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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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## **Europe calls for “credible” votes in south Sudan**

*AFP* 22/11/10 - The European Union on Monday expressed hopes of "peaceful and credible" votes in January's referendum on self-determination in South Sudan and a separate vote on the status of Abyei.

Foreign ministers from the 27-nation bloc held "a long discussion" on Sudan during talks in Brussels, said the bloc's foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton.

"We want to see the comprehensive peace agreement fully implemented," Ashton said, adding that the start of voter registration this month had been "an important milestone."

In a two-page document issued after the ministers' talks, the EU recalled it would send observers to the historic vote and was also monitoring the registration process, which is proving difficult in the northern part of the country.

Careful not to preempt voters' choice, European governments said they will kick in to support "peace and development across the whole of Sudan", whatever the outcome of the polls.

"The EU will strengthen its engagement in dialogue with all stakeholders to that end, irrespective of the outcome of the referenda," a statement said.

"It stands ready to continue to contribute actively ... to address the challenges of capacity building".

Ashton stressed however that the EU remained concerned too over the situation in Darfur and the kidnappings of aid workers, and renewed calls on the government of Sudan to cooperate with the International Criminal Court.

Because of the range of issues involved, and concerns over regional stability, the EU had set up a special internal task force on Sudan, Ashton said.

## **Half of the time passed, only 3% of southerners registered in the North**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 23/11/10 – The SSRC has confirmed the absence of any irregularities in the ongoing registration process in Khartoum and states but directed the acceptance of individual complaints.

SSRC Information Officer George Makuer said that the NCP's charge that the SPLM is rigging registration is intended to set the stage for rejection of the vote result.

Makuer admitted mistakes in appointment of registration staff below 40 years of age but attributed that to the tight time and the rush to accomplish the process, adding the NCP's complaint about this matter would be handled administratively. Makuer made the remarks after a meeting between SSRC Chairman Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil and Head of UN Panel for

monitoring Sudan's referendum Mr. Benjamin Mkapa who pledged to make contacts with the CPA parties to dislodge political obstacles that might affect the referendum.

Meanwhile, the NCP said the registration process of southerners in the North continues to be hampered, adding that half of the time has now passed and only 3% of the southerners in the North have been registered. NCP official Mohamed Mandour Al-Mahdi said there were credible obstacles preventing southerners from registering and part of this problem is the SSRC itself.

Abdul-Sakhi Abbas, NCP deputy political secretary, revealed that courts in Khartoum state began issuing warrants of arrest against SPLM elements suspected of obstructing registration by death threats, intimidating and assaulting civilians.

In another development, *Khartoum Monitor* 23/11/10 reports Ezekiel Gatkuoth, head of south Sudan mission to the US and UN as saying that it is the north that is holding southerners in the north hostage.

"On the contrary, it is the NCP that is making it difficult for southerners in the north to register," Gatkuoth told VOA. "In the SPLM leadership, we have made it clear that this referendum must be transparent, free and fair and everybody is encouraged to register because this is historic for southern Sudanese. Southern Sudanese in the north, what we are hearing is that registration is very slow because some of them are afraid of registering themselves because the NCP and the leadership of the NCP are even threatening that if they are not going to vote unity their lives will be in danger, they will not even be treated in the hospitals," he said.

*Al-Sahafa* 23/11/10 reports that it surveyed registration centres in ten northern states and it found out that the number of southern voters who have so far registered does not exceed 13,113 despite the passage of seven days, adding the turnout for registration is still low in the North.

"We understand only about 9,000 people have registered in the North. That is unbelievable," Spokesperson for the office organizing the vote in the South, Aleu Garang Aleu, said, according to *the Citizen* 23/11/10.

In Jonglei state, civilians and GoSS police clashed over registration in the Murle and Le Nuer tribal areas, according to *Al-Intibaha* 23/11/10. The Murle and Le Nuer tribes decided not to register until GoSS police elements are withdrawn from their areas.

### **No voter registration irregularities monitored – UN**

*Al-Wifaq* 23/11/10 – Head of UN Panel Benjamin Mkapa told a press conference yesterday in Khartoum that his Panel did not monitor registration irregularities at the registration centres they visited in north and south Sudan. He said what was monitored were cases of harassment against some voters at registration centres outside Sudan.

