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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

President Al-Bashir dissolves parliament, relieves governors

Local dailies 3/5/10 – President Al-Bashir yesterday issued republican decrees dissolving the National Assembly and relieving governors in northern states.

Meanwhile, the elected governors of northern states will be sworn in today in front of the President of the Republic and the Chief Justice. After taking oath of office, the new governments will call legislative assemblies in their respective states to meet to elect two representatives from each state for the Council of States. Thereafter, the President of the Republic will call the two Houses to convene for him to take oath of office.

Al-Bashir receives congratulatory cables

Sudan TV 2/5/10 – President Al-Bashir received a cable of congratulation from Chad's President Idriss Deby, CAR President Gen. Francois Bozize and President of Djibouti Ismail Gaili. According to **The Sudan Vision**, Al-Bashir also received congratulation from OIC Secretary-General Akmal Addeen Ihsan Oglo.

NCP downplays opposition refusal to participate in coming government

Sudan Tribune website 2/5/10 - The NCP played down the rejection of opposition parties to recognize the election results and to participate in the next government.

The NCP "does not insist on the participation of these parties in the government or consider their refusal to recognize the election results," said Mustafa Osman Ismail, head of the NCP foreign relations office on Sunday.

Mustafa said this rejection is mainly motivated by their severe defeat in the elections. He also stressed that the NCP seeks to form a broad-based government based on the weight of political forces represented in the parliament.

Leaks on formation of upcoming government

Al-Wifaq 3/5/10 – sources have revealed that Ali Osman Taha will retain his post as Vice President as well as Nafie Ali Nafie (Presidential Assistant) and Awad Al-Jaz (Minister of Finance). However, the sources indicated that Al-Jaz might take over as Cabinet Affairs Minister if an experienced personality is found to take over the finance portfolio. According to the sources, three persons have been nominated for the foreign affairs portfolio: Dr. Ghazi Salah Al-Din, Dr. Lam Akol and Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail.

SPLM accuses NCP of undermining security in the South

Al-Sahafa 3/5/10 – The SPLM has warned of possible collapse of the CPA and accused the NCP of undermining security in the south to block or delay the conduct of referendum on schedule. The SPLM also warned that it would raise this issue with the IGAD, the UN and the CPA partners.

SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum said they possess confirmed information that NCP armed elements had sneaked into the South and they had actually attacked some areas. He said the NCP is supporting the SPLM-DC to create militias to undermine security in the South to delay or prevent the conduct of referendum on schedule. "This is dangerous and a betrayal of

the CPA," he said, warning that such practices would harm the relationship between the two partners and would lead to the collapse of the peace process and trigger chaos. "

Amum has also criticized the NEC for delaying the announcement of election results for the various legislative assemblies in the South, describing the delay as "conspiracy against the South".

Clinton says unhappy with US role in Sudan, committed to bringing Bashir before justice

Sudan Tribune website 2/5/10 - The US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said today that she's not satisfied with the role played by the US in Sudan but described the situation in the country as "explosive" and "complicated".

"There were many, many things wrong with it. But there hadn't been an election in many years, and so part of our goal was to try to empower opposition parties, empower people to go out and vote. Thousands and thousands did. The result, I think, was pretty much foreordained that Bashir would come out the winner, and that's unfortunate" Clinton said.

"We are turning all of our attention to trying to help the South and to "mitigate" against the attitudes of the North. I can't sit here and say that we are satisfied, because I'm certainly not satisfied with where we are and what we're doing, but it is an immensely complicated arena" she added.

Clinton described Bashir as an indicted war criminal and stressed that the US "is very committed to seeing him brought to justice".

"I can't take anything seriously that Bashir says....But here's what we're trying to do. When we came into office, Bashir threw out the groups, the nongovernmental organizations, who were providing most of the aid in the camps in Darfur, which could have been a disastrous humanitarian crisis" the top US diplomat said.

"We were able to get a lot of the help back in and we're beginning to see some slight progress in Darfur. I don't want to overstate it because it is still a deplorable situation. But we are working to try to get the people back to their homes, out of the camps" she added.

Clinton emphasized that engagement is the best option in dealing with the Sudan crisis despite calls within the US for tougher measures against Khartoum.

"Now, the United States could back off and say we won't deal with these people, we're not going to have anything to do with them, Bashir is a war criminal. I don't think that will improve the situation. So along with our partners – the UK, Norway, neighboring countries – we are trying to manage what is a very explosive problem".

JEM rebels freeze peace talks with Sudanese army

Sudan Tribune website 2/5/10 – the JEM suspended today its participation in the peace process brokered by the AU-UN mediation and hosted by Qatar.

Sudanese army and JEM clashed for more than forty times in the restive region of Darfur since the signing of a framework agreement in Doha on February 23. The deal also included a ceasefire the parties had to finalize before March 15 with the signing of a peace agreement.

However, the discussions between the two parties had never started as JEM had been opposed

to parallel talks with another group established in Doha gathering different factions, the Liberation and Equality Movement (LJM).

