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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

President Al-Bashir arrives in N'djamena, holds closed talks with Deby

Local dailies 22/7/10 - President Al-Bashir yesterday arrived in the Chadian Capital of N'djamena and he was accorded official and popular welcome. Upon arrival, President Al-Bashir held a closed meeting with his Chadian counterpart Idriss Deby at the Airport after which they walked out to salute hundreds of Chadian who lined up to welcome him.

Presidential Advisor Ghazi Salahueddin, Presidency Affairs Minister Bakri Hassan Saleh, NISS Director Mohamed Atta and Minister of Science and Technology Eissa Bushra accompanied the President on his visit to Chad.

Sudan Tribune website 21/7/10 reported that President Al-Bashir was accorded a red carpet reception by the Chadian government which flatly rejected calls by rights groups to arrest him.

"Omar al-Bashir was invited to the summit in his capacity as president of a CEN-SAD member and he has nothing to worry about," said Chad's Foreign Minister Moussa Faki Mahamat.

Mahamat said Chad was following the position of the African Union in allowing Bashir to visit, a position agreed by the regional body after the initial ICC warrant was issued.

"Everybody is working for the resolution of the Darfur crisis. It is not the moment to add other charges to complicate the situation. Our priority is peace in Sudan," Mahamat said.

"What country has ever arrested a sitting head of state? Bashir won't be arrested in Chad," Interior Minister Ahmat Mahamat Bachir told AFP.

"Chad is a sovereign and independent state.... We are not dependent on the injunctions of international organizations" he added.

Deby and Bashir held closed talks after which they told reporters that they have started a new era in their relationship after years of proxy wars and accusing each other of backing the rebels.

AFP reported that neither the French ambassador in Chad nor the US charge d'Affaires took part in the welcoming reception for Bashir at N'djamena airport, although they were present for the earlier arrivals of the Somali and Comorian leaders.

The US said that Chad had obligations under the Rome Statue but was careful not to condemn N'djamena for receiving the Sudanese president.

"Chad is a party to the Rome Statute and has obligations as a result. We'll leave it to

the Government of Chad to explain why it did or did not take actions in – related to those obligations” said US state department spokesperson Philip J. Crowley.

“We strongly support international efforts to bring those responsible for genocide and war crimes in Darfur to justice. We believe that there cannot be a lasting peace in Darfur or stability in Sudan without accountability and justice. And we will continue to call upon Sudan and other parties to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court. As we’ve said many times, ultimately President Bashir must present himself to the court and answer the charges that have been leveled against him” he added.

Crowley said he doesn’t know whether U.S. brought up the issue with N’djamena but refused to say whether Washington was happy about Bashir evading arrest saying “I’m not going to characterize our mood”.

The United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said through a spokesman that it was up to countries that are party to the court "to live up to their obligations as they see fit."

"Of course he said repeatedly that... there are charges that have been put forward by the prosecutor for the International Criminal Court and these charges are very serious," Ban’s spokesman, Martin Nesirky, said Wednesday...

Presidency discusses political parties’ forum scheduled for Saturday

Al-Akhbar 22/7/10 – The Presidency held a meeting yesterday prior to President Al-Bashir’s departure on a visit to Chad. Reportedly, President Al-Bashir, FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit and VP Ali Osman Taha discussed the Sudanese political forces forum scheduled for Saturday for debate on referendum. The meeting also discussed the security situation in Darfur and the South as well as the ongoing consultations between the NCP and the SPLM on post-referendum arrangement.

Meanwhile, **The Citizen** reports that ten southern Sudanese political parties yesterday decided not to attend Saturday’s meeting called by President Al-Bashir.

SPLM Deputy Secretary-General Ann Itto said that ten different parties with over 27 representatives attended the meeting and took the decision apart from one party, Sudan African national Union (SANU) that concurred with the idea of Khartoum meeting proposed by President Al-Bashir.

“We are not going to attend the Khartoum meeting on Saturday as Al-Bashir said, because if we do, it is a violation of the terms of the CPA, besides it is a negligence of the referendum act of the Southern Sudan Interim constitution,” Itto declared, adding that the parties agreed to issue a press release on the reasons for their decision.