According to *Akhir Lahza* 23/11/10, Mr. Mkapa said turnout of southerners for registration is very low especially in the North due to lack of trust among the southerners and remoteness of registration centres from their residential areas.

*Khartoum Monitor* 23/11/10 reports Mkapa pledged to contact both the central government and GoSS to remove all political obstacles affecting the referendum process.

## **UN happy for peaceful voter registration in southern Sudan**

*Sudan Tribune.com* 22/11/10 - The Special Representative for the United Nations Secretary (SRSG) to Sudan, Haille Menkerios, says he has "very high regard" for the people of southern Sudan to peacefully resolve differences and conduct a smooth self-determination referendum.

Menkerios, who is touring south Sudan to see how voter registration is progressing, visited Jonglei state capital Bor early on Friday and proceed to Pibor.

The Special Representative said that he hoped the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) would be able to make peace with rebels in the area.

"I have a very high regard for the people of this [Jonglei] province who played a critical role in assisting reconciliation within the SPLA in trying to get those who were rebelling against the government to peacefully resolve their differences and come in support of the referendum," said Menkerios to reporters at Bor airstrip while heading to Pibor with Jonglei state governor Kuol Manyang.

Pibor county is where failed electoral candidate David Yauryau, launched an armed rebellion against the southern Sudan government after April's elections. His forces have attacked and killed several SPLA soldiers.

After visiting the area, Menkerios told Miraya FM that the situation is calm.

The UN Representative to Sudan also said he saw good stability in Western Equatoria state despite presence of Uganda's fugitive rebels, the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) that has been terrorizing the population there.

The UN is helping to deliver some registration materials by helicopter in Jonglei state due to flooding and a poor road networks.

"The referendum is a priority ... and we are doing everything we will be able to" to assist in transportation of materials, Menkerios said in Bor.

## **South Sudan turns out in force to register for historic vote**

*AFP* 22/11/10 - Long lines of southern Sudanese snaked down a red-earth forest track, waiting their turn to register for a historic vote that will decide whether their underdeveloped region becomes the world's newest independent nation.

"This is our moment to decide our future," said pregnant mother Mary Sorubu, waiting with child in hand to register at the simple tin-shack centre that serves the village of Rubeke.

"We know how important the process is, because, if this is done properly, the actual vote will be recognised around the world."

Many in the remote farmland and lush forests close to the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) held up ink stained fingers as proof they had already registered for the vote scheduled for January 9.

All along the rough and rutted mud track towards the DRC border, small but busy registration centres have been set up in thatch huts, school rooms or beneath shady mango trees.

"The people are eager to be taking part," said Ndole Ndoromo, head of the referendum bureau for Central Equatoria state's Yei County, where Rubeke is situated. "The process has been peaceful and we are pleased with the way it is progressing."

Many centres have observers monitoring the process, as well as village elders charged with verifying the eligibility to vote of those wishing to register.

"I am here to make sure only those who are allowed to vote actually register," said one elder, David Tombe, dressed in the bright yellow bib of a referendum official.

"Sometimes there are the excitable youth who want to take part but who are not yet 18, or those who may not really be southerners. So we can help check to ask who their family are and from where they have come."

Registration in the south has been "very impressive", especially in urban areas, referendum officials say.

"There has been a very good reaction and the process has gone peacefully with no reports of any violence," said Aleu Garang Aleu, a spokesman for the Southern Sudanese Referendum Bureau, which is running the vote in the south.

"We are gathering updates of the numbers who have registered all the time and we estimate from the samples received that at least 1.3 million people have registered across the 10 states of the south."

In Central Equatoria, large numbers have been registering, even in remote rural areas. "Some centres have run out already of the registration books they were issued with, because the demand has been so high," said Ndoromo.

"As soon as we realised this was happening, we called for more books to be brought, so the delay for those centres that ran out should not be long," he added.

As the clock ticks down to polling day, religious leaders have called for calm.

"Whether the outcome is unity or secession, Sudan will never be the same again because the people have exercised their free and democratic choice," said the Catholic Bishop of Yei, Erkolano Lodu Tombe, speaking at a giant open-air mass in the town on Sunday.

