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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

AU drops resolution barring arrest of Sudanese president in continent

Sudan Tribune website 25/7/10 - The African Union (AU) delegates at the summit in Uganda agreed to remove language from the draft resolution that instructs its members not to cooperate with the ICC in apprehending the Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir.

The original draft text circulated on Saturday included the non-cooperation clause and criticism of the ICC 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 original draft said.

"[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,"

However, the redrafted text obtained by *Sudan Tribune* removed both clauses following fierce debates between two opposing blocs led by South Africa on one side and Libya on the other.

The new resolution reiterates calls for freezing the arrest warrant by the UN Security Council (UNSC) which has previously went unanswered and urges members to work on amending provisions in the Rome Statute which is the ICC's bible.

It further defers consideration of the request by ICC to open a Liaison Office to the AU in Addis Ababa.

"Those two parts caused a big fight between the delegates," an African diplomat, who was at the meeting, told Reuters. "Bashir is dividing us."

"South Africa, Ghana and Botswana led the argument that the clauses should be removed," a Western diplomat, who had seen the altered draft, told *Reuters*.

South Africa and Botswana have both been one of the few nations to dismiss the non-cooperation decision last year at the summit held in Libya and warned that they will arrest Bashir should he sets foot on their territories.

However, The Ghanaian President John Atta Mills at the time expressed support to the resolution saying he will not arrest Bashir should he visits Accra.

"Libya, Eritrea, Egypt and some other countries who have not signed up to the ICC fought strongly against that but they lost out in the end." the Western diplomat added.

The latest text will likely anger the Sudanese government which has recently received a boost after Bashir managed to visit Chad unharmed despite the country being an ICC

member with an obligation to arrest him. Chad defended its decision not to arrest Bashir recalling the AU decision last year not to arrest him.

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, focusing on the continent only and turning a blind eye to atrocities elsewhere.

African figures slammed at the summit slammed the ICC and its prosecutor saying the warrant against the Sudanese president undermines peace efforts and also said the tribunal is unfairly targeting Africans.

"To subject a sovereign head of state to a warrant of arrest is undermining African solidarity and African peace and security that we fought for so many years," Malawian President Bingu wa Mutharika, current head of the pan-African organization.

Mutharika told African leaders at the opening session of AU summit in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, to look for ways of resolving the conflict in Sudan without the need to arrest Bashir.

Egyptian president unhappy over Bashir's remarks on Halayeb - official

Sudan Tribune website 25/7/10 - Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak skipped the summit of the Community of Sahel-Saharan states (CENSAD) held in Chad this week to avoid meeting his Sudanese counterpart, said an Egyptian presidential source.

Mubarak's absence from the CENSAD summit and the African Union (AU) summit in Kampala prompted questions on his health status.

An article in The Washington Times this week said Mubarak was thought by most Western intelligence agencies to be suffering from terminal cancer affecting his stomach and pancreas.

It cited a central European intelligence officer as saying the 82-year-old leader could have less than a year to live.

The source told the Cairo-based Al-Shurooq newspaper that Mubarak's absence "is somewhat related" to the participation of Bashir after making remarks last month asserting sovereignty over the disputed border region of Halayeb.

The statements made were contrary to the previous understandings reached between Mubarak and Bashir, the source added.

"Halayeb is Sudanese and will stay Sudanese" Bashir told crowds at the coastal town of Port Sudan last June marking the 21st anniversary of his military coup.

"The Southern borders to Egypt are well known at latitude 22° and I see no need to further indulge in the historical backgrounds [of this subject] " Egyptian foreign minister Ahmed Aboul-Gheit said in response.

Bashir has rarely brought up the issue publicly in order to avoid angering his Northern neighbour which has been one of his main backers.

The Halayeb triangle that overlooks the Red Sea has been a source of tension between the two countries as early as 1958, shortly after Sudan gained independence from British-Egyptian rule.

The area has been under Egyptian control since mid 1990s after a Sudanese backed attempt on Mubarak's life.

Sudan has avoided registering voters inside Halayeb for the elections which took place last April despite earlier assertions that the region was included as a constituency.

