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Headlines

- Elections on schedule will boost CPA– President Al-Bashir (**Dailies**)
- US allocates \$ 21 million for Sudan’s elections (**Al-Sahafa**)
- UN to deploy staff in all states by September to assist elections (**Dailies**)
- Failure to establish a new Sudan will mean secession – Amum (**al-Sahafa**)
- Government rejects US base for normalization – Adviser (**al-Khartoum**)
- Parliament calls for investigation in Jonglei incidents (**Akhir Lahza**)
- AU not vouching for Bashir’s innocence - Kenya FM (**ST**)
- FVP visits Uganda (**Akhbar Al-Youm**)
- CPC to visit Abyei (**al-Ayyam**)
- Locally-recruited staffs enjoy no immunity – source (**Al-Intibaha**)
- Justice Ministry to receive SPLM Yassir Arman’s case today (**Dailies**)
- SPLA kidnaps 20 women in the Blue Nile (**Al-Intibaha**)

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Highlights

Elections on schedule will boost CPA– President Al-Bashir

Local dailies report President Omar Al-Bashir yesterday addressed a ceremony held to mark the 19th Anniversary of the Sudanese Workers Trade Union. According to the **Sudan Vision**, President Al-Bashir stressed that holding of the upcoming elections on schedule would boost the CPA implementation, expressing his commitment to whatever results of the elections since they demonstrate the will of the nation.

US allocates \$ 21 million for Sudan's elections

Al-Sahafa reports the NEC and USAID yesterday signed an agreement whereby the later granted \$21 million as part of US support for Sudan's elections process. The fund will be managed by a three-member committee from the signatories.

Meanwhile, **Sudan Tribune website** 5/8/09 reported that SPLM has boycotted a meeting to formally receive the electoral commission's final formation of the geographical constituencies based on the fifth census results that the movement refused to recognize.

The SPLM spokesperson Yen Mathew said that the SPLM "does not want to be part of an institutionalized forgery program."

"The elections commission relied in creating the geographical constituencies on the rigged census results...we do not want to subscribe to the grand deceit to our people hoping for democratic transformation," Mathew said.

UN to deploy staff in all states by end of September to assist elections

Local dailies report UNMIS Electoral Affairs Officer Ray Kennedy yesterday briefed the press on the Mission's role in the upcoming elections. According to **Al-Sahafa**, Mr. Kennedy told reporters yesterday that the Mission would deploy staff in all the Sudan's states by the end of September to assist the elections process and that comes in response to a request from the NEC. Kennedy did not rule out intervention of UNMIS troops if violence takes place. However, he explained that UNMIS would act in line with its mandate and the SRSG's decision.

"Sudan faces a complex challenge in holding its first multi-party polls in two decades, warned the head of the UN Electoral Affairs Division in Sudan," **Sudan Tribune website** 5/8/09 reported.

Mr. Ray Kennedy, highlighting the tremendous difficulties facing the NEC said "size and physical landscape of the country, together with weak infrastructure in large parts of the county, would present a challenge for any election management body."

He added that polling for six offices at the same time – President of the Republic, President of the Government of Southern Sudan, state governors, the National Assembly, the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, and State Assemblies – along with different elections taking place in different parts of the country is a complex task.

Further he stressed "the time pressures that the NEC is under with the election law being passed two and a half years late and the establishment of the NEC itself taking far longer than

envisioned in the CPA and in the National Elections Act."

"Together, all of these factors make these elections some of the most complex and challenging on record," he underlined.

"Both UNMIS and UNAMID are working with the police to develop and implement training programs on election security. Our colleagues in UNDP are providing support to the process by managing funds from donor countries and purchasing some of the materials required for voter registration and the elections."

"And we are working with our colleagues in UNIFEM and the Mission's Gender Unit to ensure that women are informed about and engaged in the electoral process," he added.

