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Media Monitoring Report

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Referendum Watch

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Highlights

President Al-Bashir to visit Juba tomorrow

Al-Akhbar 3/1/11 – President Al-Bashir will visit Juba tomorrow just a week away from the referendum to familiarize himself with the preparations for the process.

Presidential Adviser Mustafa Osman Ismail said the visit comes within the framework of the CPA implementation, adding that the President would hold talks with his FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit, some GoSS officials and politicians. He added that the visit is also intended to assure civilians in the South about the state's responsibility to provide protection.

Meanwhile, *Juba Post* 3/1/11 has learned from reliable sources that GoSS President Kiir has instructed all ministers, MPs and urged citizens in Juba to turn out on streets to welcome president Al-Bashir. According to the sources, President Al-Bashir and Kiir will discuss a range of issues including Abyei, timely referendum, oil shares, citizenship, 20% un-demarcated border, security and Nile water sharing.

GoSS welcomes President Al-Bashir's independence anniversary speech

Sudan Vision 2/1/11 - Government of South Sudan (GoSS) welcomed the speech delivered by President al-Bashir on the 55th Independent anniversary.

GoSS Minister of Information and Spokesman Dr Barnaba Benjamin Barnaba said that the President's speech is considered as an important, adding that GoSS will respond positively to the President's speech during his visit to Juba next Tuesday through the mass rally which will be organized to receive him.

Barnaba said that Al-Bashir will find, during his visit to Juba, all respect and appreciation considering that the citizens in the region are happy with the President's speech in which he affirmed the conduction of referendum on time and accepting its results besides his declaration that he will be the first to recognize the new born State if southerners voted for secession.

He said that some political parties wanted to raise suspicious over the acceptance of the President to recognize the new south Sudan state in case of secession, affirming that GoSS and all south Sudan citizens laud and appreciate the contents of the President's speech, calling on the southerners to present a model practice in referendum process.

Lack of quorum prevents Court from deciding anti-referendum petition

Al-Ahdath 3/1/11 – lack of quorum caused by continuous absence of southern representatives has reportedly prevented the constitutional court from deciding the petition filed against the SSRC.

Sources confirmed to the newspaper the impossibility of disposing the suit before 9 January and the court would resume work only if the absent judges return or the law is amended to lower the quorum to 7.

SSRC says Unity state highest in registered voters

Sudan Tribune website 2/1/11 - The final registration result for referendum on independence published by the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission has put the region's oil rich Unity state in the lead with over half a million voters registered.

A total of 3.9 million southerners have been registered in southern Sudan, northern states and the Diaspora. 3.7 million people have been registered in the South alone while over 116,000 and 60,000 people were registered in northern Sudan and the Diaspora, respectively.

According to the final figures released, Unity state has the highest registered voters of 500,975, followed by Warrap and Central Equatoria states with 469,605 and 469,202, respectively. The two states with lowest registered voters are Western Bahr Ghazal and Western Equatoria with only 164,497 and 214,605 people, respectively.

In the public document released on Sunday by the Deputy Head of the Southern Sudan 2011 Referendum Taskforce Secretariat and Director of Policy and Monitoring in the Office of the President of the Government of Southern Sudan, Joseph Madak Both, the registration result has also revealed that out of the total voters registered 52% are female while 48% are male...

Polling centres ready to receive voters - SSRC

Al-Sahafa 3/1/11 – The SSRC has announced that polling centres are ready to receive voters on January 9.

SSRC spokesperson, Sua'd Ibrahim Eissa told the newspaper that SSRC members would tour some centres in the North to acquaint themselves with referendum preparations, adding that referendum committees are being trained by technical experts on the process.

Referendum: Carter, Annan to lead foreign observers' delegation

Sudan Tribune website 2/1/11 - Jimmy Carter, the ex-American president and Koffi Annan, former UN Secretary General are due to lead the Carter Center's international observation delegation set for the 9 January self-determination referendum in southern Sudan.

