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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

African leaders expected to reaffirm Bashir's immunity from prosecution

Sudan Tribune website 24/7/10 - The leaders of African states meeting at the African Union (AU) summit taking place in Uganda are expected to adopt a draft resolution affirming last year's decision on non-cooperation with the International Criminal Court.

In Kampala, a draft text was being circulated advising AU members not to cooperate with the ICC in apprehending Bashir and included tough words for prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo.

"[The AU] reiterates its decision that AU member states shall not cooperate with the ICC in the arrest and surrender of President Bashir," the draft resolution says according to Reuters.

"[The AU] expresses concern over the conduct of the ICC prosecutor who has been making unacceptable statements on the case of President Bashir, of the Sudan and on other situations in Africa," the draft said.

Sudanese officials in Kampala, backed by the AU Secretariat, have been lobbying the other nations to take a stance against the ICC on the grounds that it is a European driven court, targeting African leaders only and turning a blind eye to atrocities elsewhere.

Yesterday, AU Commissioner Jean Ping, a long-time fierce critic of the court, slammed the ICC and said that its prosecutor "does not care" if his actions jeopardize peace in Sudan and reiterated assertions that the Hague tribunal is "bullying" Africa.

Some African nations are met with the dilemma of seeking to honour their international obligations and pressure from rich countries such as Libya which has been the driving force behind last year's resolution.

The Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, who said that the ICC practices "international terrorism", has pledged to put \$90 billion at the disposal of Africa towards the creation of his "United States of Africa" initiative.

The Senegalese president Abdoulaye Wade, who revealed Gaddafi's offer, has been of the first African leaders to declare that Bashir will not be safe on Senegalese territory, even before the warrant was issued last year.

In a change of heart later, Wade along with Libyan government officials, has been lobbying other countries to withdraw from the ICC and also accused the court of targeting Africans. The Senegalese president was quoted by Sudan state media during the CENSAD summit held this week in N'djamena as saying that charges against Bashir should be scrapped altogether.

Wade was further cited as saying that African leaders have special immunity and that they represent millions of their own people including the Sudanese president.

It remains to be seen whether ICC member countries will follow Chad's steps in line with the AU position. So far Djibouti, Comoros Island and Ghana have declared that they are willing to receive Bashir despite the arrest warrant.

Meanwhile, ***Sudan Tribune website*** 23/7/10 reported that AU Commission Jean Ping launched an unprecedented attack on the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) saying he is insensitive to the impact of his case against the Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir on the peace process.

"We have to find a way for these entities to work together and not go back to war," Jean Ping told reporters in the Ugandan capital as quoted by Agence France Press (AFP).

"This is what we are doing but [Luis Moreno] Ocampo doesn't care. He just wants to catch Bashir. Let him go and catch him" he added.

"We are not against the ICC. There are 30 African countries who are part of the ICC... But we need to examine their manner of operating. There are double standards," he added.

"There seems to be some bullying against Africa" the AU official said. Ping also responded to allegations that the Pan-African body is condoning impunity.

"Now why do you not applaud us when we are trying to work with former South African president Thabo Mbeki in Sudan?" Ping asked. "Is it because people in South Africa were coming from Europe?"

"The ICC has just said President Bashir committed genocide in Darfur. On which basis, I don't know. I simply want to tell you that while the ICC was accusing President Bashir of genocide, they were [being told] to release Thomas Lubanga," Ping said.

In a related development, the Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir returned home from Chad after attending the summit of the Community of Sahel-Saharan states (CENSAD), a trip hailed by Khartoum as victory against the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Chad which is a full member of the ICC has refused to act on the court's request to apprehend Bashir saying it has no obligation to do so recalling the African Union resolution last year instructing its members not to cooperate with The Hague-based court on Bashir's case.

"This summit... shows African solidarity and it also exposes the ICC and its agenda and it also exposes the agenda of some European countries and the United States in particular," presidential adviser Ghazi Salah Al-Deen said according to AFP.

"We praise our relations with Chad very much. We have made very clear in previous occasions that we cannot see an end to the problem in Darfur without fixing the

relationship with Chad.

