

23 Dec 2009

www.unmis.org



Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

Headlines

- SPLM walks out of Parliament session on referendum law (**Dailies**)
- Misseriya rejects Abyei referendum bill (**Al-Intibaha**)
- Presidency denies plane crash in the South (**Al-Ahdath**)
- SPLM dismisses rumors over resignation of deputy chairman (**ST**)
- SPLM maintains popularity in the whole country-Igga (**ST**)
- Chadian Political and military delegation in Khartoum tomorrow (**Al-Rai Al-Aam**)
- “Only 5% of DPA implemented” – Minnawi (**Al-Intibaha**)

NOTE: *Reproduction here does not mean that the UNMIS PIO can vouch for the accuracy or veracity of the contents, nor does this report reflect the views of the United Nations Mission in Sudan. Furthermore, international copyright exists on some materials and this summary should not be disseminated beyond the intended list of recipients.*

Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

Highlights

SPLM walks out of Parliament session on referendum law

Local dailies report the National Assembly yesterday endorsed the southern Sudan referendum law in its last stage despite SPLM protest. **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports the SPLM MPs walked out from the session to protest repeal of an item of Article (27) which makes it a condition for a southern voter in the north to go to the south to register in order to vote. The Assembly said the sub-section violates the constitution and amended it and consequently the SPLM MPs walked out of the session.

Speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir said the law would be effective after the Presidency endorsed it.

According to **Sudan Tribune website** 22/12/09 - Leaders from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) along with other South Sudan political parties walked out of the National Assembly in protest of a new amendment introduced to South Sudan referendum bill.

The two chambers of the Sudanese parliament endorsed today the southern Sudan referendum bill which outlines the framework to hold this crucial popular consultation in January 2011. The law says that no less than 60% of the legible registered persons should participate in the voting and that the choice that gains 50 plus one shall be the winning option.

National Congress Party (NCP) parliamentarians modified the bill after it was agreed on in the Council of Ministers and also in the Presidency. The approved bill cancelled an article stipulating that southerners who reside outside the region will have to register and vote only in South Sudan. The chairman of referendum sub-committee Badriya Suleiman said this article violates the interim constitution particularly the article related to freedom of movement.

Speaking to press in front of the National Assembly building, Atem Garang Deputy Speaker on SPLM criticized the move describing the passage as "ill and deliberate".

"All the legal procedures were not strictly followed and violate a number of governing rules for business and conduct of the house," he said. "The essence of bringing it here in reference to the bill and assembly was for approval not to delete and insert," Atem further said.

He pointed out that because they did not want rush passing based on numerical majority, the SPLM parliamentary bloc in the Assembly in an agreement with other Political parties, requested more deliberations and consultations before passing it into law.

"This was why the Tuesday session was dedicated to reading and passing of the Referendum for self determination of southern people," he adds.

Ms. Badriya Suleiman said Mr. Justin Joseph Maruna, SPLM co-chairman of the referendum subcommittee, had participated in the deliberations and preparation of the report and agreed to cancel this item, but latter he denied what he had agreed.

Similarly, Yasir Arman, who heads SPLM parliamentary bloc, protested amendments to the draft bill giving rights to all south Sudanese in both south and the north to vote during the

referendum process.

He said this new amendment violates CPA and that the SPLM parliamentarians in the Assembly may consider suspending their participations until differences over passed bill are settled.

"What happened today shows clearest and worst violation ever made against CPA," he said.

"They amended [Article 27-3] by saying that if you are a Northern Sudanese and you are not in Southern Sudan, you can vote wherever you are. But we are saying no, according to what we had agreed upon, if you are Northern Sudanese and your heritage is from the South you need to come to Southern Sudan to prove it and then you will vote," said Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth, a Government of Southern Sudan diplomat and member of the SPLM National Liberation Council.

Another objectionable item was also introduced, according to Gatkuoth. Article 67 addresses post-2011 arrangements. "Basically we had agreed to discuss the post-2011 arrangements but it has no link with the law. They re-introduced it and they are saying that if we have no agreement on the post-2011 arrangement – no referendum, basically".

Many observers say faces began to grow angrier in parliament today as the discussions got off to a weaker start than previously thought. But all signs suggest that one of the two peace partners, possibly SPLM, is likely to concede to end the year on stronger footing.

