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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

“No agreement reached on referendum law” – SPLM

Local dailies report the SPLM has rejected the agreement it reached with the NCP. According to **Al-Sahafa**, SPLM has washed its hands off the agreement it reached with the NCP on the referendum bill and rejected the benchmark of two-thirds of voters for the endorsement of the South's independence, saying it is an impossible condition. The SPLM has also accused the NCP of seeking to impose unity by law. On the security bill, the SPLM said the NCP replaced the draft with a version different from the one agreed upon by both sides.

SPLM SG Pagan Amum, at a press conference yesterday, denied any agreement with the NCP on the referendum bill. He said GoSS VP Riech Machar would visit Khartoum to inform the NCP about the SPLM's formal position on the bill.

Government determined to formulate strategy to deal with US policy

Local dailies 24/10/09 reported Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail said that the Sudan Government was in the process of reviewing and formulating a political strategy to deal with the US policy based on reciprocity. According to **Al-Sahafa** 24/10/09, Ismail reiterated Sudan's rejection of the US threat of sanctions and criticized Washington's new policy toward Sudan. "We categorically reject the strategy in its present form. Some issues contained in the strategy such as genocide in Darfur is a big lie," he said.

"Our relations with the US are no doubt very important and we want the US to play a role toward the Darfur issue or the implementation of the CPA," he said, according to **SUNA**. But, he added, "The Sudanese Government would stick to the three principles that govern its foreign policy - mutual respect, mutual interests and non-interference in domestic affairs".

UNMIS begins transporting Machar, Paulino forces to New Site

Al-Intibaha reports UNMIS yesterday began transporting 2000 of Dr. Riek Machar's troops from "Madur" in Unity State to New Site near Juba. Sources confirmed to the paper that UNMIS also transported Paulino Matip's forces to the same camp.

Abducted French aid worker in good health

The ICRC said that the French Aid worker who was abducted two days ago in Darfur was in good health and the abductors have demanded no ransom, **local dailies** report. A spokesperson for the ICRC said ICRC staff did not manage to see the abducted aid worker but the abductors have assured that he was in good health.

Sudan to observe UN Day

Al-Wifaq reports the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with Khartoum state will celebrate today the UN Day. Director of Organizations Ambassador Magdi Mohamed Taha said the function would be addressed by governor of Khartoum State, Acting Foreign Minister and SRSG Qazi will read the SG's message.

“No room for foreign judges in Sudanese courts” – official

Al-Sahafa reports Sudan Government has said it would review the report of the AU Panel on Darfur which recommended participation of foreign judges in courts for trying alleged perpetrators of crimes in Darfur, adding it would formally react to it during the AU summit meeting scheduled to be convened by the end of this week.

Member of the Justice Ministry's Advisory Council of Human Rights Al-Tayeb Haroun told the paper that there would be no room for participation of foreign judges in Sudanese courts, saying the Sudanese judiciary does not allow.

However, MFA spokesperson has welcomed the report's reference to Darfur issue as a Sudanese-African problem, saying the Government would officially respond to the report at the AU summit in Abuja.

Meanwhile, ***Al-Rai Al-Aam*** reports VP Ali Osman Taha will leave for Abuja on Wednesday leading Sudan delegation for AUPSC meeting.

According to Reuters 23/10/09, AU Panel on Darfur report obtained on Friday said Sudan should set up a court which includes foreign judges to try the gravest crimes committed in Darfur.

The 148-page report's findings on justice for the victims in Darfur recommended that Sudan's judicial system, which faces a crisis of confidence, needs to be strengthened to cope with such cases.

The document, compiled by a panel headed by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, said Khartoum should accept non-Sudanese help to investigate and try atrocities in Darfur.

"It will ... require a strengthening of the existing system with new mechanisms, including a special criminal chamber which shall be a hybrid court drawing on the expertise of qualified and appropriate judges from outside Sudan," it said.