Asked whether the SPLM rejecting of the census results would delay the electoral process, Kennedy said "On the issue of the census results, what I would say is that we do face a very tight timeframe. Anything that potentially delays any part of that timeframe could have an impact on when the elections are held."

Reacting to remarks by Sudanese Presidential Assistant Nafi Ali Nafi who rejected the participation of "unfriendly countries" in the electoral monitoring, the UNMIS official said the UN provides only "technical assistance to the NEC." The UN "has no role in monitoring the process. Monitoring is the function of party agents on the one hand and both international and domestic observers on the other hand."

"According to our calculations, we could be asked to assist with the transportation of 7.5 million kilograms of election material."

Failure to establish a new Sudan will mean secession – Amum

Speaking to the London-based *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, SPLM SG Pagan Amum has denied asking Washington to pressurize Khartoum during his address to the Congress' Foreign Relations Committee meeting, *Al-Sahafa* reports. Amum said he only urged the Committee that honouring the CPA commitments should be made a condition for the NCP before Washington normalizes its relations with Khartoum.

Asked what could happen if the SPLM does not win in general elections he said, "If our efforts to establish a new Sudan are unsuccessful, separation will be the alternative".

Government rejects US base for normalization – Adviser

Addressing a consultative meeting on US-African relations yesterday, presidential adviser Mustafa Osman Ismail revealed that Sudan government had rejected an offer by the US to set up a military base in Sudan in exchange for normalization of relations between Washington and Khartoum, *Al-Khartoum* reports.

In a related development, *Sudan Tribune website* 5/8/09 reported that the visiting US Congressman Keith Ellison today held talks with the Sudanese officials on the CPA implementation and the ongoing efforts to settle Darfur crisis.

Ellison will visit North Darfur today where he will meet the UNAMID leadership and visit IDPs camps. He will conclude his five-day visit by a trip to Juba for talks with First Vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit on the CPA implementation.

Parliament calls for investigation in Jonglei incidents

Akhir Lahza reports the Parliament has expressed concerns that a humanitarian crisis might hit Akobo following the recent tribal clashes. The National Assembly has called on the GoSS to investigate the incident and has also asked the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs to intervene to provide assistance to the victims.

Meanwhile, **Al-Intibaha** reports that Galwak Ruon, an MP for Akobo at the National Assembly, has described the recent killings in Akobo as "genocide against the Nuer". He called on the GoSS to protect the innocent civilians, adding that a parliamentary fact-finding team is on its way to the area.

AU not vouching for Bashir's innocence - Kenya FM

Sudan Tribune website 5/8/09 — The Kenyan foreign minister Moses Wetangula today defended the resolution adopted by the African Union (AU) granting reprieve to Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir from arrest in the continent.

"The AU does not and has not and will not say that President Bashir is innocent, because we have no capacity to say that. He has been investigated, he has been indicted," Wetangula told reporters at a press conference with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Nairobi.

"The Security Council could suspend the warrant for a year because there was visible progress in Sudan, that there was internal discussions, there were talks going on in Qatar, and we wanted to see whether that texture can bring relative calm and peace in the country," he added.

"Nobody will stand in the way of President Bashir being arrested and prosecuted, but for now, the AU's position is that let's see what internal mechanisms can be done. I don't think the AU is asking for too much," the Kenyan foreign minister said.

The US Secretary of State standing next to Wetangula appeared critical of the AU position.

"The United States and others have continued to support the need to eventually bring President Bashir to justice, but he's found a lot of protectors, and mostly in this continent, where people have allowed him to travel and have not used the forces of their own judicial and law enforcement institutions to arrest him, to turn him over the ICC," she said.

KTN TV 6/8/09 reports US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told a press conference, following closed-door consultations with Kenyan President Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga on 5 August in Nairobi, that it was "very significant" that the ICC had returned an indictment against President Al-Bashir. She said, "The actions of the ICC sent a clear message that the actions by Al-Bashir and his government were outside the bounds of accepted standards and that there would no longer be impunity."