"It is a victory in the profound sense of the word [and] we are happy," he added.

In a related development, **Reuters** 25/7/10 reports that Sudan President Omar al-Bashir will not attend an African Union summit in Uganda, presidential sources said today, despite a resolution urging African states not to arrest the leader wanted for genocide.

In a further snub, Khartoum will not even send a minister from Khartoum to the summit, official sources said.

The move deepens a rift between the neighbours after President Yoweri Museveni did not attend Bashir's swearing-in after disputed elections, but visited Juba for the inauguration of South Sudan President Salva Kiir, Bashir's deputy.

"This is not about the president being afraid of being arrested," one presidential source told *Reuters*. "We could send the vice president instead but we are not sending him or any minister," the source said.

Khartoum security committee discusses religious extremism, foreign presence

Al-Sahafa 25/7/10 – Khartoum State Security Committee, at meeting yesterday chaired by Governor of Khartoum state Abdul Rahman Al-Khidir, debated a range of issues and concerns including the phenomena of presence of foreigners in the country as well as religious extremism and their impact on the state's security. Reportedly, the meeting took a number of decisions to address these concerns including the unlawful use of firearms.

Sudan summons UNICEF representative, rejects agreement with JEM

Local dailies 25/7/10 – The Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday summoned UNICEF Acting Resident Representative to convey to him Sudan's protest to and categorical rejection of the agreement it signed with JEM on child soldiers. The Ministry demanded a written explanation as to why such step was taken.

According to **Sudan Tribune website** 24/7/10, the agreement signed this week allows the UN access to JEM bases to check that children are not being recruited as soldiers. The UN said children found in military areas or in conflict zones could be removed under the deal.

An estimated 6,000 children have been involved in fighting in Darfur. Sudan official news agency (SUNA) said that this accord is "invalid" because it represents a blatant breach of laws and international conventions in having an international organization stepping in to sign a bilateral agreement with a rebel movement that is fighting the government. The government demanded that NICEF back away from the agreement.

The foreign ministry spokesperson Muawiya Osman Khalid stressed that JEM does not have any land under its control and that its fighters are being chased away by Sudanese armed forces.

He also scoffed at the JEM remarks that signing the agreement with UNICEF aims to protect children saying that the rebel group recruits children and used them in its attack on Omdurman in May 2008.

The Sudanese official further affirmed his government's firm refusal on recruiting children in armed conflicts.

South Sudan gives 14 days for foreigners to register

Sudan Tribune website 24/7/10 - Immigration authorities in the regional government of Southern Sudan has given 14 days notice for foreigners living in Juba and in the states to register beginning on Friday, 23rd July.

Following the signing of the CPA in the Kenyan capital Nairobi followed by the formation of government five years ago, nationals from the neighboring countries of Uganda, Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, etc., flocked the region for business and labor opportunities.

As required to have come with relevant documents for identification, authorities from the region have in the past reported cases of most of the foreign nationals living in Juba without possessing proper identification documents...

Unity support fund and donors committed to resolve water problems in Abyei

Al-Ayyam 25/7/10 – Abyei Humanitarian Aid Commission has complained of shortage of medical staff in the area despite the existence of health clinics. He revealed that the Unity Support Fund and donors have pledged to fund water and electricity services in the town.

Abyei HAC Commissioner Abdul Karim Chol said some international and local NGOs have exerted considerable efforts to address the Area's water concerns by drilling boreholes and installing pumps.

Voluntary returns on the rise in South Darfur - HAC

Akhir Lahza/Al-Sahafa 25/7/10 – South Darfur state government has reported a steady increase in the rates of voluntary and spontaneous returns of IDPs to their villages. HAC Commissioner in the state Jamal Yousuf said nearly 12,835 households from Kass camps have returned to nine areas in the state, more than 1000 households returned from Al-Neem camps to seven areas in addition to 106 households from Otash camp to the western Qoz area. He said that this is a good indicator that the IDP camps may soon be empty, adding that the state government and the Humanitarian Aid Commission, together with the local NGOs, have plans in the pipeline to avail basic services to the areas of return.