It said judges need not only be African. However, the court should operate within the Sudanese judicial system and work alongside traditional justice mechanisms.

Sudanese law should be amended to fully incorporate international law, and the country's security forces should no longer enjoy immunity from prosecution.

The report did not take a position on the ICC's arrest warrant for Bashir but said the ICC investigation should be included on the agenda of Darfur peace talks.

The report had not been expected to be made public before an AU Peace and Security Council meeting later this month.

The report also said a truth, justice and reconciliation commission should be formed as a part of any Darfur peace deal.

The report said there was no evidence that "the crime of rape has been accorded the attention it deserves" and Sudanese law had "forbidding obstacles" to proving rape.

The AU panel said Darfur peace talks, long delayed by rebel divisions and continued clashes on the ground, urgently needed to reach agreement ahead of Sudan's first multi-party elections in 24 years, which are due in less than six months.

On the same subject, ***Sudan Tribune website*** 23/10/09 reported that the Sudanese presidential adviser Ghazi Salah Al-Deen told the Qatar based Al-Jazeera TV in an interview last July that Khartoum "trusts the intentions of the panel and its evaluation because it is African and not stemming from a colonialist mentality".

“We are awaiting whatever the Mbeki panel....we are satisfied with whatever results from its recommendations” he said.

Kiir to visit Cairo

Local dailies report FVP Salva Kiir will leave for Cairo today on an official visit. According to **Al-Rai Al-Aam**, the visit is in response to an invitation from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for consultation on a range of issues including the situation in the Sudan, Darfur issue and development projects in the South.

Meanwhile, FVP Kiir yesterday met with President Al-Bashir to brief him on the situation in the South and the outcome of his visit to South Africa.

According to **Sudan Tribune website** 24/10/09, Kiir’s delegation includes presidential adviser Mansour Khalid, foreign minister Deng Alor and Joseph Ashwil state minister at the presidency and other officials.

The semi-official Egyptian **Al-Ahram** newspaper quoted the spokesperson of Egyptian cabinet Magdi Radi as saying that Nazeef will tackle with Kiir the plans to resume work in the Jonglei canal project.

Radi said that the Jonglei canal project will save 4 billion cubic meters of water from the Nile waters that would be shared equally for use in the development of the South and launching agricultural and energy projects.

Egypt is growing increasingly concerned with the water shortage relative to demand. The Nile basin countries are lobbying hard to amend water agreements that grant the lion share of the Nile river water to Egypt.

The newspaper added that Kiir and Nazeef will also discuss opening a branch for Alexandria University in Juba and launching Egypt sponsored development, energy, health and educational projects.

Al-Mahdi sends message to Palestinians, telephoned SRSG

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi has sent two messages to the Palestinian Fateh and Hamas leaders urging them to make the full use of the opportunity availed by the Goldstone’s report which condemned Israel.

Meanwhile, Al-Mahdi has telephoned SRSG Ashraf Qazi for condolences on the assassination of UNMIS Deputy Force Commander brigadier Muinuddin Ahmed.

The North behind tribal conflict in the South – Nhial Deng

SPLA Affairs Minister Gen. Nhial Deng Nhial has accused authorities in the North of supplying arms to militias and tribes in the South, **Ajras Al-Hurriah** reports. “We know very well that Khartoum, particularly the NCP, is providing arms to militias in the South and Arab tribes at the border in addition to some southern tribes to give the international community the impression that GoSS is unable to carry out its duties.

Two die of acute food shortage in Eastern Equatoria

Two people have died and a large number of civilians displaced as a result of an acute food shortage in Eastern Equatoria State, reports **Al-Wifaq**. The state’s agriculture minister, Betty Ogowro, attributed this shortage to climate change that has affected the harvests in most parts

of the state.

South Sudan say US policy affects war stricken regions

Sudan Tribune website 24/10/09– The Spokesperson of Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), Paul Mayom Akech, Minister of information and broadcasting service today said that the recent released US policy on Sudan greatly affects war ravaged regions across the country.