Also included in the team to guide the delegation are Joseph Warioba, the former Tanzania Prime Minister and John Hardman, who doubles as the Carter Center president and its CEO. The Carter Center, Sudan Tribune has verified, intends to deploy more than 100 observers to voting locations across Sudan and overseas to assess the referendum process and observe polling, counting, and tabulation.

"The referendum is a critical step in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement," President Carter said in a 2 January 2011 communiqué.

"We hope this process will help the people of Sudan work for a peaceful future, regardless of the outcome," he added...

broad-based government will be formed immediately after referendum – NCP

Al-Sahafa 3/1/11- the NCP has revealed that some political forces including opposition parties have agreed to President Al-Bashir's call for formation of a broad-based government

immediately after the referendum results are released.

National Assembly Speaker who is also a senior NCP member Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir has said that some political parties had accepted the call and others were still considering the offer, adding that his party would continue listening to viewpoints of other forces.

Sudan Tribune website 1/1/11 reported that President Al-Bashir on Friday reversed defiant remarks he made earlier this week and called on opposition to join his government as the country inches closer towards a likely breakup.

Bashir made the call for the “broad-based government” at the speech that marked the 55th anniversary of the country’s independence.

The Sudanese leader said that this move would help “unite the internal front”.

On Friday, Bashir responded to calls by opposition for a nation government by telling them “to lick their elbows”.

“There will not be a national government,” he told supporters in Al-Gezira state where he inaugurated several projects on the occasion of Memorial Day.

“We totally reject this — the only solution now is for Bashir to resign, hold new elections and a forum to agree a new constitution,” Kamal Omer, a senior official from the opposition Popular Congress Party told Reuters.

Mubarak Al-Fadil, leader of dissolved Umma Reform and Renewal Party (URRP), echoed Omer’s sentiments.

“They want to keep the control of the National Congress Party on the crucial organs of the state and simply offer some positions to opposition. This is not change and will achieve nothing,” Al-Fadil told Sudan Tribune.

He also expressed doubts whether this invite is a genuine one saying that it is likely “a tactical move”.

The former Prime Minister and head of the National Umma Party has given the government until January 26 to meet his demands or else he might join the ranks of forces seeking to oust the regime.

Opposition parties want a roundtable conference on which the participants will agree on rewriting a new constitution, forming an interim government to prepare for elections and work on resolving the Darfur crisis...

President Al-Bashir directs authorities to protect southerners and their property during referendum

Local dailies 3/1/11 – President Al-Bashir has directed his government authorities to protect southerners and their property in the North during the upcoming referendum and to secure IDP returns in Darfur. The President made the instruction at meeting yesterday with Interior Minister

Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid who confirmed that the police forces would not tolerate any attempt to undermine stability and security of civilians and their property.

According to *Al-Sahafa* 3/1/11, Hamid revealed that the Sudanese nationality would be cancelled and replaced with a national ID card during the forthcoming period, adding that every citizen would be given a national number.

Meanwhile, *Al-Akhbar* 3/1/11 reports Director General of police Gen. Hashim Osman as saying that strict legal measures would be taken against the circles threatening to take to streets in an uprising or civil disobedience during the upcoming referendum. Addressing a police parade ceremony yesterday in Khartoum, Gen. Osman said police forces would not tolerate any breach of the law. "If they do not believe what I say let them try," he warned.

In another development, Khartoum state governor Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Khedir has revealed that 17,500 policemen have been trained and now ready to secure the referendum, adding that 72 polling centres are also ready and efforts are continuing to increase them to 1000 to cover the entire state.

NCP warns authorities are capable to maintain security, PCP warns blood will be shed if NCP initiates violence

Al-Ayyam 3/1/11 – NCP political secretary Prof. Ibrahim Ghandour has accused opposition political forces of seeking to incite sedition and to destabilize the country by calling on civilians to overthrow the government. He said the Popular Congress Party (PCP) is seeking to block the call by President Al-Bashir for formation of a broad-based government, warning the opposition not to try to breach the law because that would invite security forces' strong reaction.