Four suspected of aiding escape of US diplomat killers arrested

Local dailies 25/7/10 – Security authorities in Western Darfur State have apprehended four people suspected of orchestrating the escape of the assassins of US diplomat John Granville and his Sudanese driver. According to sources, the four suspects were arrested in Garsilla area and were flown to the town of Al-Guneina.

Pre-referendum Watch

CPA pending issues may reignite war – state minister

Al-Ayyam 25/7/10 – State Minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Kamal Hassan Ali has warned of a renewed war should the CPA pending issues continue unresolved. He told *Egyptian Al-Shurug* that if these contentious issues were not addressed they could lead to a fiercer civil war than that before the 2005's CPA. Mr. Ali has criticized the voices which continue to say that the South's choice would be secession.

Juba forces snub the unity forum

The Citizen 25/7/10 – Juba national consensus forces said they would not participate in the deliberative forum proposed by President Al-Bashir for the purpose of discussing referendum issues unless all the issues that face the country are included in the forum's agenda, in addition to their participation in the preparatory committees of the forum. The forces further proposed the convention of an all-round forum that embraces all the political parties, including the NCP.

Communist Party Central Committee member Siddig Yousuf said President Al-Bashir's invitation targeted specific persons rather than parties, adding that invitations to the forum were not received by all the political parties.

Sudan Tribune website 24/7/10, reported that a number of opposition parties issued a statement rejecting an invitation by the Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir to discuss the upcoming referendum in Southern Sudan scheduled for January 2011.

This week Bashir called for a summit with leaders from the major opposition parties that was supposed to be held on Saturday upon his return from Chad where he took part in a regional summit.

The Sudanese head of state met with his two Vice presidents Salva Kiir and Ali Osman Taha today after which it was announced that the meeting was postponed indefinitely and it was not clear when it will take place if ever. But the Sudanese government denied that the postponement is related to refusal on the part of opposition parties.

Both Bashir and Kiir met with opposition figures separately including Umma party leader Al-Sadiq Al-Mahdi, Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) leader Mohamed Osman Al-Mirghani, Popular Congress Party (PCP) chief Hassan Al-Turabi and head of the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) Mohamed Ibrahim Nugud.

The deputy Secretary General of the Sudanese People Liberation Movement (SPLM) Yasir Arman said that the opposition leaders asked that the meeting with Bashir should not be confined to referendum but must also include issues such as Darfur crisis, deteriorating economic conditions of the people, democratic transformation and political freedoms.

Turabi was the only figure to flatly reject the idea of the meeting while Al-Mirghani and Nugud expressed willingness to participate.

The Umma party has also refused to respond to Bashir's invitation and sources within the party say that the invitation was addressed to Al-Mahdi and not to the Umma party. However, Umma party sources did not rule out Al-Mahdi participating in the meeting in his personal capacity.

Eight smaller political parties today issued a statement accusing the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) headed by Bashir of seeking to stall the referendum or rig its results.

They further said that the NCP wants to create an illusion that it is keen on preserving the country's unity and wants other parties to bear with it the consequences of the secession which they described as inevitable.

The opposition parties that signed the statement called on the NCP to lift the environment of fear and intimidation in order to allow for conducting a genuine dialogue.

They blasted the ruling party saying it has been evading the deliverables of equal citizenship rights without discrimination based on race or religion that would have created a wider opportunity for the choice of unity by Southerners.

Many observers and opposition figures in Sudan say that the NCP does not want to bear the burden of splitting the country alone and wants other parties to be part of it so that history books do not write down that the Islamist movement which is the ideological base of the ruling party, allowed for separation of Sudan.

Many international and regional powers are privately opposed to the idea of a separate state in the South for fear that it will not be a sustainable one which could trigger instability.

South Taskforce approves preparatory document for referendum

Sudan Tribune website 23/7/10- The Southern Sudan 2011 Taskforce has approved a preparatory document outlining activities that need to be carried out to make the referendum a success.

The Taskforce met on Thursday under the chairmanship of the Vice President, Dr. Riek MacharTeny, and endorsed after deliberating on the working document of the sub-committee number one on preparations of the conduct of the referendum in Southern Sudan.