The GoSS has welcomed the new US Policy saying it provides a unique yet complex opportunity for the central government to learn and adjust areas of international concern but that the policy affects the poor majority particularly in the marginalized areas of Sudan, Akech said.

The official said that Southern Sudan is still part of united Sudan under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), needing developmental machinery, which according to him said, can not get into the region since routes of entry is part of North Sudan.

“We cannot have heavy machineries coming into the region when there are sanctions that ban imports heavy machines to the country,” he said adding that this policy requires “an honest review” from Sudanese people and governments.

“This is not because we support lifting of imposed sanctions on Khartoum by the US administration and other government but we need a policy that explores ways and how to exclude war stricken regions to progress,” he said.

The minister who has been hesitant to comment on US policy review on Sudan reiterated that these sanctions do not in any way affect leadership of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) government or central administration of Sudan but poor people of the Sudan particularly in the South and the marginalized areas of the country such Southern Blue Nile, Nuba Mountains, Abyei among others.

But GoSS VP Riek Machar in a press statement on Wednesday said the policy was positive and would result into the lifting of sanctions imposed on the country by the successive American administrations if Sudan responded positively.

He said there would be no logic to continue with the sanctions in the country if the issues highlighted in the policy were addressed and fully resolved.

Sudan would also be removed from the list of the states that sponsor terrorism if it practically cooperates with the policy, he added.

Dr. Machar, who is also the Deputy Chairperson of the ruling party in the South, the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) explained that the new US policy would help his Government in trying to speedily curb the ongoing inter and intra-tribal fighting in the region.

Botswana affirms position on ICC warrant for Sudan president

Sudan Tribune website 24/10/09 – The Government of Botswana this week reiterated its support to bring Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir to justice.

The African Union (AU) has adopted a resolution last July instructing its members who are signatories of the Rome Statute, which is the founding text of ICC, not to cooperate in apprehending the Sudanese president.

However, Botswana dissented from the AU position and accused the Libyan leader Muammar Kaddafi of forcing the resolution upon the members without debates.

The Botswanaian official stressed that his country “is certainly committed to seeing a Sudan at peace with itself as well as with all her neighbors”.

Kiir said that although Botswana was geographically far from Sudan, it has lessons which could be of importance to the people of Southern Sudan such as in management of resources.

This, he said, could be done through some formal exchange programmes such as in the areas of human resources development and in the management of natural resources

During his visit, the First Vice-President of Sudan paid a courtesy call to Botswanaian president on His Excellency the President Ian Khama.

South Africa to support South Sudan towards elections and referendum

Sudan Tribune website 23/10/09 — The Republic of South Africa has pledged to carry out trainings in multiple institutions and technically support Southern Sudan in preparation for the upcoming elections and referendum.

It also pledged to play the role of ambassador by encouraging domestic and international investors to invest in the semi-autonomous region.

This was discussed in the bilateral talks held in Juba on Friday between the delegation of the Republic of South Africa headed by the Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe and Southern Sudan’s team headed by the Vice President, Dr. Riek Machar.

South Africa expressed willingness to lead the way in the investment by exploring the possibility of establishing joint ventures with the indigenous investors in Southern Sudan.

It will also train the police and other law enforcement agencies on how to keep law and order during the elections and referendum.

The country has been supporting capacity building programs by taking and training Southern Sudanese officials for all these years since 2005 during which more than 3,000 civil servants had completed their training.

Humanitarian Affairs Ministry admits three NGOs

Al-Sahafa reports Humanitarian Affairs State Minister Abdul Bagi Al-Jailani has affirmed the Government’s keenness to deliver aid to the needy in south Darfur, saying three international NGOs have replaced the ousted ones. Al-Jailani made the remarks after a meeting with the USAID DG yesterday.

