's U.N. Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, agreed that the annex to the report would be updated with a letter to include additional information on sources. But they said the report itself would not be changed, and will likely be formally sent to the 15-member council next week.

During Wednesday's meeting, the diplomats said China got no support from the other committee members, who include representatives from all 15 council nations.

The U.N. panel responsible for implementing the embargo told the UNSC that Sudanese forces have used more than a dozen types of Chinese ammunition against Darfuri rebels over the past two years. It also reported finding recently manufactured shell casings from Chinese ammunition at the site of numerous attacks launched by unidentified assailants against peacekeepers from the joint U.N.-African Union mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

It is not clear if the panel is pointing fingers at Khartoum for the recent surge of attacks on UNAMID peacekeepers and personnel.

The report by the panel found that the Sudanese government had routinely skirted the sanctions - using recently purchased Russian helicopters, Sukhoi 25 fighter planes from Belarus and at least one Russian MiG-20 fighter jet in Darfur.

Sudan acknowledged to the panel that it had transferred some of the aircraft into Darfur, but insisted that the aircraft had not been used in military operations and therefore did not violate sanctions.

Russia has sold some 36 Mi-24 and Mi-17 helicopters to Khartoum since 2009, while Belarus has sold 15 Sukhoi 25 jets to the Sudanese government since 2008, according to the panel. Sudan signed end-user agreements with both governments guaranteeing that the aircraft would not be used in Darfur.

The panel uncovered a total of 18 varieties of shell casings, including 12 from China and four from Sudan. Two samples of ammunition - which were used by the Justice and Equality Movement, one of the main rebel groups - were manufactured in Israel. The panel said that Israel confirmed that the ammunition was sold to the government of Chad. Chad - which also signed an end-user agreement with Israel not to ship the arms to a third country - has long been accused of smuggling weapons to JEM.

### **Darfur peace talks are moving to decision making stage - rebel**

*Sudan Tribune website* 20/10/10 - Sudanese parties engaged in the Doha talks are moving from negotiations to decision-making process in order to finalize a peace agreement they are preparing to ink in the upcoming weeks, a rebel official said Wednesday.

Yesterday, Tuesday, the mediation chaired a meeting of the steering committee composed of top officials in the negotiating delegations of Sudanese government and Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) to assess the progress made by the parties in five committees they formed, announcing the end of direct talks.

The steering committee has now to review the positions of the two parties on the outstanding issues and decide together on every point that the committees failed to agree on it. The security arrangements and power sharing include many contentious issues.

"Tomorrow the steering committee will receive formally the outcome of the five committees and will start discussions from 22 to 27 October on the outstanding issues submitted by the panels dealing with the different files," said Tadjadine Bechir Niam who is LJM chief negotiator.

LJM rebel official further said during this period of discussions and before to sign formally a peace agreement with the Sudanese government they plan to hold a series of public meetings with the Sudanese political forces, Darfur civil society, IDPs and refugees to explain the deal and win their support.

The LJM also will visit neighbouring countries and some members of the international community to meet the official authorities and the Sudanese Diaspora to brief them on the peace deal they reached with the government.

"We need to explain the agreement and listen to the point of view but also to gain their support to this agreement," Niam said.

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