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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

## Referendum Watch

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

# Highlights

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## **GoNU parties to push for extension of registration**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 24/11/10 – NCP Political Secretary in Khartoum state Dr. Nazar Khalid Mahgoub has revealed an agreement among the Government of National Unity's political parties to submit a memorandum to the SSRC asking for extension of the voter registration period to enable southern Sudanese to exercise their full rights. Mahgoub has criticized the SSRC's performance, citing the registration irregularities which, he said, were also confirmed by the United Nations and the international community.

## **A million citizens registered in the South – SSRC**

*The Citizen* 24/11/10 – SSRC Deputy Chairman Chan Riek has revealed that 34% of the overall registration centres have witnessed the registration of a million southern citizens yesterday, adding that some of the centres had not sent their preliminary registration rates due to difficulty of communication. He said the registration process is proceeding well in the region of unity state, Jonglei and part of Warrap state which was affected by floods. He described security conditions as stable and disclosed that the parties monitoring the referendum in the South included observers from the European Union, Carter Centre, parties and local civil society organizations.

## **SPLM rejects NCP accusation on mobilizing southerners not to register in the North**

*Khartoum Monitor* 24/11/10 – In a press conference held yesterday in Juba, SPLM Deputy SG and Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Dr. Ann Itto has rejected the accusation made by the NCP on the process of voter registration in the North. She said the complaint which was filed by the NCP accusing her party of mobilizing the southerners in the North not to register was not true, adding the people of the South are not willing to register not because of what the NCP is saying but because the NCP would rig the outcome of referendum in the North.

## **“Crisis” between SSRC and UN over registration advertisements**

*Al-Watan* 24/11/10 – The newspaper has learned that a crisis emerged between the SSRC and the UN over registration advertisements. Reportedly, the Commission was surprised that campaigns for registration for referendum were advertised by some official media without its knowledge, adding that budget for registration-related advertisements should be with it (SSRC).

The SSRC had planned an equal distribution of registration ads to the media.

## **IGAD summit in Addis discuss CPA parties' pending issues**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 24/11/10 –IGAD leaders wrapped up their extraordinary summit meeting yesterday in Addis Ababa and issued a statement praising the prevailing spirit of cooperation between the two CPA parties, their resolve to address remaining issues and to avoid a renewed war.

“Whether the result of the upcoming referendum is unity or secession war will not be our choice

and we will work with the SPLM in case of secession to build strong and distinguished relations with the South in the security, economic, political and social areas,” President Al-Bashir told the African leaders. He also declared Sudan Government’s commitment to the PCA ruling on Abyei but pointed out that his Government is also equally committed to ensure that all residents of the territory have the right to vote. According to state Minister for Foreign Affairs Kamal Hassan Ali, Al-Bashir indicated that any solution that excludes some residents in Abyei from voting would lead to series consequences. Ali described FVP Kiir’s speech to the summit as balanced.

Ali said the NCP and SPLM delegations to summit submitted several proposals for resolving the problem over Abyei.

On the border demarcation, President Al-Bashir said the committee submitted its vision to the Presidency, adding that 80% of the border issue had been agreed upon.

*Ajras Al-Hurriya* 24/11/10 reports that FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit, in his speech to the summit, stressed the need for the upcoming referendum to take place on time, warning that delay might lead to violence. Kiir complained of difficulties created by the national government, saying it has failed to honour its financial pledge to the SSRC.

*AFP* 23/11/10 reported that East African leaders meeting Tuesday in the Ethiopian capital called on north and south Sudan to resolve their differences ahead of January's referendum on autonomy for the south.

The call came after a face to face meeting between Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir and south Sudan leader Salva Kiir ahead of the main summit plenary, designed to ease tensions ahead of the referendum.

That meeting was mediated by host Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, and the two men were expected to meet again Wednesday in Khartoum, with former South African president Thabo Mbeki as mediator, a diplomat said.

"We didn't get into the details of the discussions on Abyei," Meles told journalists after the meeting.

"What we tried to create is the right environment for the negotiations on Abyei to make progress," he said, referring to the disputed oil-rich region whose future will be decided in January.

The six member states of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) wrapped up their one-day summit by expressing concern over unresolved issues that could jeopardise full implementation of the 2005 peace agreement, brokered by IGAD.

IGAD "expresses concern over pending issues that continue to threaten the full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and urges the parties to resolve the remaining differences," a closing statement said.

On Monday Ethiopian Foreign Minister Hailemariam Desalegn told journalists that the unresolved issues are: "Abyei, which is under negotiation ... the (border) demarcation process

and citizenship".

The Ethiopian minister added that some of the issues need to be solved prior to the referendums while others could wait until later.

Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki and Djibouti President Ismail Omar Guelleh also attended the summit, which was held behind closed doors.

The only IGAD head of state who was absent was Somali President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed.

The regional body stated its concerns over the recent political developments in Somalia "that continue to be characterized by internal wrangles and lack of cohesion among the leadership of the Transitional Federal Institutions"...

