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Media Monitoring Report

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Referendum Watch

- Southern officials will be relieved after secession (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- Central Government to be dissolved after release of vote result (*Al-Sahafa*)
- NCP and Umma Party agree to discuss national issues (*Dailies*)
- Presidency to meet on 27 January – Deng Alor (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- Over 99.95% vote for southern independence in Eastern Equatoria (*ST*)
- Almost 99% choose south Sudan split (*Reuters*)
- Security situation in Abyei Area stable (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- Sudan on eve of a new dawn, needs international community's assistance – SRSG (*Al-Ayyam*)
- President Kiir forms constitutional review committee (*ST*)
- Southern parties warn against SPLM domination in case of secession (*Al-Ahdath*)

Popular Consultation Monitor

- Blue Nile governor leads calls for regional autonomy (*Al-Ahdath*)
- Popular Consultations resume in Kurmuk (*Al-Sahafa*)

Other Highlights

- Post-referendum future of Sudan's Darfur uncertain (*AP*)
- Sudan rejects separate negotiation track with JEM (*ST*)

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Highlights

Southern officials will be relieved after secession

Al-Rai Al-Aam 23/1/11 – The newspaper has learned that presidential and parliamentary decrees would be issued immediately after the referendum results are released to relieve GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit from his post as FVP in addition to removal of southern ministers and MPs from their posts if the vote result confirms secession. Southern members of the Constitutional Court, Political Parties Affairs Council and independent commission etc. would also be dismissed.

However, *Sudan Radio* 22/1/11 reported Justice Minister Mohamed Bushara Dousa as saying that the FVP would continue in his post until the end of the interim period. He added that he also does not see any problem for Blue Nile governor Malik Aqar to continue in his post until the end of the interim period.

Meanwhile, *Al-Intibaha* 23/01/11 reports that the Just Peace Forum has slammed statements by Justice Minister Mohamed Bushara Dousa to the effect that Salva Kiir Mayardit would continue to hold his position as First-Vice President of the Republic until the end of the interim period even if the referendum result is separation.

Speaking to the newspaper, the Chairman of the Just Peace Forum, Al-Tayeb Mustafa [also the Editor-in-Chief of *Al-Intibaha*], pointed out yesterday that the constitution stipulates that the President of the Republic, if he is from the north, would remain in his position should the referendum result is separation but should be considered as having resigned if he is from southern Sudan. He pointed out that the article he quoted from the Constitution does not exempt any other constitutional post holder.

“How can a national of a foreign state be the First Vice-President of another state?” he wondered.

Central Government to be dissolved after release of vote result

Al-Sahafa 22/1/11 – The newspaper has learned that President Al-Bashir will dissolve the government immediately after the vote result is announced which is likely to confirm secession.

The President has also embarked on consultations to form a broad-based government including restructuring of the existing institutions.

NCP and Umma Party agree to discuss national issues

Local dailies 23/1/11 – The ruling NCP and the National Umma Party led by Sadiq Al-Mahdi agreed yesterday to set up a joint mechanism to discuss national issues.

NCP deputy chairman Nafie Ali Nafie told reporters after a meeting between President Al-Bashir and Mr. Sadiq Al-Mahdi that the meeting was requested by President Al-Bashir for discussion on “national agenda paper” already submitted by the Umma Party to the NCP. He said the two parties decided to conduct serious and profound dialogue on the issues.

Mr. Sadiq Al-Mahdi, for his part told reporters that his meeting with President Al-Bashir focused on a range of national issues including Darfur, freedoms and the new constitution.

Presidency to meet on 27 January – Deng Alor

Al-Rai Al-Aam GoSS minister of regional cooperation said the Presidency would hold a meeting on 27 January to discuss the Abyei and border demarcation.

He said the Presidency is likely to reach an agreement on Abyei referendum if the issue of voter definition is sorted out.

Over 99.95% vote for southern independence in Eastern Equatoria

Sudan Tribune.com (Torit) -The state referendum high committee in Eastern Equatoria state has announced that 99.95 percent of votes cast in South Sudan's independence plebiscite opted for the region to separate from the north.

According to the preliminary results only 0.05 percent of voters want Sudan to remain united.

The Eastern Equatoria State Referendum High Committee announced the preliminary results in Torit hotel in the presence of hundreds of the state citizens who turn up to cheer the results...

The voting exercise passed successfully in Eastern Equatoria state with no violence or intimidation reported all over the eight counties of the state...

Almost 99 percent choose south Sudan split

Reuters (JUBA) 21/1/11 - Almost 99 percent of south Sudanese who voted in an independence referendum chose to split away from the north, the first official but incomplete figures published by the vote's organising commission showed on Friday.