However, it's unclear how the SPLM will compromise once the government refuses to put in place alternatives. Gatkuoth commented of the law, "we are condemning it, we are not accepting it, and we will continue to attack it".

"It is a known behavior of the NCP to agree and renege," he said. "They always respond to pressure. They will never agree on niceties. They are people who are used to problems. When there are no problems, they will never deliver."

AFP 22/12/09 reported Sudan's parliament adopted a law on the conduct of a referendum for southern independence on Tuesday, despite opposition from southern lawmakers who walked out in protest.

MPs from the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement and other southern parties withdrew from the parliamentary session in protest at a clause that would allow Diaspora southerners to cast absentee ballots.

According to the law, a "yes" vote in the 2011 referendum would require a simple majority of votes with a 60 percent turnout.

Reuters 22/12/09 reported that Sudan's parliament on Tuesday passed a controversial and long-awaited bill, paving the way for a referendum on the independence of the country's oil-producing south.

The bill passed despite Southern Sudanese members of parliament boycotting the meeting on a dispute over the voting rights of South Sudanese living in the north.

"Finally, after a long journey, we approved this law," said Ahmed Ibrahim al-Tahir, the parliament's chairman and member of north Sudan's dominant National Congress Party.

Tuesday's bill marks the end of months of wrangling between the former civil war foes over the terms of the legislation.

South Sudan secured the independence vote as part of a 2005 peace accord that ended more

than two decades of civil war with the north.

Analysts had warned the south could return to war if there was any sign Khartoum was not going to go through with the vote, a development that would have a devastating impact on the country, its oil industry and the surrounding region.

Misseriya rejects Abyei referendum bill

Al-Intibaha reports that the All-Misseriya Union categorically rejected the Abyei referendum bill which was passed by the National Assembly. Union chairman Mohamed Khatir Gumma said the law should include the right of the tribe to decide the destiny of the Abyei area. Gumma also reiterated the Misseriya rejection to the PCA ruling.

Presidency denies plane crash in the South

Al-Ahdath reports Presidency State Minister Joseph Lual Acuil has denied news circulated by the media yesterday to the effect that a plane carrying an advance delegation of FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit crashed in Tonj airfield in Warrap state. Acuil said what happened was that the plane overshot the runway killing one woman but all the 36 passengers on board were safe.

According to **Sudan Tribune website** 22/12/09 —The government of Southern Sudan today denied the death of any Presidential security personnel in a plane crash blaming media for exaggeration and called for calm in the area.

Speaking from Juba, an official from presidential security personnel office, who declined to be named, said on Saturday December 19, 2009 a plane carrying GoSS presidential security personnel lost control as it was trying to land at Tonj air field killing an innocent woman on the ground at the peripheral of the strip.

"No one on the ground or among the passengers was injured," he adds.

Sudanese media including the official TV have reported that 48 people died when their aircraft crash-landed at Tonj Airport, Warrap State in southern Sudan. The reports said all the victims were members of the advanced team of security of First Vice-President and President of Government of South Sudan Salva Kiir Mayardit who planned to visit the state.

"Whenever I heard plane crash, it reminds me of the tragic crash which robbed South Sudan of her charismatic and visionary leader Dr. John Garang on Saturday July 30th in 2005, said Alier Bior, a Southern Student at Juba University campus in Khartoum.

It also reminds me of the similar incident in which first South Sudan SPLA affairs minister, General Dominic Diim with his wife Josephine along with GoSS presidential Advisor on Decentralization, Dr. Justin Yac Arop, among other passengers and crew members was killed, he adds.

Paul Mayom Akech, minister of information and broadcasting service in the government of Southern Sudan also dismissed the incident involving death of any member of presidential security personnel but regretted the killing of an innocent woman.

He said "the crash did not kill anybody but it was unfortunate that an innocent resident of the area could not escape the crash at the peripheries of the air strip." The minister said a joint committee from southern Sudan government and civil aviation will probe the cause of the incident.

SPLM dismisses rumors over resignation of deputy chairman

Sudan Tribune website 22/12/09 – SPLM has denied rumors published in a Khartoum-based Arabic daily alleging that the deputy chairman of the party had resigned.