According to **Al-Ayyam**, the Presidency meeting also directed the national government and the government of southern Sudan to implement the recommendations of the forum of the Border States held recently in the South.

South receives oil share by 128%

Al-Ahdath 22/7/10 – The Ministry of Finance announced that the federal government has paid the GoSS and the oil producing states their share of oil revenues, confirming that GoSS received its oil share by 128%.

Sudan curbs BBC radio broadcasts on local frequencies

Sudan Tribune website 21/7/10 - Sudanese authorities informed the BBC Arabic service radio that they will no longer be allowed to broadcast on local frequencies citing violations by the widely popular station in the country.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) since several years is airing its Arabic service on FM frequency in Khartoum, Port Sudan, Medani and capital of Northern Kordofan Al-Obayid. Also Monte Carlo, the Arabic service of Radio France Internationale (RFI) is aired on the FM in the Sudanese capital.

The decision to stop the broadcasting will be effective within three months. It does not include the semi-autonomous region of southern Sudan.

Sudanese authorities refused to renew a permission to broadcast its Arabic programme saying that the British government sponsored corporation imported unauthorized devices through the diplomatic pouch two years ago, informed sources tell Sudan Tribune. It is not clear why the decision was taken only now.

The matter had been considered at the time as violation of the Sudanese law and the devices were confiscated by the authorities.

Darfur rebels sign deal with the UN to protect children

CNN 22/7/10 - A Sudanese rebel group has signed a deal allowing access to its bases to ensure children are not being used as soldiers and to protect them from sexual violence, the United Nations said.

As part of the agreement Wednesday, the rebels pledged to release and hand over to the United Nations anyone under age 18 caught up in the Darfur conflict.

The Justice and Equality Movement rebels also agreed to release children "not directly associated" with the group but used by others in the conflict.

"It's taken more than two years to get here," said Nils Kastberg, Sudan representative for the United Nations Children's Fund, which signed the deal with the rebels.

In the deal, rebels vowed to stop the recruitment and use of child soldiers, including in noncombatant or supportive roles, the United Nations said. They also plan to end their killing, maiming and sexual violence of children.

Sudanese forces have clashed with the rebel group for years, most recently in May. The latest conflict was over a breach of a deal reached this year to cease hostilities, according to the United Nations.

Kastberg said the deal makes it easier to deliver supplies to children, who join armed groups to get basics such as food and water. He hoped it would be an incentive for other rebels in the region to protect minors.

"We gradually see that armed movements recognize that involving children has consequences ... [and that] there can't be impunity," Kastberg said...

UNAMID effectiveness questioned as mandate renewal nears

Sudan Tribune website 21/7/10 - A number of international NGO's have criticized the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) saying its mandate is too weak to make a difference for the civilian population.

The UNAMID mandate expires at the end of July and is to be extended by the AU and UN later this month.

The world's largest U.N.-funded peacekeeping mission is at 75% of its total 26,000 strength but says its job to secure the remote area is difficult in the absence of a peace deal between Khartoum and rebels who took up arms in 2003.

Furthermore, many Darfuris living in the camps look with suspicion to the force and conceiving them as pro-Khartoum. The latter has insisted that the composition of the troops be dominantly African and rejected any units from outside the continent prompting many countries to refrain from contributing.

The Sudanese government says the mandate of the peacekeeping force is to protect civilians under Chapter VII only if its army fails to do so. Violence has flared in recent months and UNAMID itself came under attack from unidentified militias and bandits.

"We appeal the International Community for immediate intervention using chapter Seven of Security Council Resolution passed on Darfur in order to save our lives when the UNAMID forces failed in its mission to protect us" read a statement signed by the Youth and Women Sector of Darfur IDPs and Refugees, a body loyal to Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) headed by Abdel-Wahid Al-Nur.

The Panafrican News Agency (PANA) said that the AU is facing a strong opposition ahead of a special Peace and Security Council (PSC) meeting here Wednesday to renew the UNAMID mandate.

