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Links

- *The New York Times: Southern Sudan Feels Freedom Close at Hand:* http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/09/world/africa/09sudan.html?_r=1&ref=Africa
- *Sudaneseonline: Sudan and the Winds of Change; Lessons from Tunis and Egypt by Abdel-Rahman El-Mahdi:* http://www.sudaneseonline.com/en3/publish/Articles_and_Analyses_12/Sudan_and_the_Winds_of_Change_Lessons_fm_Tunis_and_Egypt_by_Abdel-Rahman_El-Mahdi.shtml
- *AFP: Sudan Facebook group calls for protests:* <http://news.xin.msn.com/en/sci-tech/article.aspx?cp-documentid=4610217>

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Referendum Watch

98.83% of votes support secession of southern Sudan

Xinhua Juba, 30/01/11 - UP to 98.83 percent of votes cast in the southern Sudan referendum, which had been conducted earlier this month, supported a secession of the autonomous region from Sudan, according to preliminary results published by the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission today.

According to the statistics at the southern Sudan 2011 website, out of the totally 3,851,994 votes, 3,792,518 were for the secession and 44,888 or 1.17 percent were for the unity, while 6,222 were blanket votes, and 8,366 were invalid votes.

The highest rate for the secession was witnessed in southern Sudan, where 3,697,467 votes, or 99.57 percent, were in favour of the secession while 16,129 votes, or 0.43 percent, were in favour of the unity.

In north Sudan, where a majority of the population are Arab Muslims, 38,003 votes, 57.65 percent, were in favour of the secession and 27,918 votes, or 42.35 percent, were in favour of the unity.

In eight foreign countries where referendum was conducted among southern Sudanese citizens, 57,048 votes or 98.55 percent were for the secession and 841 or 1.45 percent were against it. *[Please find separate attachment on FVP Salva Kiir's statement following announcement of the results]*

President Al-Bashir reiterates commitment to respect referendum results

Al-Sahafa Addis Ababa, 30/01/11 – President Al-Bashir said in Addis Ababa yesterday that his government remains committed to respecting the outcome of the southern Sudan referendum and to help contribute to sustainable peace and stability in the region, Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail said. Al-Bashir who was addressing a closed-door meeting of the Heads of State and governments participating at the Addis summit briefed the participants on the current developments in Sudan, especially the referendum. He reiterated commitment to the sustainability of peace in the country, stressing that the north and the south would continue their relations regardless of the outcome of the referendum, given the common values they share.

Sudanese police clash with students in Khartoum

Reuters Khartoum, 30/01/11 - Police beat and arrested students in central Khartoum, witnesses said on Sunday, as demonstrations broke out throughout the city demanding the government resign.

"Dozens of police have begun to beat the students with batons in Jackson Square," one demonstrator called Mohamed Salah told *Reuters*. "Some have been arrested."

A *Reuters* witness said armed riot police fired teargas and surrounded students in at least two universities in the capital.

Hundreds of heavily armed police began to patrol all Khartoum's main streets on Sunday morning as young people started gathering. Government newspapers carried front pages ordering people not to go out onto the streets.

Groups have emerged on social networking sites and Sudanese websites, calling themselves "Youth for Change" and "The Spark", since the uprisings in nearby Tunisia and close ally Egypt

this month. One Facebook group had attracted almost 15,000 members by Sunday morning.

Messages on Facebook suggested the organisers were hoping to echo neighbouring Egypt's uprising and overthrow the Khartoum government, which they blame for high prices and accuse of curbing freedoms.

Sudan's presidency agrees on timeframe to resolve Abyei issue

Radio Miraya 29/01/11 - The Sudanese Presidency has agreed on a timeframe starting from February to mid-March to resolve the Abyei issue, GoSS Information and Broadcasting Minister said last Friday.

The two partners have agreed to resolve the Abyei issue peacefully through dialogue and through the participation of the African Union, Barnaba Marial Benjamin told the press in Juba.

Meanwhile, *Khartoum Monitor* reports today (30/01/11) that Abyei Chief Administrator Kual Deng has criticised the recent statements by some Misseriya elements rejecting the Kadugli Agreement. He pointed out that such statements do not help in contributing to peace and stability in the area.

GoSS commissions new air force with 10 choppers

The Citizen Juba, 30/01/11 – The recent arrival of the first of 10 helicopters marks the birth of south Sudan's air force, SPLA Spokesperson Philip Aguer said on Friday. He said that this enables the southern military to tackle militia groups and secures its vast territory. Aguer did not say where the aircraft were bought from but said they were transport aircraft which could be used as gunships against the LRA.

"If there are attacks from the LRA ... we must be capable of getting our forces to the border quickly, which we have not been able to do (in the past)," said Aguer.

The SPLA's new mobility will take pressure off the U.N. peacekeeping mission, which transported voting materials across the south for the referendum, he said.

UNMIS also transports officials when necessary because of the lack of roads, as the former guerrilla fighters prepare to form an independent government and a regular army.

Aguer said the south's air force would not antagonise Khartoum because of the north's vastly superior air power.

"They have hundreds of jet fighters, how could they be antagonised by 10 transport helicopters? ... we want to help them and work together to make Sudan secure in the future."

The northern army spokesman said he was not worried. "They are transport helicopters," al-Sawarmi Khaled said. "Obviously they can be used as military helicopters if they want, but it seems they are not intending to do that."

Gunbattles between tribes in the heavily armed south and SPLA clashes with anti-government militias are common. Aguer said the helicopters were also needed to secure the south's vast territory, roughly the size of France.