*Sudan Tribune.com* 23/11/10 reported that the communiqué issued by the summit stated that the summit was "particularly encouraged" by the commitment shown by the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) in north Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in the south to ensure that two "viable" states enjoying "soft borders" without "disruption to the livelihoods of the people" will exist should south Sudan opt for secession...

Sudan President Omer Al-Bashir used his address to the summit to say that unnamed parties were obstructing registration of southern voters by creating hurdles to prevent southern citizens from accessing voter-registration centers.

"Since the beginning of the registration process, citizens in many areas started to complain about their inability to register as a result of obstacles made by some quarters which led to preventing them from accessing registration centers," he declared.

He further warned that such practices would detract from the credibility of the process. Bashir blamed the south for derailing the process of demarcating north-south borders, saying that representatives of southern states had put obstacles in front of the border-demarcation committee. "Undecided borders could cause conflicts between nations," Bashir said.

The President claimed that the Sudanese Armed Forces had re-deployed to the south of the border strip as stipulated in the CPA while the SPLA only implemented 24% of the southward re-deployment.

He reiterated the government's commitment to the arbitration ruling on Abyei. However, he added that the government was "equally committed" to giving the right to vote to all residents of Abyei without confining that right to a specific group.

For his part, south Sudan's leader Salva Kiir warned in his speech to the summit that any delay to the referendum could send Sudan back to war.

He said that the registration is going "smoothly and peacefully" and that the turnout is "encouraging particularly throughout Southern Sudan."

The southern leader warned any delay to the referendum "risks a return to instability and

violence”, adding that all efforts must be devoted to ensure “a timely conduct of the referendum.”

"As far as funding is concerned, it is important to admit that there are still difficulties particularly with the National Government in Khartoum, which has deliberately failed to fulfill its obligation to contribute money to the SSRC," he said.

He went on to explain that the government in the north had so far only released “100 million SDG” (around \$42 million) out of “the 150 million SDG it had pledged.” Even foreign donors, said Kiir, are “struggling” to make good on their pledges.

Kiir said that some NCP senior members had been raising tempers in the public by issuing statements that are likely to instigate violence.

“I appeal to this august gathering to discourage the Sudanese parties from provocative behavior” he added.

"The records are documented that IGAD and the international community should seriously note because should violence erupt there are people to be held responsible” he said.

Kiir sought to assure the summit audience that south Sudan is committed to ensuring freedom of expression and campaigns for both choices of unity or secession ahead of the vote.

"This is our goal and I wish to reiterate to you that we will make certain that all opinions and campaigns for unity or separation are given equal opportunity to be heard” he said.

He also said that they were “deeply concerned” by the lack of progress on talks with north Sudan over Abyei, border-demarcation and post-referendum arrangements.

Kiir made a rare criticism against the government’s new strategy for Darfur, predicting its failure unless all rebel factions are included in the peace process.

"No new strategy can work for Darfur until all parties are brought to the negotiating table to agree for peaceful settlement," he said.

### **Ethiopia PM warns against "ghastly" Sudan war**

**Reuters** 23/11/10 - Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi warned of "ghastly" consequences for Africa if Sudan returns to war after a crucial referendum on southern independence in January.

"Like all doomsday scenarios (a return to war) is too ghastly to contemplate," Meles, who hosts crunch Sudan talks in Addis Ababa on Tuesday, told Reuters in an interview.

"That is why we have to use everything in our capacity to stop it from happening because the alternative is massively destructive not only for Sudan or the Horn of Africa, but the continent as whole." Meles said all-out war was "possible but not inevitable".

"There isn't as much trust between the two parties in the Sudan as there was between ourselves and the Eritrean movement," he said. "It is likely to be more complex and more difficult."

Meles -- viewed as an honest broker by both sides -- said neighbouring Ethiopia hoped to stay close to the north and the south, even if a new country were created.

"We have excellent relations with both sides now and there is no reason why we can't maintain these relationships in the future so long, of course, as the doomsday scenario is prevented," Meles said.

### **Coming Presidency meeting to discuss Abyei in presence of Mbeki**

*Al-Sudani* 24/11/10 –Sudan Ambassador to Ethiopia Mohamed Yousuf has revealed that the coming Presidency meeting would discuss issues of Abyei and citizenship in presence of head of AUHIP Thabo Mbeki. He said the Presidency meeting would be held by the end of this week.

### **North-south brinkmanship could send Sudan back to war - ICG**

*AFP* 23/11/10 - North and south Sudan risk renewed conflict if they wait just before January's referendum to reach a political accord, a report said on Tuesday.

"Given the brinkmanship that has long characterised north-south politics, it is conceivable the parties will continue to circle fruitlessly before attempting to strike a grand bargain at the eleventh hour," International Crisis Group said.

"Neglecting the groundwork for positive post-referendum relations would be short-sighted and very possibly a recipe for renewed conflict," added the think-tank's acting Africa director Ernst Jan Hogendoorn.

"Khartoum may be increasingly resigned to the reality of partition, but it could still attempt to extort major concessions from the south in exchange for endorsement of the referendum," the ICG report said.