International civil society organizations represented at the several pre-AU Summit meetings in Uganda said they would oppose plans to renew the mandate of the mission for another year unless the mandate was changed.

Those opposed to the renewal of UNAMID's mandate as it is said the force has not been able to protect the Darfurians.

A Chadian diplomat, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the mandate of the UNAMID was weak and needed a review. But he declined to state whether Chad would push for a review of that mandate.

However, the AU Commission Chairperson Jean Ping's Spokesperson, Nouredine Mezni, told PANA that the opposition to the renewal of the mandate would not stop the decision-making process.

'We welcome the role of the civil society. But in this case, they will not stop the decision-making process. The PSC has met twice on the issue of Darfur and they have contributed positively to the improvement of the situation, including contributions to the Doha peace process,' Mezni said.

Mezni said the formation of the force was carefully worked out because of the Sudanese government's opposition to a UN peacekeeping mission. He said the force was operating under special circumstances that required the understanding of its critics.

But a senior Oxfam official countered: "The question is what have you (UNAMID) been doing with the mandate for the past year in order to request for another mandate of one year? You cannot have a peacekeeping force that cannot respond even when stones are being thrown at them.'

Le Roy said he wants to know if UNAMID failed to take a stand against the attackers when it should have.

"When you are attacked, the rules of engagement are very clear: you have the right to use your weapons in ... self defense," Le Roy said.

"If it's the case that they (UNAMID) have not reacted, or if the mission was badly planned, then there will be ... sanctions because that is of course unacceptable for the credibility of U.N. peacekeeping," he said.

A Sudanese diplomat, Bona Malwal Akuei, said the main problem facing the Darfur force was the lack of technical equipment.

"Our appeal is to the international community and those countries with the military equipment, including the tactical helicopters, to provide it to the force," the Sudanese diplomat said, adding that there was no substitute for UNAMID in Darfur.

Jordan stops entry visa to Sudanese, revokes valid ones

Akhir Lahza 22/7/10 – Jordanian authorities yesterday ordered halt of issuance of entry visa to Sudanese nationals and also revoked entry visas issued the same day.

Sources said authorities in Jordan stipulated that entry visa should be applied for before twenty days during which Jordan's security will scrutinize the papers. According to the sources, patients will not be exempted from the measure.

Pre-referendum Watch

Al-Mahdi suggests formation of a "wise men commission" to conduct the referendum

Al-Sahafa 22/7/10 – National Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi, at press conference yesterday, called for the formation of what he termed as “commission of wise men” to be tasked with the conduct of the referendum and to address the contentious issues. Al-Mahdi revealed that he had received an invitation from President Al-Bashir to take part in a forum on referendum, saying his party would participate.

According to **Al-Wifaq**, Al-Mahdi stressed the need for the two CPA partners to document their undertaking to accept the referendum result. “Non-recognition of the referendum result will lead to a renewed war,” he warned.

Ajras Al-Hurriya reports that Al-Mahdi has warned against “election-like scenario” during the upcoming referendum, saying the conduct of the referendum should be assigned to the UN, pointing that though he does not prefer the option of UN conducting the exercise but “anyway it is better than a disputed result”.

Political parties (Juba Conference) to meet in Khartoum today

Al-Ahdath 22/7/10 – FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit is to hold a meeting today with leaders of political parties (Juba Group) including Communist Party leader Mohamed Ibrahim Nugud and National Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi for consultation on key issues particularly unity of Sudan. Kiir will also hold a separate meeting with DUP leader Mohamed Osman Al-Mirghani.

Communist Party spokesperson Yousuf Hussein said President Al-Bashir’s invitation to the political parties to attend a consultation forum on Saturday is an attempt to preempt the call by the Juba Group for holding a national conference on key issues.

Southern activists repeat calls for independence

Sudan Tribune website 21/7/10 - Activists and academicians together with clerics from different churches have joined forces to call-upon politicians and members of the public in general to campaign vigorously for international community to support to the choice of southern Sudanese in January 2011.