We have alternate sources of revenue come southern separation – NCP

Al-Rai Al-Aam Khartoum, 28/01/11 – NCP finance secretary Al-Zubeir Ahmed Al-Hassan says northern Sudan has ready sources of revenue to replace their loss from the oil revenue. He pointed out that the north would increase oil production in its territory after southern Sudanese

separation and would tap on the country's gold resources to increase hard currency reserves. The north would also fine-tune measures to collect customs dues and taxes and clamp down on illegal smuggling as well as cut down on government expenditure to improve revenue collection.

The north would also improve its agricultural industry focusing on oil seed production and the expansion in sugar production. Other measures would include tapping on the country's vast animal resources and mineral industry, among others.

We have not requested dual citizenship for southerners in the north –Alor

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 29/01/11 – GoSS Regional Cooperation Minister Deng Alor says the NCP and the SPLM have reached an understanding on the issue of currency. The two sides have agreed that each side would have a separate currency by 9th July this year and that southern Sudan would continue to use the Sudanese pound for a while. The two sides, he said, have also agreed to an exchange of prisoners, pointing out that charges against female inmates in serving time in northern Sudanese prisons for brewing alcohol would be dropped as soon as they step on southern Sudanese soil.

On nationality, Alor said that the GoSS has not requested dual citizenship for southern Sudanese in the north but AUIHP head Thabo Mbeki has advocated for these measures to help preserve the rights of southern Sudanese in the north and that of their northern counterparts in the south. He criticized the NCP's rejection to the idea of dual nationality pointing out that any Sudanese has the right to dual citizenship in the same manner in which some NCP members have dual citizenship.

Initiative in Juba seeks peaceful coexistence between north and south Sudan

Al-Ayyam Juba, 29/01/11 – The Popular Initiative for Peace and Peaceful Coexistence between north and south Sudan has called for an end to tribal violence in the north-south border areas and is encouraging dialogue between the different tribes of southern Sudan. In a statement yesterday, the initiative underlined the need to chart a strategy for social peace and peaceful coexistence through reconciliation conferences between the different tribes and ethnic and racial groupings. The initiative is the brain child of a voluntary NGO operating in the field of humanitarian aid.

The Al-Bashir, Al-Mahdi talks did shake the opposition, PCP admits

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 29/01/11 – The opposition Popular Congress Party (PCP) says it would only hold talks with the NCP if its leader, Dr. Turabi, is set free alongside other senior members of the party. Ibrahim Al-Sanousi, party Assistant Secretary-General, did admit however that the recent meeting between President Al-Bashir and National Umma Party leader Sadig Al-Mahdi did shake the opposition alliance.

Sudan outlines “shuttle diplomacy” to offset secession impact

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 29/01/11 - Sudan will embark on a shuttle diplomacy in the upcoming period to contain the challenges of the imminent secession of south Sudan, the country's ministry of foreign affairs announced on Saturday.

In an interview with Sudan's official news agency *SUNA*, the official spokesman of the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Khalid Musa, pointed out that the primary goal of the approach is to contain the “negative” effects of south Sudan secession on the country's foreign policy.

The second goal, he added, is to reduce the amount of “foreign presence” in the country,

represented in the UN Mission to Sudan (UNMIS) and the AU-UN Hybrid Peacekeeping Mission Darfur (UNAMID).

The spokesman said that the new policy would focus on improving Sudan's image which he said was being tarnished by lobby groups in the Western world, adding that the new diplomacy would aim to normalize relations with the West.

Other Highlights

SPLM in Southern Kordofan accuses NCP of forging the elections register

Al-Ayyam Khartoum, 29/01/11 – The Advisor for the head of the SPLM in Southern Kordofan has accused the NCP of trying to register over 25 children minors in the Southern Kordofan voter register in Kadugli town. Gamar Dalman told the press yesterday that the SPLM agent at the centre tried to stop them from registering to no avail as NCP agents insisted on them registering.

Meanwhile, *Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports yesterday that the National Elections Commission has rebuffed the allegations of irregularities in the voter registry for Southern Kordofan saying that there was an argument at one of the centres but it had nothing to do with the alleged registration of minors.

Rebels commit themselves to work together for peace in Darfur

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 29/01/11 - The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) will meet next week for the first time in Doha to show their commitment to the peace process and discuss ways to coordinate their action.

"We, the undersigned agree to meet in Doha by the 5th day of February 2011, to demonstrate a common commitment to peace and justice for our region and our country," says a joint communiqué signed by JEM and LJM leaders respectively Khalil Ibrahim and Tigani El-Sissi released on Saturday 29 January.

The two rebel leaders further called on the Sudanese government to resume immediately peace talks in Doha "for the purpose of reaching a comprehensive political solution to the conflict and an end to the suffering of our people".

The Sudanese government withdrew its negotiating delegation from Doha after a deadlock in the talks with the LJM rebels over the power sharing file particularly Darfur status and the post of vice-president demanded by the rebels.

The government also said JEM was not serious to reach peace despite the presence of a delegation from the rebel group in Doha and the start of talks for a cessation of hostilities deal with the government negotiating team.

Khartoum announced the launch of an internal process to end the conflict involving tribal leaders, civil society groups, displaced persons, governors and elected institutions in the region. The process is also coupled with another initiative supported by the Sudanese government led by the former South African president turned peace broker, Thabo Mbeki.

The two rebel groups reiterated their rejection to the two processes.

"Any attempt to move negotiations inside Sudan will necessarily give the Government of Sudan

control over the process. This "Khartoumization" of the process is unacceptable to us and represents an unconscionable move to grant the perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity control over their victims.

The rapprochement between the two groups is seen as a good boost to the efforts led by the mediators in Doha who worked tirelessly to achieve progress in the talks despite intrinsic and extrinsic hindrances related to the political situation in Sudan.

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