The website for the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission (<http://southernsudan2011.com/>) showed a 98.6 percent vote for secession, with more than 80 percent of the votes from the south counted, and 100 percent counted in other areas.

"This is the outcome we expected ... the results won't change much," the commission's deputy chairman Chan Reek Madut, a southerner, told Reuters.

"It is not surprising because of the way they conducted their registration. Some people passed as southerners who were actually northerners from Darfur," said Madut.

"They took advantage of the lack of security in the area. It won't impact seriously on the result." Darfur is the scene of a seven-year conflict pitting rebels against the government. A senior official from north Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP) said he would wait until the final announcement before giving an official reaction.

"But the expectation is that the result will be for secession," said Rabie Abdelati. "The party is working for the post referendum period now -- the demarcation of the borders and the resolution of the Abyei problem. We are doing our best to prepare for the consequences of secession on the

north."

Security situation in Abyei Area stable

Al-Rai Al-Aam 23/1/11 – The Abyei Administration announced yesterday the opening of the North-South crossing, saying the UN troops took over the road yesterday after the SPLA has withdrawn to 1956' border.

Misseriya leader Mohamed Omer Al-Ansari told the newspaper yesterday that security situation in the Area is stable after nomad migration routes are opened and trucks were allowed to move southward. He said the recent agreement signed in Kadugli is being implemented in full, revealing an initiative by Ngok Dinka to resolve the crisis between the two tribes away from the SPLM and the NCP. He said the Dinka and the Misseriya would meet next week to discuss the initiative.

Sudan on the eve of a new dawn, needs international community's assistance – SRSB Menkerios

Al-Ayyam 23/1/11 – SRSB Haile Menkerios has described polling of referendum on South Sudan self-determination as successful and called on the parties to accept its result.

“Whatever the referendum's outcome, both northern and southern Sudan will remain multiethnic, multicultural and multi-religious societies. This diversity is always the strength of nations, never their weakness,” he said.

He said Sudan is on the eve of a new dawn and is going to need a heavy dose of encouragement and support from the international community to make sure committed implementation of the CPA signifies a final and definitive break with the past and opens a new era of prosperity and stability for all the Sudanese”.

President Kiir forms constitutional review committee

Sudan Tribune.com (Juba) 22/1/11 - The President of the Government of Southern Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit, on Friday issued a Presidential decree forming a Constitutional Review Committee, chaired by the minister of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Development, John Luk Jok, to review the current constitution of Southern Sudan as the region moves to statehood.

Initial results from south Sudan's referendum on independence show that the south is likely to secede in July this year. The referendum is part of a 2005 peace between north and south.

Though the terms of reference for the committee is not yet revealed to the press, the 24-person committee's activity is believed to be part of implementation of the resolutions and recommendations of the Southern Sudan political parties' conference, which brought together almost all of parties in the south.

The conference was called by Kiir in an attempt to unite the south politically ahead of the referendum.

One of the main resolutions of the conference, as well as fresh elections after independence, called for a constitutional conference after the referendum.

The ruling party in the South, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and all the southern opposition political parties agreed on a roadmap in October 2010 to guide the region for future governance after the referendum.

Russia ready to recognize South Sudan's independence

Sudan Tribune.com 20/1/11 - Russia is willing to recognize an independent state in Southern Sudan if the results of 9 January referendum are accepted by the two governments north and south, said the special envoy of the President Dmitry Medvedev to Sudan.

“If a new independent state appears on Africa's map as a result of the referendum and this is not accompanied with conflicts, this outcome can be described as a most favourable one,” said Mikhail Margelov special Russian envoy to Sudan.

“We act as an honest partner: we have no burden of the colonial past either in Sudan or in neighbouring African countries, nor have we investments running into billions or the mentality of an international policeman. Russia in this case can only show its goodwill,” he stressed.

Margelov said the northern and southern Sudan governments expressed readiness to reach agreement on the pending issues to prevent another civil war.

Southern parties warn against SPLM domination in case of secession

Al-Ahdath Khartoum, 23/01/11 - Leaders of some of southern Sudan political parties have warned against possible political domination by Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in the South after secession. Speaking to Radio Miraya, the Secretary General of the Democratic Salvation Front, David Biel Jal, said any retreat from implementation of the recommendations of the South-South Dialogue Conference in Juba could become a factor for political instability in southern Sudan.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the United Democratic Front, Peter Abdelrahman Sule, said he is optimistic that a broad-based interim government would be formed in the South in case of secession. Sule said he expects the SPLM and all political parties in the region to live up to their historical responsibility.

PopCon Monitor

Blue Nile governor leads calls for regional autonomy

Al-Ahdath Kurmuk, 23/01/11 – Governor Malik Aggar of Blue Nile State yesterday listed his name at his hometown of Bau as in favour of autonomy for the region within the context of a united Sudan. He also called for stronger security arrangements.