Religious leaders, artists and women activists have openly joined youth pressure group dubbed as South Sudan Youth Forum for Referendum in their call for massive support against voting in favor of unity in the upcoming exercise for a referendum scheduled to take place next January.

The move is part of an all-out effort to convince skeptical Southern Sudanese voters including some influential people from political parties, particularly southern alliance political parties chaired by the former Sudanese foreign affairs minister, Dr. Lam Akol, allegedly and secretly moving around to campaign for postponement of the upcoming referendum.

Clerics from different dominations in the region under the Sudan Catholic Bishops’ Conference (SCBC) in the regional capital of Juba have equally called for collaboration with members of the southern Sudan referendum bureau to conduct proper civic education and discuss the importance of self determination for people of South Sudan.

Wau Diocese Bishop, Rudolf Deng Majak asked people to forgive those against the independence of southern Sudan and called for unity among southerners as they enter what he termed as "difficult times in the history of Sudan".

"Let us unite for the benefit of children of God," was the joint call at the bishop conference.

In his speech at the conference, minister of Cabinet affairs, Kosti Manibe, said that the regional government is prepared to respect choice of the people of South Sudan at the referendum.

Youths, civil society activists organize referendum conference

Sudan tribune website 21/7/10 - A two-day conference aimed at bridging the existing information gap about the forthcoming referendum through awareness creation is in the offing, courtesy of a coalition of youths working in partnership with civil society organizations.

An umbrella entity, dubbed My Referendum for Freedom (MRF), which was initiated in Australia nearly a year is behind the event, already earmarked for July 28 and 29 at the Juba-based Beijing hotel.

MRF, which targets mainly community-based organizations and youth groups, is currently operational in all the 10 states of Southern Sudan.

"Our aim is to ensure that the referendum message is fully understood by the entire population. As such, we want to reach as many people as possible, including those at grass roots levels," Mr. Kur K. Ayuen, the MRF Campaign Manager told *Sudan Tribune*.

The two-day conference, based on the theme, "Your Vote, Your Future," will later be climaxed with a debate on key referendum-related topics.

Asked why the organizers chose a broader theme, Mr. Ayuen said the 2011 referendum needed to be differentiated from the April general elections.

"People need to differentiate between an election and this forthcoming referendum. Whatever this generation will decide during the referendum will determine the fate of the future generations," Mr. Ayuen remarked.

"As organizers for this event, we strongly feel the struggle for referendum was a long term one. In this case, it is important to acknowledge and recognize efforts of our fallen leaders," Ms Nyathon James Hoth, MRF Executive Director exclusively told *Sudan Tribune*...

10,000 police personnel to secure referendum

Al-Sudani 22/7/10 – GoSS Interior Affairs Minister Gier Chuang said his ministry had recruited 10,000 policemen to secure the referendum process, adding the recruits are currently being trained and would be deployed as soon as the training is completed. Mr. Chuang told a regular press briefing in Juba that security challenges remain despite the

improvement over the past month.

GoSS to pay SDG 100 m to Southern Sudan Referendum Commission

Ajras Al-Hurriya 22/7/10 – GoSS VP Riek Machar said GoSS is determined to pay SDG 100 million to the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission to enable it to prepare for the exercise.

Machar, who made the remarks while addressing southern Sudan MPs in Juba, said that prolonged negotiations between the NCP and the SPLM have hampered preparations for the referendum.

Austria to mediate between CPA partners

Al-Ahdath 22/7/10 – Austria has offered to mediate between the NCP and the SPLM to consolidate Sudan's unity and called on the international community to exert efforts to address all problems and challenges Sudan is facing. This is revealed by the visiting Austrian delegation.

VP Machar says Abyei referendum will occur with or without border demarcation

Sudan Tribune website 21/7/10 - The South Sudan Vice president Riek Machar criticized the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) over the delay in demarcating the borders in the oil rich region of Abyei.

The ex-Southern rebel group complains that that its members of a joint demarcation team feel threatened by armed militia elements, which the SPLM claims are sponsored by Khartoum.