The document was presented to the Referendum Taskforce meeting by the chairman of the sub-committee, John Luk Jok. It contained proposed activities in areas of civic education, registration of voters and security during the polling, among many others.

The meeting was also briefed by the Vice President on the work of sub-committee number two on the post-referendum arrangements, which is chaired by the SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum. Machar informed the meeting that negotiations on the post-referendum issues are expected to begin on 27th July in Khartoum.

The meeting was also briefed by the minister of Cabinet Affairs, Kosti Manibe, who chairs sub-committee number three on the work of his group in preparations of the Government of Southern Sudan for 2011 governance. It was announced in the meeting that a proposed conference to discuss issues of governance which was previously scheduled to take place by the end of the month has been postponed until next month.

The Taskforce meeting was also attended by the Deputy Chairman of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission and head of the Juba-based Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau who was accompanied by his members where the importance of coordination between the Taskforce and the Bureau was discussed.

The Taskforce also resolved to organize meetings with various political parties, civil society organizations, churches as well as with international organizations to agree on coordination mechanism with the Taskforce.

South Sudan referendum bureau pledges neutrality

Sudan Tribune website 23/7/10 - Southern Sudan referendum bureau on Friday pledged to remain neutral throughout the South's vote on secession from the north of the country due to take place next year.

In an interview with *Sudan Tribune*, from the regional capital Juba, Chan Rec, deputy chairman of the referendum commission said: "As officials we are prepared. No soldier will ever say [they are] not prepared to execute [the] orders of the commanding officers. The same applies in government, when an official is appointed by [the] president of the country; he accepts and does it as required by the law, we are prepared."

Rec, who is also Deputy Attorney General in the regional Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), said that his commission and the government were ready to conduct the referendum on schedule in January, 2011.

"Everybody is aware because they know that there will be a referendum at the end of six years of the interim period based on the agreement for people of southern Sudan. Media in collaboration with civil society groups, churches and international organizations and government officials are also conducting workshops and seminars," to ensure that the people of southern Sudan informed about the referendum, Rec said.

With just five months until polling, registration has yet to begin.

"We are now waiting for [the] start of [the] registration process as materials and ballot papers are being received. Other materials are already in place," said Rec.

The commission plans to launch a media centre in Juba and Khartoum for journalists and other interested people to access information and the results of the referendum. Many analysts feel that majority of the southerners will overwhelmingly vote for secession from the north.

Lakes State Governor instructs to cover referendum issues

Sudan Tribune website 24/7/10 - The Governor of Lakes State, Chol Tong, directed state radio on Thursday to dedicate all evening radio broadcasts to covering the referendum on southern independence that is due to take place in January 2011.

The governor said that the media needed to spread awareness of the referendum and issues that may obstruct the referendum process, such as demarcating the border between north and south Sudan.

Tong told the Minister of Information and Communication, Marik Nanga Marik, that radio broadcasts needed to translate complicated referendum issues like the referendum law into language people could understand.

Governor Tong gave the instructions at a workshop run by the Justice Africa organization in Rumbek, on the safety and citizenship status of southern Sudanese in northern Sudan and northern Sudanese in southern Sudan in the eventuality that the south secedes from the north following next years referendum on southern independence.

Sudan's peace partners to begin post-referendum negotiations next week

Sudan Tribune website 22/7/10 - The two parties to the 2005 North-South peace deal, the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) are expected to begin negotiations on the post-referendum issues next week, announced the SPLM Deputy Chairperson.

Riek Machar Teny, on Thursday, informed the Southern Sudan 2011 Taskforce that the negotiations will take place in Khartoum on the 27th July to try to resolve on the issues pertaining to the post-2011 referendum arrangements. This week the two parties signed a document on guiding principles for the negotiations.

In the guiding principles, the parties recommitted themselves to the holding of the referendum on self-determination of the people of Southern Sudan on the 9th of January 2011 and respect the choice of the people.