Four LRA abductees rescued by vigilantes in Sudan's W. Equatoria

Sudan Tribune website 25/7/10 - Four women have been rescued from the Ugandan rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) by a local vigilante group in Ukwo village in Yambio County.

The vigilante group known as the Arrow Boys also apprehended a senior "wife" of rebel commander Dominic Ongwen, who was among the LRA leaders the International Criminal Court (ICC), issued an arrest warrant for in 2005.

With the LRA's expanding attacks into Western Equatoria State over the past three months, vigilantes like the Arrow Boys have joined the armies of Uganda (UPDF) and South Sudan (SPLA) in attempting to pursue LRA fighters in the area.

The LRA are believed to have forced over 10,000 boys and girls from Ugandan, southern Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic into combat.

Local chiefs have serious concerns about the impact of ongoing Ugandan-led military operations against the LRA on the safety of civilians in the region, and are pressing the semi-autonomous Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) to protect civilians and end LRA violence...

Egypt Air launches flights to Juba starting August - report

Sudan Tribune website 25/7/10 - The Egyptian national carrier "Egypt Air" will begin flying to the South Sudanese capital town of Juba starting August 6th according to a news report.

The independent Al-Tayar newspaper quoted an official at "Egypt Air" in Khartoum as saying that there will be two flights a day through Khartoum every week on Wednesdays through Fridays.

The official said that the decision was made in light of increased demand and their keenness on providing excellent service to nationals of South Sudan living in Egypt.

"Egypt Air" joins a growing number of airlines flying to Juba from several countries in the

region including Ethiopian Airlines, Eagle Air (Uganda) and Kenya Airways.

Pre-referendum Watch

CPA partners postpone post-referendum negotiations

Al-Akhbar 27/7/10 – The two CPA partners have postponed their post-referendum negotiations, supposed to convene today in Khartoum.

According to sources, the negotiations would be resumed early in August in Khartoum. The postponement is reportedly desired by both the partners for more consultation on sticky issues including security, international agreements, debts and Nile water.

Border impossible to demarcate before referendum – Committee

The Citizen 26/7/10 – The technical committee for demarcation of the border affirmed the impossibility of finalizing demarcation of the North-South border according to line 1956 before the coming referendum.

The committee suspended its field work until after the rainy season. It revealed that no agreement has been reached on 75% of the contested issues and that it has decided to refer the pending issues to the Presidency of the Republic.

Deputy Chairman of the border demarcation committee, Col. Eng. Rig Digol, said he had informed Cabinet Minister Luka Biong of the difficulties that impede the progress of work.

In an interview to the Citizen, Digol disclosed that the committee's field work has been put off for the coming October because of rainfalls and natural conditions on the ground, though he indicated that the committee would resume its office work and discussions prior to submitting a report to the Presidency of the Republic on the pending issues between the two parties.

In response to the possibility of referring the file of the pending issues to the international arbitration court in the same way as the Abyei issue, Digol stated that it was beyond their mandate to give an opinion on the matter...

SPLM calls on AU leaders for strong stance on referendum

Ajras Al-Hurriya 26/7/10 – The SPLM has stressed the importance of respect to the southern Sudanese's choice in referendum, calling on African leaders to take a strong stance on the need to conduct a free, fair and timely referendum.

GoSS Minister of Peace and SPLM SG Pagan Amum has declared the SPLM's rejection of involving nomads in the Abyei referendum, saying they possess "non-political rights" in the region.

On the meeting of political parties called by the Presidency, Amum said they had been invited and they would participate to present their platform as a political party including the need to respect and implement the CPA.

Government committed to referendum on schedule

Al-Ahdath 27/7/10 – Undersecretary of Foreign Office Rahamatullah Mohamed, at meeting with Kenyan Ambassador yesterday, reiterated the Sudanese government's commitment to a fair, transparent and timely referendum, calling on IGAD member states to continue support for the Sudan.

Separation advocates in the South do not exceed 1.5% - NCP

Al-Ahdath 27/7/10 – NCP information secretary in Bahr el Ghazal Gabriel Angom has stressed the need to involve all the political forces in the efforts to make unity attractive to the southern voters during the upcoming referendum, adding that the percentage of separatist people in the South do not exceed 1.5% of the population.