"Manipulation of the referendum is unethical and immoral... If the referendum proves to be flawed or manipulated, this is likely to lead to uncertainty, instability and even violence," he said.

In north Sudan, voter registration at the 165 centres set up for displaced southerners has been far lower, officials say.

On Sunday, the Khartoum state government and referendum commission agreed to form a "joint committee" to try to improve the numbers registering.

Across Sudan and among the Diaspora abroad, around five million southerners are estimated to be eligible to vote.

There are 2,794 voter registration centres inside Sudan, 2,629 of them in the south. They will remain open until December 1.

Southern and northern leaders have accused each other of intimidating voters in the run-up to the referendum.

### **S. Sudanese get death threats over vote in Uganda**

*Reuters* 23/11/10 - South Sudanese living in Uganda have received death threats and warnings not to register for a vote on the independence of their region, a development that could undermine the referendum, officials said on Tuesday.

Staff from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) running the registration centres have also received menacing calls and letters, disrupting the preparations for January's referendum, said officials.

The Khartoum-based commission organising the plebiscite said it was looking into reports the threats were being made by south Sudanese campaigners trying to limit voting outside the south because they feared the polling there might be rigged.

"There have been death threats by telephone, in letters, banging on doors in the middle of the night," a diplomatic source told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The source said the threats were targeting potential voters and staff working for the IOM. The Geneva-based migration organisation declined to comment.

People from the oil-producing south are just 47 days away from the referendum on whether they should secede or stay part of Sudan - a vote promised in the 2005 peace deal that ended decades of north-south civil war.

Emotions are running high ahead of the vote, due on Jan. 9 that could split Africa's largest country in two. Most south Sudanese are expected to choose independence, but remain deeply suspicious of the former foes in the north...

Only southerners can vote but registration centres have been set up for an estimated 500,000 eligible voters living in the north and another half million southern people based in Uganda, the United States and six other countries.

"We have heard these allegations that reckless individuals are trying to scare people from voting in Uganda ... The reports are definitely that it is southern Sudanese. They think maybe the process is going to be rigged so they are going out of their way to scare people from registering," said referendum commission member Sabit Alley.

Alley said commission staff were visiting Uganda to check the reports and the progress of the registration. It was too early to say how the Ugandan operation was going, but reports of the threats may have cut registration in rural areas, he added.

U.N. referendum monitors on Monday said they had received "disturbing reports of intimidation and threats" against IOM staff and potential voters.

"We urge the parties (north and south) to help ensure that everyone who wants to register can do so without fear," said former Tanzanian president Benjamin Mkapa heading the panel.

Senior SPLM official Anne Itto on Tuesday told journalists her party had not been involved in any intimidation of voters, without referring specifically to Uganda.

### **Addis Summit begins, CPA parties stick to their positions on Abyei**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 23/11/10 – IGAD summit meeting will begin today in Addis Ababa to discuss Sudan CPA parties' differences over implementation of the agreement.

Both President Al-Bashir and his FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit arrived in Addis Ababa and they will address the summit on their parties' visions on the CPA implementation.

Reportedly, both parties have stuck to their positions on Abyei during the ministerial meeting yesterday.

*Sudan Tribune.com* 22/11/10 reported that President Omer Al-Bashir upon arrival at the Addis Ababa Bole International Airport, was welcomed by state water and energy Minister, Alemayehu Tegenu and other high ranking government officials.

The 16th extraordinary summit of Head of states of IGAD member states will commence on Tuesday, mainly to discuss Southern Sudan referendum on self-determination and on the situations of Somalia.

On Monday, The 38th extraordinary IGAD ministerial level preparatory meeting was held putting issues of Sudan and Somalia top on Agenda. The ministers discussed the progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the government of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and the former rebel SPLM/A to end one of Africa's worst civil wars in January 2005.

Sudan's state minister for foreign affairs Kamal Hassan told the ministerial meeting that Sudanese government is committed to respect the outcome of the referendum if it is conducted in a free and fair, transparent manner and reflect the genuine desire of citizens for the southern Sudanese...

*DPA* 23/11/10 (Deutsche Presse-Agentur) reports that a regional summit on Sudan ahead of a crucial independence vote for the south was set to get underway in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa Tuesday, with wanted Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir in attendance.