The pro-National Congress Party (NCP) newspaper, Al-Intibaha, on Tuesday published that the Vice President of the Government of Southern Sudan and deputy chairman of the SPLM, Dr. Riek Machar Teny, had resigned from the SPLM Political Bureau.

It continued to say that he was consulting with other political forces to declare his move by forming a different political party.

The party's leadership in Juba immediately denied the allegations in a televised statement.

Dr. Luka Biong Deng, the minister for Presidential Affairs, who is a close aide to the President and the Vice President, said the rumors alleging Dr. Machar's resignation was the work of anti-peace forces in the country.

Dr. Biong who said he had just finished talking on the phone with the party's deputy chairman, who is currently on official duty to Khartoum, told the nation that in the words of Dr. Machar, these allegations were cooked by the enemies of peace trying to divert the attention from the main issues facing the country.

He added that Dr. Machar said the allegations were aimed against peace and unity of the people of Southern Sudan and of the SPLM as a political party.

Dr. Biong further explained that the Vice President was in Khartoum per the directive of the Southern Sudan President and SPLM chairman, Gen. Salva Kiir Mayardit, to follow up with issues in the CPA implementation.

SPLM maintains popularity in the whole country-Igga

Sudan Tribune website 22/12/09 – The Speaker of the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, James Wani Igga, who is also the SPLM third deputy Chairman charged with political strategic planning campaign committee, has said his party maintains popularity in the whole country.

"It is energetically getting massive supports because of the positive strides it has made towards rehabilitation in the South Sudan," he said appealing to Sudanese People to participate in the recovery and construction programs.

Challenges are being gradually overcome as regional government is paying particular attentions to insecurity, repair and building of physical infrastructure among others, he added. He further appealed to citizens not to be misled by some certain politicians.

The key figure in the Sudan People's Liberation Movement who was speaking to Wundruba women representatives visiting Juba for talks over territorial concern in the area, said his government will continue providing a firm but fair leadership.

He said as much as there are challenges that attracts opposition attention against the nascent regional Government, the region is generally doing well as it nudges best alternatives to settling tribal and territorial differences not resorts to killing public figures.

He appealed to Southerners to guard the peace the region is enjoying under leadership of

General Salva Kiir Mayardit, whom he said is neither vindictive nor a tribalist.

"Comrade Salva is no new person to me and in the SPLM leadership as well that I have known him for longer period as a person who is neither vindictive nor a tribalist. He embraces everyone," he said.

Therefore, I am appealing to my fellow South Sudanese people, supporters and sympathizers alike not to be swayed by some politicians who are always speak negatively.

He continued to stress that there is no government that does not have challenges. "Even developed countries face challenges but what matters is being on the right track," he stressed.

Mr. Igga said the SPLM led government has made some progress, citing the education sector in which schools have been constructed all over the region as opposed to the grass-thatched ones that were used for a long time during war periods.

He called on citizens not to entirely rely on Government but to be part of moving the region forward economically calling South Sudanese who can add value to the country's economy to get on board instead of always looking for negative aspects in the manner the SPLM government runs.

Chadian Political and military delegation in Khartoum tomorrow

A high-level political and military delegation from Chad headed by Foreign Minister Musa Feki is due in Khartoum tomorrow on 3-day visit for meetings with Sudanese officials including President Al-Bashir, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports. A source told the paper that the delegation would conduct political and military consultations to follow up on the implementation of what was agreed upon between the two countries during the recent visit of Presidential Adviser Ghazi Salahuddin to Chad.

“Only 5% of DPA implemented” – Minnawi

SLM Chairman and Senior Presidential Assistant Minni Minnawi has painted a grim picture of the DPA implementation, saying only 5% of the agreement has been implemented, **Al-Intibaha** reports. At a meeting with the media leaders yesterday, Minnawi complained that he is a Senior Presidential Assistant but he has no powers because of the NCP's majority in the Cabinet and the Parliament. He accused the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and the Humanitarian Affairs of misusing donors' funds for Darfur, saying the Darfur Authority he chairs has only received 105 million dollars. According to **Akhir Lahza**, Minnawi said financial support for Darfur ended up in the NCP's pocket.