Clinton pointed out that while the US continues to support the need to bring Al-Bashir to justice, the Sudanese leader has found "protectors" especially in Africa. Clinton said, nevertheless, there was a legal process to be followed and that there is often a delay between an indictment and an arrest.

"We know this sometimes takes time. If you look at some of the international tribunals there are periods of time during which the investigation takes place, if it does get started, in this case it did. Then if an indictment is returned there is often time before the person indicted is brought to justice," she said.

Clinton was responding to a question about the apparent inaction of the international community to bring President Al-Bashir to justice over violence in the Sudanese province of Darfur.

Kenyan Foreign Minister Moses Wetangula, added that the African Union was not suggesting that President Bashir was innocent. Instead, he said, the AU had asked for the suspension of the indictment for one year in order that peace talks in Sudan could make progress.

"The AU does not, has not and will not say that President Al-Bashir is innocent, because we have no capacity to say that. He has been investigated, he has been indicted. What the AU asked the [UN] Security Council to do was that within the context of Article 16 of the Statute of Rome, Security Council could suspend the warrant for a year because there was visible progress in Sudan, there were internal discussions, there were talks going on in Qatar and we wanted to see whether that texture can bring relative calm and peace in the country because we do know that peace security, stability and all these factors must be looked at within the same context." He said.

On Somalia, Mrs Clinton said the US government greatly appreciated Kenya's efforts in dealing with the Somali conflict and added that she would meet President Shaykh Shariff on 6 August in order to discuss what the international community could do to support the Somali government.

"I will be meeting Shaykh Shariff tomorrow to discuss what else the international community can do to try to support his efforts to stabilize Somalia, to create a functioning government," she said.

On piracy off the Somali coast, Clinton said Kenya had absorbed the bulk of the burden of receiving and holding pirates and that her government would like to offer some assistance in this regard.

She said, "The United States is leading an international contact group on piracy. We want to provide more assistance to Kenya which is offering this very important service."

FVP visits Uganda

Akhbar Al-Youm reports FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit yesterday left for Uganda on a two-day visit for talks with Ugandan officials on bilateral relations, border trade and LRA activity in Southern Sudan. According to **Al-Akhbar**, Mr. Kiir arrived in Uganda and discussed with the President of Uganda Yowerio Museveni the recent LRA movements in South and Uganda's stand on the ICC.

CPC to visit Abyei

The CPC, in coordination with UNMIS, will undertake a visit to Abyei during the next few days to assess measures on the ground to implement the PCA ruling on Abyei, **al-Ayyam** reports.

Locally-recruited staffs enjoy no immunity – government source

Al-Intibaha reports Sudan government announced that the locally-recruited Sudanese nationals working with foreign missions and UN in Khartoum enjoy no immunity, adding the immunity is enjoyed by the international staff and diplomats dispatched by their governments for work in the Sudan. An unnamed source told reporters yesterday that some locally recruited Sudanese nationals enjoy a limited immunity while performing their official work.

Khartoum North Court judge Mudathir Al-Rashid earlier said he was determined to liaise with the MFA to find out about the immunity enjoyed by Ms Lubna Ahmed Hussein in order to

continue the trial.

Justice Ministry to receive SPLM Yassir Arman's case today

Local dailies report the case of SPLM official and MP Mr. Yassir Arman will be referred to the Ministry of Justice today. According to **Al-Raed**, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Abdul Daem Zumrawi said the Justice Minister would forward the file to the National Assembly with a request to the Speaker to lift immunity from Arman for trial. He said investigators were in possession of evidence including CDs that incriminate Arman.

SPLA kidnaps 20 women in the Blue Nile

Al-Intibaha reports SPLA force assaulted civilians in the Boot Locality (Blue Nile State) and kidnapped twenty women. A source said the assault occurred on 2 August. Reportedly, civilians have called on UNMIS to investigate the abduction and to put an end to the SPLA attacks.