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Media Monitoring Report

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Post-Referendum Monitor

UNSC condemns SPLA refusal for UNMIS support for civilian protection

Al-Raed Khartoum; New York, 23/03/11 – The United Nations Security Council informal meeting in Abyei came to an end the day before yesterday. No press release or procedural decisions were made at the end of the meeting.

The Council had deplored the recent clashes between the SPLA and General George Athor's forces and other renegade generals. The Council also criticised the SPLA for refusing UNMIS forces to carry out their protection of civilians' role during the clashes.

A source at the Sudan's UN delegation said that the United Nations Security Council urged the CPA partners to resolve the outstanding issues and, through the existing mechanisms, investigate the SPLM allegations of SAF support to southern Sudanese armed militia groups. The source further said that the United Nations Security Council lauded the recent meeting between President Al-Bashir and FVP Salva Kiir and the agreement for the resumption of talks between the two sides.

Sudan's representative to the UN read a statement before the Council meeting condemning the accusations by Pagan Amum of SAF support to southern militias. He pointed out that the accusations were fabricated and all members of the Council did not take these accusations into consideration.

GoSS representative to the talks, Pagan Amum, also briefed the session pointing out that the evidence they have furnished represents only 1% of proof in the hands of the GoSS that incriminates the NCP of fueling insecurity in the south. He told *Al-Sahafa* that the United Nations Security Council has called on the NCP to stop waging a proxy war against southern Sudan and to instead focus on dialogue to create good neighbourly relations.

Amum added that the UN Undersecretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alain Leroin, also briefed the session and confirmed that militia forces loyal to Lam Akol's SPLM-DC were behind the fighting in Malakal and blamed the forces of George Ator and Galwak Gai for the violence in Jonglei and Unity State. He said that the UN official also made mention of media reports from Khartoum of the formation of militia groups in Khartoum. *Al-Ahram Al-Youm* quotes Pagan Amum as having told the Security Council in his briefing that the GoSS expect a bigger role for the United Nations Security Council and UNMIS especially as the Mission winds up.

Pagan Amum also briefed the session on the recent events in Abyei and warned that the Abyei problem, if not resolved before 9th July 2011, would fuel future problems between the north and south. He said that the solution lies in "... annexing Abyei that was actually southern territory back to the south." The GoSS, he said, remains committed to the rights of the nomads in Abyei and all the other border areas.

Sudanese president issues veiled threat to SPLM

Sudantribune.com; local dailies Khartoum, 23/03/11 - The Sudanese president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir dismissed allegations made by the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) that he and his National Congress Party (NCP) are aiding the renegade militias in the South to destabilize the semi-autonomous government there.

SPLM's Pagan Amum had said earlier that the plan for aiding Southern militias was under the

direct supervision of president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir.

But the Sudanese leader on Tuesday denied the allegations saying that the NCP signed the CPA when it had the upper hand on the battlefield and is committed to implementing its terms for the sake of peace.

Speaking at the military academy in Omdurman, Bashir said that the government in the North will not start any war and subtly warned the SPLM against seeking a military confrontation.

"Whoever initiates war, will be the first to suffer," Bashir was quoted as saying adding that war will use up all the resources that should be devoted to development.

The Sudanese president described the South's claims as "lies" and urged the SPLM to stop repeating them. He accused unnamed officials in the SPLM of having external agendas.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) discussed the situation in Abyei on Monday after hearing from NCP and SPLM representatives.

Amum said he complained to the UNSC that the northern government in Khartoum is funding militias to destabilize Southern Sudan before it secedes. He disclosed that he asked council members to consider deploying a new peacekeeping force at the border between the two sides.

This request was previously made by SPLM chairman Salva Kiir but was met with lack of enthusiasm given the long borders and the rejection by the NCP.

The Sudanese ambassador to the UN Dafalla Al-Haj Osman refuted the SPLM's position saying that the south always blames the north for its problems.

"Whenever there are problems in the south, they blame the north for that," he said, insisting that the south's own opposing groups are responsible for the recent violence." the envoy said.

South Sudan says north bombs its territory

Reuters Khartoum, 23/03/11 – The SPLA has accused the north of bombing its territory, violating a 2005 peace deal ahead of the oil-producing region's impending independence.

Sudan's north-south conflict raged for all but a few years since 1955 claiming 2 million lives in Africa's longest running civil war. The south voted this year to secede and will become the world's newest nation on July 9.

SPLA spokesman Philip Aguer said the north dropped bombs on March 21 between a village and an SPLA base causing no casualties in Raja County in Western Bahr al-Ghazal, which borders the north's war-torn Darfur region.

Sudan's northern army and U.N. peacekeepers were not immediately able to comment on the report.

Last year the north bombed the south while chasing Darfur rebels they said were being supported by the semi-autonomous southern government. The south accused the north of arming rebels in its territory with clashes killing hundreds of people this year alone.

While both sides cannot afford a return to all-out war, arming proxy militias was a tactic used during the conflict, fought over religion, ethnicity, oil and ideology.

South Sudan cabinet approves 'Sovereignty Symbols' for emerging nation

Sudantribune.com Juba, 22/03/11 - South Sudan's cabinet has approved the proposed sovereignty symbols including the name of the would-be independent state, including its flag,

national anthem and its new currency, after long deliberations.