Heads of state from regional grouping, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), are expected to push al-Bashir and Southern Sudan leader Salva Kiir to resolve



outstanding issues before the referendum.

"The special summit has been organized for the IGAD community to take stock of the progress of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and encourage the parties to ensure full implementation of the remaining few but weighty issues," said the office of Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki, who is the chair of the IGAD sub-committee on Sudan.

The summit is expected to focus primarily on resolving a dispute over the oil-rich Abyei region, which sits on the border between north and south.

With the referendum, in which the south is almost certain to vote for independence, fast approaching, analysts say sorting out long-standing issues such as Abyei is crucial to avoid a return to conflict.

The heads of state are also expected to discuss Somalia, where Islamist insurgents are pushing to oust the weak Western-backed government.

The leaders of Djibouti, Uganda and Ethiopia are also due to take part in the summit.

### **Abyei receives first batch of IDPs returning from north Sudan**

*Sudan Tribune.com* 22/11/10 - Hundreds of Abyei population on Wednesday covered a distance of one hour walk to receive a first group of 1200 internally displaced persons returning home from the northern states.

Many of the returnees visibly looked tired after spending three days on trucks driving through corridors of the highly contested north- south borders spoke of a home land.

Awien Acuil Mading, an elderly woman told Sudan Tribune at the reception point in Abyei town that she is happy for being among the first batch to return home safe.

"I am happy that we have finally come back home, home is home no matter how bad it looks to other people. My heart has always been here even if we have nothing to eat," said Awien.

Acuil Akol Miyen, secretary for finance in administration of Abyei, told Sudan Tribune that these returnees are the first group of IDPs returning voluntarily from the northern Sudan.

"We have a budget for 8080 people approved by the government of south Sudan to help us to facilitate the transportation of those who have expressed willingness to be returned home. So, we have received 1200 people today. This is the first and other groups will come," said Acuil...

The delay in Abyei referendum is raising fears that indefinite delay may become a cause for future conflict.

Dhieu Mathok Diing Wol, a senior member of the SPLM told Sudan Tribune on Thursday from the regional capital of Juba that the NCP considers Abyei as nothing but wealth, hence clanged on the region for economic reason.

### **NCP refuses to reincorporate its JIU's back into SAF**

*Sudan Tribune.com* 22/11/10 - The ruling political party in the North, the National Congress



Party (NCP), has refused to reincorporate its component of the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs), which have been deployed in the South since 2005 back into the northern army, the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), should the South vote for secession.

The two partners to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the NCP and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) have been negotiating on the post-referendum arrangements. One of the issues to be tackled is security including the future of the JIUs; a force created by the peace deal to serve as the nucleus for a future national army should the South vote for unity of the country...

Currently, SAF has an estimated force of 12,000 in the South in its JIUs component per the security protocol agreement in the CPA. Most of the force comprises of southerners who were either originally from SAF or from the Other Armed Groups (OAGs) but incorporated into SAF after 2005 peace deal.

However in a briefing to the Southern Sudan Referendum Taskforce meeting chaired by the Vice President, Dr. Riek Machar Teny, the South Sudan ministers in the negotiating team said it appeared that the NCP had been reluctant to accept back into the northern army its JIUs force in the South should the country split.

The NCP also warned against northerners residing in the South who are eligible to register and vote in the referendum law, saying they would lose their northern citizenship if they voted. The referendum law allows northerners who have been living in the South since before 1956, or live in the north but trace their ancestry back to the South to vote inside Southern Sudan.

As the registration continues till December 1, before the vote on January 9, both parties, NCP and SPLM have traded accusations. The NCP accuses the SPLM of discouraging southerners in the North not to register and the SPLM accuses the NCP of intimidating southerners in the North to go to centers and register against their free will.

## Other Highlights

### **Darfur's Minnawi distances himself from security arrangements accord**

*Sudan Tribune.com* 22/11/10 - The head of Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) faction Minni Arcua Minnawi announced today his rejection of the security arrangements accord signed with Khartoum last month and accusing the government of seeking to disarm his forces in order to kill the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) signed in Abuja four years ago.

Minnawi told the independent Al-Sahafa daily by phone from Juba that the Sudanese government has only implemented 15% of the DPA with no progress on power and wealth sharing, Darfur-Darfur dialogue and security arrangements. He added that all these items had to be implemented simultaneously.