“The demarcation of this border has been stalled and politicized unnecessarily. This now threatens that peace. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) calls on the Government of Sudan to join it in efforts to demarcate the area within 30 days” Machar said in an Op-Ed article sent to Sudan Tribune.

“The Government of Sudan and its members on the Joint Demarcation Committee, however, have not fulfilled their commitment to demarcate the area. The frustrations of the SPLM Joint Demarcation Committee have been well documented as have the SPLM's attempts to encourage the GoS to facilitate their work. Instead, the Government has politicized the tribunal decision's implementation and in doing so, made false promises to the Misseriya and other nomads whose livelihoods depend on these areas” the SPLM official said.

Machar stressed that the referendum on the future of Abyei will not be held off by the deadlock in the demarcation process.

“Whether the demarcation takes place or not, the borders of Abyei are fixed and known. Delaying the demarcation has no affect on changing Abyei's defined borders”.

He further noted that political boundaries will not interfere with the movements of

Misseriya and other nomads.

“The SPLM guarantees to all Misseriya and other nomads that your traditional rights to movement through the Abyei Area post 2011 will continue regardless of the results of the Abyei Area and Southern Sudan Referenda”.

The Abyei referendum commission has yet to be formed and demonstrations were staged in the region demanding its swift establishment.

Below is the full text of the Op-Ed by South Sudan Vice President Riek Machar

By Dr. Riek Machar Teny, Deputy Chairman, SPLM

One year ago today, a tribunal sitting at the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in the Hague helped to ensure peace among our people by issuing a decision defining the borders of the Abyei Area. The demarcation of this border has been stalled and politicized unnecessarily. This now threatens that peace. The Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) calls on the Government of Sudan to join it in efforts to demarcate the area within 30 days.

As many readers know, in a dispute over land, like the one of Abyei, the most important part of the tribunal’s decision is the definition of the land’s borders on a map. Definition is where designated officials, in this case an international tribunal, draw on a map the longitude and latitude lines representing the Northern, Southern, Western and Eastern borders of the area in question. This has been done for the Abyei Area. Indeed, under the law, there is now no question or ambiguity about where Abyei’s borders are located and where the ancestral lands of the Ngok Dinka are. Both the SPLM and the Government of Sudan know where Abyei’s borders are and they have publicly agreed they are final. In fact, in the arbitration agreement that originally referred the case to the tribunal, the Government of Sudan and the SPLM both that the tribunal’s decision on the boundaries would not only be “binding”, but also that “the Presidency of the Republic of Sudan shall ensure the immediate execution of the final arbitration award.”

After the ruling was issued, leaders of both parties publicly reaffirmed their commitment to implement the award. One year later, the SPLM remains dedicated to this effort. The Government of Sudan and its members on the Joint Demarcation Committee, however, have not fulfilled their commitment to demarcate the area. The frustrations of the SPLM Joint Demarcation Committee have been well documented as have the SPLM’s attempts to encourage the GoS to facilitate their work. Instead, the Government has politicized the tribunal decision’s implementation and in doing so, made false promises to the Misseriya and other nomads whose livelihoods depend on these areas. This has caused unnecessary security concerns in the area and distracted our people from that which is most important. Indeed, what is most important is that we ensure that: 1) all people who depend on land and waters of Abyei have access and their customary rights of movement respected and protected even after 2011, and 2) that Abyei and all of the surrounding areas to which its many neighbors seasonally return in the North and South, receive increased reconstruction, development, and prosperity, and 3) that the Ngok Dinka and other residents of the abyei Area shall finally have a right to choose whether they want to belong to the North or South (a right the Government of Sudan

denied to them in the past).