However, PCP foreign relations secretary Bashir Adam Rahama has lambasted the NCP call for a broad-based government, saying "the government will lose its political, legal and moral legitimacy after secession of the South". He said the government is trying to frighten civilians by parading security and police forces. "...the NCP should realize that if it initiates violence, Khartoum streets will be filled with blood," he warned.

Misseriya threaten to declare Abyei part of the North on 9 January

Local dailies 3/1/11 – Misseriya paramount leader Mukhtar Babu Nimir has threatened to declare Abyei territory part of the North on 9 January should the Dinka tribe declare Abyei part of the South from Bahr el Arab on the same date.

Meanwhile, member of Abyei referendum forum, Dr. Chol Deng warned that annexing Abyei to the North would mean government-backed invasion of the territory.

SPLA to secure referendum in tense areas in the South – GoSS

Al-Sahafa 3/1/11 – GoSS Interior Minister Qier Chanq announced the deployment of additional 6,000 police personnel to secure the referendum, saying the SPLA would handle the tense areas such as Jonglei and Unity states. He denied claims that the GoSS had involved aliens from neighbouring countries into the referendum process and accused the NCP of issuing identity papers to foreigners especially from Uganda to vote for unity.

Chang stressed GoSS responsibility to protect northerners and their property in the South but voiced fears over possible harassment of southerners in the North particularly those who might vote for separation.

Bloody clashes between SPLA and Athor in Khor Flous left tens killed and wounded

Al-Intibaha 3./1/11 – Bloody clashes between the SPLA and forces of renegade Gen. George Athor in Khor Flous yesterday left tens of SPLA soldiers killed and wounded.

Athor told the newspaper that a group of SPLA soldiers attacked his forces but the clashes resulted in killing and wounded of tens of soldiers on the SPLA side. He revealed that influential personalities in the GoSS informed him on phone yesterday that the GoSS might accept his conditions for signing a peace deal.

According to *Al-Ahram Al-Youm* 3/1/11, 7 people were killed and 12 wounded in clashes between the SPLA and Athor's forces on Saturday in Khor Flous (Jonglei state) following collapse of talks between the two sides last Wednesday. Athor told the newspaper yesterday that he could not reach peace with the GoSS because the latter refused a condition to pull out SPLA forces from west and north Upper Nile, Pibor and Ayot areas.

Sudanese opposition leader warns of consequences of holding referendum on time

Akhbar Al-Youm 2/1/11 -The chairman of the [opposition] Original Democratic Unionist Party, Muhammad Osman al-Mirghani, has warned of conducting the referendum on time and considered that would be a huge risk that could have unpredictable consequences regardless of its result. He described it as a burden which the government would not be able to shoulder. He pointed out that there are foreign powers waiting to sabotage the referendum. He renewed the call for the adoption of confederation between the north and south in order to avoid the consequences of the referendum.

Al-Mirghani made the remarks in his speech marking 55th anniversary of Sudan Independence Day...

UN says all preparations for southern Sudan referendum complete

Ajras Al-Hurriya 3/1/11 - The United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) has confirmed that all preparations are complete for the Southern Sudan Referendum scheduled for 9 January, 2011.

In his message on the occasion of the Sudan's 55th anniversary of Independence Day, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, Haile Menkerios, said, "everything is ready for Southern Sudan referendum polling to start on 9 January 2011 as provided by the CPA despite the extremely short time that was available".

Mr. Menkerios indicated that the two parties showed that they are firmly determined to manage together common security challenges, and not to go back to war as a possible option in the future.

(The SRCG's statement was highlighted by many daily newspapers of Khartoum last Saturday

including the National TV which broadcast it on Friday).

Clinton and Powell to visit Sudan next Saturday

Al-Sahafa 3/1/11– Sudan Media Center (SMC) revealed that a high level US delegation headed by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton would be visiting the Sudan as of next Saturday to follow up southern Sudan referendum. The delegation would include former US secretary of state Colin Powell and John Danforth, former US envoy to Sudan.

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