"JEM has decided to freeze its participation in the Doha Peace Process," said JEM official spokesperson in a statement released on Sunday. Ahmed Hussein Adam said the decision has been taken following "continuous aerial and ground assaults" on JEM forces.

"The Doha mediation has been informed of this decision and JEM will take necessary action if the government assault on innocent people is repeated."

UN relief chief speaks out against Ugandan rebel violence in DR Congo

UN News 1/5/10 - The top United Nations humanitarian official today condemned the "horrific" atrocities committed by a notorious Uganda rebel group in the volatile northeast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes spoke out against the violence on a visit to Niangara, an area in Orientale Province near the DRC's border with Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR).

"This is unacceptable. We need a rapid solution to what has become a regional crisis," he emphasized.

In meetings with authorities and humanitarian workers in the area, the official voiced concern that the possible drawdown of the UN peacekeeping mission in the country, known as MONUC, could have negative effects on the protection of civilians and on humanitarian access.

Bloody day in El-Fasher after demonstrators march to governor residence

Sudan Tribune website 2/5/10 - The Sudanese police fired at demonstrators in North Darfur capital city of El-Fasher who staged protests and marched to the governor's house over money they lost in a huge Ponzi scheme that collapsed last month.

There has been conflicting figures over the number of people who were killed but the North Darfur government put the toll at 3 and 25 injured.

However, other sources said that at least ten people were shot dead including policemen who exchanged fire with some of the demonstrators who appeared to be armed.

"There have been four to 10 deaths as well as 20 to 30 people injured," the humanitarian worker told AFP on condition of anonymity. Aid workers and UN officials took refuge in their compounds during the confrontation.

"There is a lot of confusion ... We don't know if it is police shooting, or civilians, or the Arab militias in town. They lost a lot of money and are very unhappy," said one aid worker, speaking to Reuters by phone.

The incident follows a previous demonstration that took place this week by hundreds of defrauded investors in front of the El-Fasher's prosecutor's office. The police used tear gas to break up the protestors.

The demonstrators were angry that the governor of North Darfur Osman Kibir backtracked on a promise to compensate them for the money they lost but his office later issued a statement saying that this is "interest money" which is forbidden under Islamic Sharia'a law.

Furthermore, it was reported that aggregate losses could be anywhere from 240-350 million Sudanese pounds (\$120-\$175 million) which included money belonging to investors in other parts of country and abroad.

"It was a Ponzi scheme," said a UN official in Darfur to Reuters, referring to a pyramid model where money is illegally paid from one investor to the other and presented as profit.

"This has been going on for months. It came to a head," added the official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "It went beyond El Fasher. It went to the Diaspora. People have been venting their frustration, gathering in places."

Many investors had sold land or ploughed in their savings to take part in the get-rich-quick scheme. The marketplace in the centre of El-Fasher has been renamed "Al-Mawasir Souk (market)," after the local colloquial Arabic for a swindle. Al-Mawasir has also become the name used across Sudan for the scam.

Khalid, a teacher in El Fasher, said he had lost 12,000 Sudanese pounds (\$5,400) to two businessmen who started taking investments around 10 months ago.

"They said if you have \$10, they will give you some shares or papers. And then after 30 days they will give you \$15."

At first the men did pay up, said Khalid, who only wanted to be identified by his first name. Then the business closed down just before Sudan's national election earlier this month and did not open up afterwards, he added.

"They said they were taking the money, going to Khartoum and other places outside Sudan to buy goods to sell in the markets. That is how they said they made their money. Kibir's office issued a statement today accusing politicians who lost the elections of standing behind the events today stressing that the situation is now under control.

"The state government has nothing to do with the so-called Mawasir market as it is a market that citizens make the profit and loss without interference from the Government" the governor said.

"This plot that came into the spotlight during the demonstration is a political plan, around which the political dead-enders who have lost the last election convened to make up [their] losses".

The official hailed citizens who took the legal route to resolve the matter.

UNAMID said that it had instructed its personnel to stay at their workplace.

The leader of Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) Abdel-Wahid Al-Nur told Sudan Tribune that he condemns the killings "in the strongest possible terms".

"This is a continuation of the pattern by the regime to kill the people of Darfur as they moved from targeting people in the camps to those in the towns. This is why we say there will not be peace without an end to the killings" Al-Nur said.

According to *The Citizen*, 24 demonstrators were reportedly killed and over 18 were injured in the shooting, expecting the toll to rise because of serious injuries of some of the wounded persons.

Southern Kordofan's first reintegration program to give ex-soldiers cows and animal health training

Radio Miraya website 2/05/10 - About 170 ex-soldiers will be trained in animal health and given 3 cows each in South Kordofan's first reintegration program. All of the ex-soldiers had requested to be trained in animal husbandry. They are the first batch of military personnel under the state's Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) exercise that aims to reintegrate former soldiers into society. The ultimate goal of DDR is to fully boost long term security and stability.

The process is sponsored by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and implemented by Surduba Society for Development and Stability.