Most people in the locality reportedly called for more basic services such as health and education for the people.

The eighth day of Popular Consultations yesterday saw the exercise covered in 46 out of a total of 116 centres. Mamoun Hamid, the Deputy Speaker of the Blue Nile State Legislative Assembly reports a good turnout at the centres and the presence of local and international monitors. He

noted that some irregularities did occur in the process with reports of bribing.

Popular Consultations resume in Kurmuk

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 23/01/11 – The Parliamentary Committee on Popular Consultations in Blue Nile State has announced a resumption of the exercise that had been stalled for two days in Kurmuk locality.

“We have resumed the exercise in Kurmuk following a two-day delay caused by a minor incident,” said Siraj-el-din Hamid who heads the committee. He said that the exercise is however facing some funding challenges.

Other Highlights

Post-referendum future of Sudan's Darfur uncertain

AP 22/1/11 - Years before Sudan's south began casting votes for succession; the woes of Africa's largest country were defined by the ethnic bloodshed in the western Darfur region.

Now, international mediators and rights groups are calling for stronger efforts to settle the eight-year Darfur conflict, fearing that the expected breakaway of the south may push Khartoum's leaders to clamp down harder on dissent and place stricter limits on an international role in Darfur and other areas that remain under its direct control.

Human Rights Watch and other groups say violence was already increasing in the vast arid region in the lead-up to the southern referendum held earlier this month. At the same time, government restrictions are making it harder to obtain information on conditions there, they say.

On Friday there were reports of new clashes between the military and rebels in Darfur, leaving 21 dead.

The roots of the breakaway movement in the south are similar, but it's also fed by a religious split between the Muslim-dominated north and the heavily Christian south. American officials visited Darfur during the referendum to send a message that the region will not be forgotten.

U.S. Senator John Kerry reminded Sudanese officials that prospects for improved relations with the U.S. hinge on progress in Darfur. He also urged greater international efforts to reach a resolution in Darfur after more than two years of talks in Qatar have failed to reach a comprehensive peace deal.

Roger Middleton, a Sudan expert with the London-based Chatham House, said the impact of the referendum on Darfur is still far from clear.

"There are two possibilities. One of them is that the loss of southern Sudan and the loss of that big obstacle frees up Khartoum to really focus on winning a war — a political war, at least — in Darfur and that gives them the ability and time and the money to focus on that," he said.

The other possibility is that the Darfur rebels could take inspiration from the south "and perhaps

even potentially (see) an ally in the new southern independent state," said Middleton.

The "defection" of Minni Minnawi, who was appointed a presidential adviser after signing the peace deal, has raised alarms about the potential of proxy wars between north and south.

"We don't think that it is in the best interest of the new state of south Sudan to be a sanctuary" for rebel groups, the head of the U.N.-African Union peacekeeping mission, Ibrahim Gambari, told The Associated Press.

He has held recent talks with the U.N. mission in Sudan over tightening security cooperation along the 286-mile (460-kilometer) border between Darfur and breakaway south Sudan. U.S. officials said President Barack Obama also raised the issue with the southern Sudan president, Salva Kiir, before the referendum.

But despite a public promise from Kiir to deny Darfur rebels a home in southern Sudan, Minnawi is still in the south. He was quoted by Sudanese papers as saying there has been no progress in talks with Khartoum officials over his return.

Mediators say the Doha peace talks are not dead. Shuttle diplomacy between rebel groups and the government have already began and a small delegation from the main rebel faction, the Justice and Equality Movement, is currently in Qatar.

"Now with the referendum and maybe in July the separation, I think the attention of the international community will be focused ... to have a success story like with the north-south," Gambari said, adding that sanctions against rebel groups refusing to join the talks are also being considered.

There are fears, however, that Khartoum could move to limit access to Darfur and the rest of its territory to international groups, like those providing crucial humanitarian aid to the displaced...

Sudan rejects separate negotiation track with JEM

Sudan Tribune.com 22/1/11 - The Darfur Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) will not be allowed to seek its own accord with the Sudanese government in negotiations that are in isolation from those ongoing with other rebel groups, an official in the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) said today.

Adam Haj Yousuf, a leading NCP figure, was quoted by government sponsored Sudanese Media Center (SMC) as saying that Khartoum agreed on peace talks for the sake of the Darfuri people and to reach a resolution to the conflict. He said that negotiations were not intended to serve the interests of certain individuals or bodies.

He argued that JEM's demand for a separate negotiation track will only encourage further divisions within other rebel groups.

"What did JEM benefit from the framework agreement it signed with the Sudanese government?" Yousuf said adding that the military powerful movement is seeking the maximum benefit for itself...