In an extraordinary Council of Ministers meeting on Tuesday chaired by the Vice President, Riek Machar Teny, the cabinet confirmed that the Republic of South Sudan, abbreviated as RoSS, would be the name of the country when it becomes independent in July. The name was initially approved last month during a meeting with participation of leaders from various political parties which included members of the executive.

The current flag of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), which was borrowed from the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) since 2005, was also approved by the cabinet to remain the flag for the independent country.

The cabinet also approved the proposed national anthem in its current form, without amendments after it received approval last week by the Southern Sudan 2011 Taskforce, a group set up to prepare the region for independence.

Minister of information and official spokesman of the government, Barnaba Marial Benjamin, said the cabinet would now refer the issues to the parliament for further deliberations and final endorsement.

The cabinet also approved the name of the new country's currency, which is to be called the South Sudan Pound. Discussions on its design were deferred for next meeting when a sample design can be made available to the cabinet for reference by the minister of Finance and Economic Planning, David Deng Athorbei.

Sudan's NCP says its "cyber-Jihadists" ready to "crush" online oppositionists

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 22/03/11 - The ruling National Congress Party (NCP) in north Sudan has stepped up rhetoric against internet-enabled dissent, warning youth groups calling for regime change online that the party's "cyber-Jihadists" are ready to "crush" them.

In a meeting with members of the NCP's "cyber-battalion" in Khartoum on Tuesday, the party's vice-president in Khartoum State Mandur Al-Mahdi warned opposition and youth groups engaged in organizing anti-government campaigns through social networking-websites such as Facebook and Twitter against the consequences of their action, saying that his party would "crush" whoever stands in its way.

The ruling party reacted violently to few attempts by youth and opposition groups to stage street protests in the recent past, using its security apparatus to detain and intimidate a large number of activists.

This week the NCP accused students loyal to rebel groups from Sudan's war-battered region of Darfur as well as certain political figures of being behind small anti-government protests on Monday – the second since youth groups staged anti-government protests on 30 January.

Al-Mahdi accused those whom he termed as "residues of communism" and members of his party's splinter group the Popular Congress Party of wooing support from "others" against their fellow countrymen.

Other Highlights

Sudan denies preparations to setup US military base in eastern town

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 22/03/11 - A Sudanese official has dismissed as “vicious rumors” media reports on preparations by the United States to setup a military base in Ageeg, a minor port town in eastern Sudan in an effort to thwart arms-smuggling operations across the country’s porous eastern borders.

The *Sudan Media Center (SMC)*, a website closely linked to the country’s intelligence circles, quoted Ali Saeed Hamid Sukar the mayor of Ageeg locality, a minor port town located to the south of Sudan’s eastern Red Sea state, as saying that his locality was “devoid of any preparations to setup an American military base.”

According to *SMC*, the report on preparations to build a US military base was contained in Wednesday’s edition of a London-based newspaper which reported that activists in eastern Sudan complained to local authorities against the construction of military bases in the area at a time when they were planning to turn the little port town of Ageed into a major sea port.

But according to Ageeg mayor, the construction work being observed in Ageeg was an attempt to “renovate” barracks of the Sudanese maritime forces in the area.

The Sudanese official said that such reports were “merely vicious rumors propagated by opposition groups in a desperate attempt to torpedo stability in the [Red Sea] state.”

The US along with Israel and Egypt are trying to prevent arms from reaching Gaza strip which is controlled by Hamas Islamic movement.

Rebel movements agree to coordinate positions for peace in Darfur

Sudantribune.com Doha, 22/03/11 - The rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Liberation and Equality Movement (LJM) agreed today in Doha to fully coordinate their positions in the Doha peace process for peace in Darfur and to prepare ways for their merger in the future.

The peace negotiations between the two movements and the Sudanese government are deadlocked due to the disagreement over the administrative status of Darfur.

UNAMID to establish humanitarian corridor in Jebel Marra

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 22/03/11 - Darfur peacekeepers and rebels from the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) led by Abdel Wahid Al-Nur agreed to establish a humanitarian corridor in Jebel Marra.

Delegations led by UNAMID Joint Special Representative (JSR) Ibrahim Gambari, and SLM Chairman Abdel-Wahid Al-Nur met during the earlier hours of Tuesday in Kampala after resolving last minute technical details related to the organization of the reunion.

The hybrid force said the meeting focused on the cooperation and coordination between the two parties to facilitate the protection of civilians in the restive region by the peacekeepers.

The parties also discussed channels of communications on the ground and the establishment of a humanitarian security corridor to eastern Jebel Marra.

UNAMID peacekeepers ambushed in Darfur

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 22/03/11 - Two soldiers from the African Union - United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) were seriously injured after being ambushed during a return trip from escort duties near the capital of West Darfur.

The mission said in a statement that the incident took place in Masteri, a village 45 km south of El-Geniena. The driver and a peacekeeper had their vehicles fired on by unidentified men.

The nationalities of the peacekeepers were not released.

UNAMID chief Ibrahim Gambari said he was outraged by the "cowardly attack" against the peacekeepers while the mission called on the Sudanese government to bring the perpetrators to justice stressing that the force is in the restive region "to help restore peace and stability".

"UNAMID remains undaunted and unwavering in its commitment to carrying out its mandate in the service of peace. UNAMID calls upon the Government of the Sudan to identify, capture and swiftly bring the perpetrators to justice."

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