He accused the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) headed by President Omer Al-Bashir of refusing to abide by the terms of the DPA and further stressed that Khartoum is abandoning the peace agreement in favor of its new Darfur strategy.

There was no explanation for why SLM figures signed the security arrangements despite Minnawi's disapproval.

Minnawi's announcement drew strong rebuke from Khartoum.

The pro-government Sudanese Media Center (SMC) quoted the commissioner for security arrangements at the executive transitional authority of Darfur Lieutenant General Mohamed Mustafa Al-Dabi as saying that Minnawi has "betrayed" the DPA and is wasting time.

Al-Dabi said that the government is "very serious" about the DPA as evident by his presence in Darfur awaiting Minnawi and his troops to begin implementing the security arrangements.

"If the government wants to blow up the Abuja [Agreement] through the new Darfur strategy or the Doha negotiations as Minni Arcua says then what keeps me in Darfur to enforce the security arrangements?" he asked.

Currently the government is negotiating with the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM), an assortment of small dissenting factions cobbled together under Libyan and US auspices and led by Al-Tigani Al-Sissi. The two sides signed a ceasefire agreement last March and are now working on sealing a comprehensive peace accord.

However observers say that LJM has little presence on the ground and peace can only be achieved by bringing in the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) headed by Abdel-Wahid Al-Nur and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) led by Khalil Ibrahim. Both movements remain outside the peace talks in Qatar.

### **SLM's Al-Nur arrives in Kenya for consultations on peace in Darfur**

*Sudan Tribune.com* 22/11/10 - Speaking from Nairobi, the leader of the rebel Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) told Sudan Tribune that he came to Nairobi because he needs to conduct wide consultations with many members from his group who cannot take part in the SLM leadership meeting.

"The discussions I have to hold here and in another African capital aim mainly to prepare Paris meeting," Nur said. "One can understand easily that all the leading members of the Movement cannot be there," he stressed.

The rebel leader who is based in Paris said he will return very soon to the French capital to achieve the ongoing preparations for a gathering that will debate on ways to reach a peaceful settlement to the seven year conflict in Darfur.

Abdel Wahid is the founder of the first armed movement, SLM, which rebelled in February 2003. He refused to engage peace talks with the Sudanese government since the failure of Abuja peace talks in May 2006.

The rebel leader says he wants the government to provide security to the civilians in the troubled region by disarming the janjaweed militias and implementing a ceasefire agreement signed in April 2004. He also asks the return of IDPs to their homeland.

Nur, who used to meet regularly with the Joint Chief Mediators, met last July with the Qatari state minister for foreign affairs and pledged to consider the participation of his group in the

peace process.

He also holds regular discussions on the need to achieve peace in Darfur with the French officials who recently accepted the organization in Paris of a meeting for the SLM leading figures.

Abdel Wahid said he is "very grateful for the French government's" support to his efforts for peace in Darfur and allowing him to gather his group in Paris.

"I also call on all those who want to see a genuine and lasting peace in Darfur to support our efforts in this regard," he said. "We are peace lovers and we want a sustainable peace achieving the demands of Darfur people for security and development," he stressed.

He further dismissed reports that his trip to Kenya aims only to conclude new alliance with other rebel groups and Minni Minnawi in order to wage war against Khartoum with the support of southern Sudan ruling party, the SPLM.

"Military solution will not end the conflict," he said.

He continued to say that all his discussions with the head of southern Sudan president and the SPLM leader were only about peace in Darfur.

Meanwhile, *Sudan Vision* 23/11/10 reports that head of the Sudan Liberation Movement, Abdel Wahid Mohammed Noor, has arrived in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi Monday coming from the French capital of Paris for meeting a number of SPLM leaders in Juba.

High-level government sources told *SMC* that Abdel Wahid would leave for Juba tomorrow Tuesday for meeting a number of SPLM leaders who had convinced him of the importance of visiting Juba for consultations on the required coordination for the next phase with his counterparts in the various armed movements.

The sources expected the SPLM to arrange meetings that will include Minni Minnawi, Abdul Wahid Mohammed Noor, Ahmed Abdel Shafia and Abou El Kasim Imam within a scheme that aims at destabilizing security and stability in Darfur.

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