However, the parties recognized that the CPA stipulates that the "parties agreed to make unity an attractive option for the people of southern Sudan, based on the free will of its people, democratic governance, accountability, equality, respect, and justice for all citizens of the Sudan, and affirmed that the people of Southern Sudan have the right to self-determination to freely choose between unity or secession."

"The parties believe that the decision of the people of Southern Sudan to freely choose either unity or secession should not be interpreted in any way to hinder the continued efforts to foster positive relations between the people of the South and the North," it stated.

They affirmed that regardless of the outcome of the referendum, maintaining a sustainable peace and cooperation between the people of the South and the North is a high priority and objective.

“The parties believe that either decision of the people of Southern Sudan shall be an opportunity to enhance cooperation among the people of Sudan and the region and the international community. The parties share the desire to work together to pursue harmonious relationships and peaceful coexistence between the South and the North and to promote and protect the sustainable livelihoods and welfare of the people,” the document reads.

The two parties will negotiate on the future of oil production, transport and marketing, assets, debts, Nile waters, security, international treaties, currency, etc., especially in case of the country splitting into two independent states.

Free transportation of newspapers to the South begins today

Al-Sahafa 25/7/10 – The tripartite mechanism comprising the National Press and Publication Council, Civil Aviation and Air Transport companies announced that transportation of newspapers to the South, free of charge, will begin today. The mechanism said the free delivery of newspapers to the South is part of efforts to consolidate unity of the country.

South Sudan UDI can be "uncomfortable" option – Machar

Sudan Tribune website 23/7/10 - The second powerful leader in the regional government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) has said that any Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) by the South can invite “uncomfortable” situation in the region.

The GoSS VP, Riek Machar, however told the region’s parliamentarians that such an option could only occur if it had to be forced on the people of Southern Sudan and their semi-autonomous government.

Machar made the remarks in his response to a question posed to him in the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly during his presentation to the parliament on the work of the Referendum Taskforce, which he chairs.

He was asked whether the South would unilaterally declare independence if Khartoum would not allow for the timely or free and fair conduct of the plebiscite in the region.

Machar told the lawmakers that UDI would not be a preferred option unless the South had to be forced to such a situation where unilateral declaration of independence would remain the only option.

He further explained that the best option is to conduct the referendum, as stipulated in the 2005 North-South Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), where it will be the people to decide if they want independence.

He told MP’s that unless they did not trust the would-be decision or choice of the people they represented in their various constituencies, the preparations for and outcome of the referendum was what the people should be focusing on and looking forward to.

The Vice President also warned that a UDI option could attract a military situation which may invite intervention in both North and South by forces from foreign countries.

Machar, however, in a separate occasion earlier said that if the South was convinced that Khartoum was deliberately obstructing the conduct of the referendum, the members of the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly would, on behalf of the people they represent, decide the future of the region.

He also said it was a debatable option whether or not the decision of the elected parliament would also be equally seen as an action amounting to a UDI, rather than a legitimate decision by the representatives of the people.

He expressed hope that the referendum would take place as scheduled on 9th January in a free and fair manner and that the outcome would be respected by the parties involved.

SSRRC Director urges southerners to unite for successful separation

The Citizen 25/7/10 – The Director for Southern Sudan relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC) Minister Philip Cot Job has appealed for unity of southerner Sudanese ahead of forthcoming referendum for self-determination. Speaking to the newspaper on Friday, Minister Job said southern Sudanese should unite together despite their political parties to rally behind SPLM to vote for the separation of southern Sudan from the Arab. “Arab cheated southern Sudanese in 1947 when British was aiming to separate the South from the Arab North by bribing illiterate chiefs with money to choose unity and again in 1972 the Addis Ababa Peace was dishonored by the Arab,” he was reportedly quoted as saying.

Popular Consultation is a right for every citizen of Southern Kordofan

Al-Khartoum 25/07/10 – Political forces in Southern Kordofan State are calling for the “serious” conduct of Popular Consultations “free of party politics” to preserve the achievements made during the past years. Deputy NCP leader in Southern Kordofan, Mohyeldin Al-Toum, said that all citizen of the state, regardless of affiliation, would be part of the Popular Consultation exercise.