According to ***Al-Rai Al-Aam***, Al-Jailani said the NGOs are two Swiss and one Scottish. He said the phenomenon of abduction of aid workers in Darfur was normal given the spread of banditry in the region, adding the problem would be resolved by putting in place measures that would include provision of protection to NGO and UN agency compounds, involvement of the tribal chiefs and speedy development.

In a related development, ***Al-Wifaq*** reports that the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs has issued general guidelines for commissions, aid workers and relevant bodies as part of efforts for

implementing the plan to “Sudanize” humanitarian work. The Ministry said the guidelines would steer humanitarian work during 2010 to strengthen partnership with the UN. According to Kassala-based HAC Commissioner Osman Dafallah, the guidelines call for gradual implementation of the “Sudanization” of humanitarian work during 2010.

Senior UN official deplores latest kidnapping of aid worker in Darfur

UN News Centre 24/10/09 – The top United Nations humanitarian official in Sudan today condemned the kidnapping of a staff member of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the latest in a series of aid worker abductions in the country's war-scarred region of Darfur.

“The kidnapping of Gauthier Lefevre serves nothing but to undermine humanitarian work in the region, at the sole expense of those who benefit from such endeavour,” said UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan Ameerah Haq.

“It harms the chances of creating a safe and secure environment for delivering humanitarian relief and impacts negatively on our ability to deliver food and basic health and welfare services in areas where they are most needed,” added Ms. Haq.

The French-British national was snatched by gunmen on Thursday while retuning to Al Geneina - the capital of West Darfur state - from a field mission to help local communities obtain clean drinking water.

Ms. Haq called on the kidnapers to immediately and unconditionally release Mr. Lefevre in a news release, underscoring the serious security concerns in Darfur for all humanitarian organizations working in the region.

LRA kills five Darfur IDPs

SPLA said the LRA attacked IDPs in south Darfur, killing five of them, **Al-Sahafa** report. Procurement of food was seemed to be the motive of the attack. The attack raised fears about possible spread of LRA activity in Darfur. SPLA spokesperson Kuol Deim said the attacked occurred on 21 October at the border between west Bahr el-Ghazal and Darfur.

According to **Al-Wifaq**, Maj. Gen. Kuol said SPLA dispatched a company to track down LRA fighters who attacked the refugee camp in Raja in Darfur two days ago, saying the LRA fighters left the area toward CAR.

Zaghawa, Birgid clash in South Darfur

Ajras Al-Hurriah reports that the Zaghawa and the Birgid tribes clashed in Sheria Locality and the fighting was still continuing but it was not possible to verify the casualty figure. Eyewitnesses said animal theft was the reason of the clash. Native administrators and UNAMID in Shangil Tobai were leading efforts to mediate between the two groups to resolve the problem.

North Darfur to have 460 voter registration centres

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports that the High Elections Committee in North Darfur State has completed preparations to open some 460 voter registration centres in the 43 constituencies in the state. Al-Sirr Al-Mak, the head of the North Darfur High Elections Committee also revealed that the committee had selected polling officers and voter registration officers for the different constituencies and would make use of elders and other prominent residents of IDP camps to assist in the voter registration process.

Al-Turabi says ready to reunite with NCP if conditions are met

Al-Wifaq reports the Popular Congress Party (PCP) leader Hassan Al-Turabi has expressed his party's readiness to reconcile and reunite with President Al Bashir-led NCP if a number of conditions were met. These conditions include Government's commitment to the CPA implementation, guaranteeing of political and social freedoms in the country and stamping out corruption.

Amnesty International asks Nigeria to arrest Al-Bashir

Amnesty International (AI) said it had received reports that the President of Nigeria has secretly invited President Al-Bashir to visit Nigeria although the ICC has issued an arrest warrant for the latter, reports **Rai Al-Shaab**. AI also said that the Nigerian leader has also sent guarantees that President Al-Bashir would not be arrested. The organization has however called on the Nigerian Government to honour its obligation to arrest Al-Bashir if he sets foot on Nigerian soil to attend the AUPSC scheduled for 29 October 2009.