Indeed, our people have been distracted and misled. For this reason, on this anniversary of the PCA's decision it is important that our people are given the facts, rather than political opinions. Perhaps then we can begin to work together to renew trust among our people and bring peace and development to the area. As noted above, the definition of Abyei's border on a map has been done. The borders are known and they are permanent. It is the demarcation that has not taken place. Much misinformation has been communicated about what demarcation is, what it will represent, and what its impact has on our people's lives and even the Abyei Area Referendum. To clarify, the demarcation is when the known boundaries of an area are marked on the ground in some way so that people can see the borders if they so choose. Demarcation is not what makes the boundary of the Abyei Area final. The definition that tribunal issued in its decision already makes the boundaries of Abyei known, fixed and final. Delaying the demarcation of the border will not change or reverse the decision on the boundary. The two are not related. Under the law, the demarcation is the obligation of the Government of Sudan to demonstrate that it will not violate, but rather comply with law.

Though some have been led to believe otherwise, demarcation is not a wall that keeps people in or out. It is also not a fence that prevents our animals from moving to and fro for grazing. Consistent with practice around the world, as planned by the Joint Demarcation Committee of the SPLM and Government of Sudan, demarcation in Abyei only means the placing of several poles in the ground which are a full kilometer apart from each other. These poles help people on the ground to visibly see the borders. It is true that many community members that rarely travel far from their villages will never even see these poles. It is probably true that some of these markers likely will even find themselves under water during our rainy season. This is what some people would have you fear – a few poles made from oil pipelines in Heglig, separated by vast areas of land, in some cases water, cows and villages.

There are those that would like to feed conflict in our villages where local leaders and community members have for years peacefully organized the movement of their peoples and the reception of their neighbors for purposes of grazing and other traditional activities. We must work together to speak over these individuals that work against the unity and peace of our people. In this spirit the SPLM wish to confirm the following to all of the people concerned.

1. Whether the demarcation takes place or not, the borders of Abyei are fixed and known. Delaying the demarcation has no effect on changing Abyei's defined borders.
2. If the demarcation does not take place, this will not in any way delay the Abyei Area Referendum. The demarcation is symbolic in this case more than instructive, and both parties already know where the borders are.
3. Because we already know where the borders are, the definition of who is a "resident" for purposes of voting in the Abyei Area Referendum will not be affected in any way if the demarcation does not occur. Demarcation has no influence at all on the definition of who does and who does not get to vote in the Abyei Area Referendum.

4. The demarcation is not a solid wall or even a long fence and it will never be a physical obstacle to any of the customary movements of our people of the North and South who traditionally and seasonally migrate through the Abyei Area.

5. As the tribunal stated, the political boundaries between states and even countries do not need to interfere with the customary rights of movement for traditional people. For this reason, the SPLM guarantees to all Misseriya and other nomads that your traditional rights to movement through the Abyei Area post 2011 will continue regardless of the results of the Abyei Area and Southern Sudan Referenda.

6. Consistent with the CPA and the PCA decision, the SPLM will respect and protect the right of choice that is before the members of the Ngok Dinka community and it will work with the Abyei Area Commission to define the criteria for “other residents” of Abyei that is consistent with international law and state practice.

7. Lastly, the SPLM reiterates our commitment to protecting the livelihoods of the people of Abyei and its surrounding areas no matter the outcome of the 2011 referenda. We will continue to work together with the Government of Southern Sudan and the Government of National Unity to bring more development, reconstruction and opportunity to the people who live there. We welcome identification from the people of their needs and priorities.

People of Sudan, on this anniversary of the PCA’s boundary decision, the SPLM wishes to tell you that there is nothing to fear about the demarcation of the Abyei Area and you should not let any person fill your heads with lies or misunderstanding about it. Demarcation does not prevent people and their animals from moving freely. Demarcation does not determine whether someone can or cannot vote, and demarcation will not change the now defined boundaries of the Abyei Area. The two CPA parties have too much to do before 2011 on behalf of our people. The demarcation of the Abyei Area is a requirement of the CPA that must be completed and we should spend no more time in delays. In this spirit, on this day the SPLM calls for the support of the Presidency and in particular, President Al Bashir, to urgently provide to the members of the Joint Demarcation Team all of the technical support and political authorization needed to complete this work in no later than (30) days. We hope the people of Sudan will join us in this call for completion of this task.

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