The Brussels-based research group admitted that it was not possible to resolve all the differences between the two parties ahead of the vote, now less than seven weeks away.

"The further we can get towards a sort of win-win arrangement now the better. That does not mean that all the issues would be fully resolved, both sides know it is not possible before January," the report's author Zach Vertin told AFP.

The African Union announced last week that the parties had agreed to settle outstanding issues such as border demarcation and trade barriers, but the accord has not been officially signed.

Logistical problems have threatened to seriously delay the referendum, which has prompted sharp exchanges between the two sides, although concerns have eased since voter registration began last week.

"Delay is increasingly unlikely but still conceivable," the ICG report said.

## **“We are capable of fighting a war if imposed on us” – NCP official**

*Al-Wifaq* 24/11/10 – Presidential Adviser for security affairs Gen. Salah Abdullah Gosh who is also a senior NCP leader has warned that his party could fight a war if it is imposed. Gosh made the remarks at a press conference held yesterday at Khartoum Airport where he went to receive returning NCP functionary, Zuhair Hamid Suleiman, who was freed by the SPLM.

Suleiman told the press conference that his detention by the SPLM was intended as a message to the NCP youths not to campaign for unity.

*Sudan Tribune.com* 23/11/10 – reported that a senior official from the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) returned to the Sudanese capital on Tuesday after allegedly being held by the authorities of South Sudan since last Saturday, according to Sudan’s official news agency (SUNA).

The deputy head of the NCP’s Youth sector Zuhair Hamid Suleiman was quoted by SUNA as saying that his delegation discovered blatant violations that marred the voter registration process in the South particularly in polling stations where there is low turnout.

Suleiman was reportedly taken into custody when he was heading from Juba to Bor as part of the NCP’s campaign for unity in the South. He said that he suffered bruises that were documented by a physician in Juba hospital and that the medical report was provided to the European Union (EU) observer mission for referendum.

The Sudanese presidential adviser for security affairs Salah Gosh who met Suleiman at the airport called on the SPLM to stop its policy of suppressing freedoms and allow Southerners to express their views without fear.

Gosh was quoted by SUNA as saying that the incident reveal that SPLM’s slogans of democratic transformation are false.

## **Many jobs will be vacant in the North after secession - Trade Unions chief**

*Al-Sahafa* 24/11/10 – Chairman of Sudan’s Federation of Trade Unions Ibrahim Ghandour who is also a senior NCP leader has called on the GoSS to attract various investments to create jobs for the southern Sudanese who will lose their jobs in the North should secession take place.

He said that if secession takes about 30% of the jobs would fell vacant particularly those created as part of the CPA implementation.

## **Other Highlights**

### **SAF rejects presence of Darfur rebel leaders in the South**

*Al-Wifaq* 24/11/10 – SAF announced its categorical rejection of harbouring by the SPLM of Darfur rebel leaders in the South, considering it an impediment to the peace process.

SAF spokesperson Lt. Col. Al-Sawarmi Khalid considered the presence of Darfur rebel leaders in the South an hostile act, adding that the matter would be referred to the Joint Defence Board

(JDB).

*Al-Ahram Al-Youm* 24/11/10 reports that SLM leader Abdul Wahid Al-Nur arrived yesterday in Juba and discussed with Darfur rebel leaders, including Minni Minnawi, the merger of their forces and their relocation to 1/1/56 border in preparation for military confrontation with Khartoum government.

Meanwhile, *Sudan Tribune.com* 23/11/10 - The ruling National Congress Party (NCP) reiterated on Tuesday its accusations to the southern Sudan ruling SPLM of supporting Darfur rebel groups and issued a stern warning saying Juba will bear the responsibility of this declaration of war...

Mohamed Mandour Al-Mahdi went to say they consider harboring Darfur rebels in Juba "a declaration of war". He demanded the SPLM to remove urgently the rebel groups outside southern Sudan and to stop all the political and logistical support it provides to these movements.

"If the SPLM refuses to respond to these demands then it must bear responsibility for the consequences," he warned.

Mandour also mentioned the heavy presence of armed vehicles belonging to JEM rebels in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State and the markets of its capital Aweil...

### **Residents in Kadugli criticize UNMIS refusal to assist victim of an accident**

*Al-Sahafa* 24/11/10 – wide sections of local community in Kadugli have reportedly criticized the refusal of UNMIS-Kadugli to assist Ms Eliza George who sustained serious injuries when an UNMIS vehicle overturned on Kadugli-Shaer road.

Dr. Ahmed Zakaria who is treating Elisa said UNMIS Kadugli transported the driver of the vehicle but refused to transport Ms Elisa to Khartoum for treatment despite her critical condition. Zakaria said Elisa's condition is critical and UNMIS would be held responsible for the deterioration of her health.

Many human rights activists in Kadugli have criticized the Mission, with some calling for its expulsion, saying it is not neutral in its monitoring of the CPA breaches.

A high-level official who spoke on condition of anonymity said UNMIS-Kadugli is keeping mum on the NCP's military buildup in the area.

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### ***United Nations Mission in Sudan - Public Information Office***

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