Border demarcation committee sets to work on Sunday

Al-Ayyam 3/5/10 - The committee charged with delineating the border between Khartoum State and Northern Kordofan State will undertake on Sunday a field visit to the border areas between the two states. The team will assess the situation on the ground before starting the demarcation processes.

Another veteran senior army officer joins Independent candidate Gen. Athor

Sudan Tribune website 3/5/10 - A veteran senior officer in the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) is reported to have joined the former army deputy chief of staff who has carried out deadly attack against the SPLA forces.

Brig. General John Jok Gai has reportedly joined Gen. George Athor Deng, who turned violent after losing the Jonglei state's gubernatorial race to the incumbent governor, Kuol Manyang Juuk.

Brig. Gen. John Jok was a popular army officer during the formation of the SPLM/A in 1983 in Itang, Ethiopia, and was the officer in charge of the police stations in the residential area which accommodated most of the SPLM/A senior officers in 1980s.

He is the first Brig. General to be named after the Government of Southern Sudan's statements suspecting about seven Brig. Generals who have sided with Gen. George Athor.

Other generals are suspected to be mostly from Gen. Athor's home area and have coordination in many areas in Jonglei state. Brig. Gen. John Jok was recently deployed in Wau, Western Bahr el-Ghazal as deputy in charge of the police force in the state.

He was also the former Commissioner of Nyirol County of Jonglei state and was removed by a presidential decree two years ago. His family members told Sudan Tribune that they have confirmed that he is no where to be known. He has since two weeks ago cut off his phone lines. Wild spread rumors in Bor town talk of Gen. George Athor warning the town residents to leave the town until May 8 dateline, or face the consequences of his imminent attacks.

He is also reported to have recruited former SPLA unconfirmed officers and infantry soldiers on his side and already promoted some of them.

Gen. Athor possesses a number of pick up trucks and ammunition depots, according to security sources, who said the number of his forces could have now reached about nearly a thousand. His exact location is not known as of now since his withdrawal from his home town, Khorfulus. Military analysts say his recent denial on phones about his innocent on the Doleib attacks was

just a maneuvering tactic.

Opinion: Sudan's Other Crisis

The NY Times 2/5/10 - One year after the International Criminal Court accused Sudan's president, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, of war crimes for the genocidal rampage in Darfur, he was re-elected in a blatantly manipulated election.

Mr. Bashir has no legitimacy and he must stand trial for his crimes. But those facts must not divert the world's attention from another potential crisis: the very real danger of renewed civil war between Arab Muslim northern Sudan and the south, which is largely Christian and animist. The last conflict — from 1983 to 2005 — left about two million people dead.

Under a United States-backed peace agreement, the semi-autonomous southern region will hold a referendum in January to decide its future. Voters are expected to choose independence. Leaders in both the north and the south pledged to respect the results. But there is so much oil involved that they can't be depended on to keep their word — without strong encouragement from the United States and other major players.

Southern Sudan produces most of the country's oil. Mr. Bashir and his cronies are unlikely to give that up easily. Meanwhile, leaders in the south are likely to resist giving up the oil-rich border area of Abyei if it votes separately to join the north. All sides need to understand that this isn't a zero sum game. The oil now gets to market via a pipeline through the north to Port Sudan. Khartoum could continue to share the benefits with a long-term contract under which the south would pay royalties to use the pipeline. And the south needs the pipeline and stability to keep pumping that oil.

Washington, the African Union, the United Nations, the European Union and China, which has growing investments in Sudan, must press both sides to ensure a fair and free referendum and to honor the voters' verdict. They must make it clear — firmly and often — that renewed violence is not the answer.

Last year, the Obama administration replaced a punishment-heavy approach toward Sudan with one that includes some incentives, although officials continue to debate the right mix. What is most needed is sustained attention, and pressure, in this critical period.

There are still a lot of unresolved issues that need to be settled now — including border demarcation, water rights and the status of citizens on both sides of the border. Those will prove even more volatile if left hanging until after the vote.

Washington is sending more diplomats to southern Sudan. They have a lot of work to do — and not a lot of time — to help the leaders there improve their ability to govern and promote the rule of law. Otherwise, the desperately impoverished region runs the risk of becoming a failed state the day it is born.

Temperatures to soar in coming days

Radio Miraya website 2/05/10 - Temperatures are expected to soar in Khartoum in the coming days. According to the Meteorological Corporation, the rise in temperature is due to the Orbital Separation's shift from the south to the north. Jumaa Ali Muhammad, a meteorological specialist at the corporation said temperatures have reached 45 degree Celsius in the north and is expected to rise to 47 degree Celsius. Muhammad further added that heavy clouds will result because of the temperature increase, which will follow with heavy rainfall.

Meanwhile, medical sources in Khartoum have cautioned against the effects of sudden temperature increases, especially among children and the elderly. Dr. Abdullah Ali Al-seed, a paediatrician at the Medical and Technological Science University in Khartoum told Radio Miraya that children are most at risk.