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# Highlights

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## **Abyei boundary committee marks two points at Abyei-Unity border**

The Abyei border demarcation committee has actually started its work on the ground by marking two points on the southern part of the border between Abyei and Unity state but has failed to do a similar marking in the northern due to security concerns, **Al-Sahafa** reports.

According to reliable sources, the Presidency gave two planes to the committee after the UN has refused to give it three planes instead of one. But sources said one of the planes given by Presidency broke down as soon as it was inducted, adding that the committee began its work on the southern part of the area since it is comparatively safer. The sources added that the committee called on the Presidency to address the issue of threats in the western part, citing the harassment to UNMIS troops when they approached those areas. The committee said it would use the planes to surmount the security obstacle but sources are concerned by reports of mobilization amid the Messeriya.

In another development, **Sudan Tribune website** 6/11/09 reported that Dr. Francis Mading Deng, a son of late Dinka Ngok paramount chief Deng Majok, who for administrative purposes requested former British district commissioner during colonial period, to transfer Abyei to Kordofan, called for peaceful coexistence between Dinka Ngok and Messeriya communities in the region.

Deng who paid a visit to his ancestors' home in Abyei today said resumption of ancestral ties between the two communities is an alternative to securing peace and stability in the area.

"I call upon the Nine Dinka Ngok clans and the Messeriya to work together in securing possible ways to settle differences that exists due to civil wars."

"These differences were neither caused by Messeriya communities nor Dinka Ngok but situation of wars; he adds urging the Abyei administration to focus on peace building and reconciliation initiatives."

Mading is reported having congratulated the two parties, the ruling National Congress Party of President Basir and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement for keeping their forces out of the town.

"I was impressed when I saw children playing, moving freely and every one else walking about in the town unlike when I first came in 2004," he said.

He also congratulated the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) for being supportive to the local administration and for keeping open eyes on the security situation in the region.

"I am told UNMIS is doing great job here, he queried while talking to chief administrator, Brigadier Arop Mayak in his Abyei office," said Dr. Francis who is the Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide.

Deng was accompanied by senior Government officials from the GoNU and foreign diplomats from Khartoum.

He is said to have been received at UNMIS Abyei Camp helicopter landing zone by senior Abyei administration officials headed by chief administrator and traditional chiefs including women and youth groups.

### **SPLM delaying elections because it lacks popular following – Nafie**

Presidential Assistant and NCP Deputy Chairman for Political and organizational Affairs Nafie Ali Nafie has described the SPLM/SPLA as “anarchistic” adding that the South is ruled by the SPLA intelligence and the SPLM is delaying elections because it lacks popular backing in the South, **Al-Sahafa** reports. Nafie, who was speaking at a press conference yesterday, said separation of the South before the elections would be the gravest crime in the country and a violation of the agreement and the law, adding the upcoming elections would be free of any rigging, promising to take legal action against any attempt to rig elections.

**Al-Intibaha** reports Nafie launched an unprecedented attack on the SPLM, holding it responsible for insecurity in the South. He revealed that Darfur SLM leader Abdul Wahid was recruited by the SPLM in New Site. He added that US envoy Scott Gration’s attempts to resolve dispute between the NCP and SPLM over pending issues was blocked by what he described as “Abyei veto” and dismissed claims about a US proposal to postpone elections in the South until referendum is conducted. Nafie said SPLA intelligence is the de fact ruler in the South. “We remained patient for a long time despite restriction of freedoms and detention of NCP leaders in the South hopefully that the SPLM will learn politics and the art of how to run a state,” he said.

According to **Al-Wifaq**, Nafie told journalists that the NCP would not recognize separation of the South if the SPLM declares it before the referendum is conducted. “Any reckless measure on the part of the SPLM would not be respected”, he said, hoping that the Movement would not declare secession before the elections are held.

### **There must be a solution – FM Deng Alor**

FM Deng Alor said the NCP and the SPLM have not reached an agreement on the pending issues including the referendum and the national security bills, **Al-Khartoum** reports. However, Alor said the meetings between the two partners resume today and revealed that that US envoy Scott Gration returned home. Alor said any problem has a solution and there must be a solution to the sticky issues, warning of the NCP “monopoly” of power and feet dragging on key bills. He said the SPLM would not standby while the NCP continues to behave like this, adding the SPLM would take a decisive decision but he did not elaborate.

**Sudan Tribune website** 7/11/09 reported US special envoy to Sudan retired general Scott Gration left on Friday after failing to bridge differences between the two major partners in the Government of National unity (GoNU).

The new development comes despite earlier indications that the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) were close to agreeing on disputed item of referendum and the census through Gration’s mediation.

The particularly sensitive issue of referendum is centered on the percentage of voters turnout required to recognize the self determination process valid and the percentage of ‘yes’ votes to declare an independent South Sudan.

The census dispute relates to the use of the one conducted last year which the South considers to be understating their numbers for the purposes of determining the geographical constituencies in the April 2010 elections.

SPLM suggested using the population percentages in post-elections census but the NCP rejects

it.

It remains unclear what the next steps would be for both parties and the US administration which is working hard to prevent the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), it helped broker, from unraveling.

There is growing internal and regional concern that South Sudan may resort to a unilateral declaration of independence should the effort to agree on the referendum law fails.

But the powerful Sudanese presidential adviser Nafie Ali Nafie warned the South from undertaking this step.

“Any irresponsible or illegal move will find no respect...if the choice [through referendum] is separation then we will accept the new state and it will enjoy the full international support but anything else will mean that they fear that people of the South will chose unity” Nafie told reporters today in a press conference.

Nafie directed fierce criticism at the SPLM accusing it of violating the human rights of its citizens saying the South “is governed by the SPLM intelligence”.

“The [SPLA] intelligence is composed of isolated islands with no unified administration” he said.

Nafie accused the SPLA of attacking the NCP supporters in the South through “torture and arrests”.

He presented two NCP members in the South who recounted their experience of torture and harassment by the SPLA including continuous interrogation and water boarding.

Kamal Ebeid, another NCP leading figure, was quoted by Sudan official news agency (SUNA) as saying that the SPLM in its current form “cannot be a strategic partner to achieve peace and security in Sudan”.

### **President Al-Bashir enters his name on the voter registration ledger**

President Al-Bashir has called on all the Sudanese people to register their names in order to exercise their full rights during the upcoming elections, *local dailies* report. The President made the remarks after registering his name at a voter registration centre in Khartoum yesterday.

Meanwhile, *Al-Sahafa* reports NEC Chairman Abel Alier as saying that the voter registration process is progressing according to the schedule, citing challenges in some areas. He added that the NEC agreed to extend voter registration time in Khartoum State until 8:00 pm every day.

### **Al-Bashir to meet Mubarak before proceeding to Turkey**

*Al-Sahafa* reports a high-level Government official as saying that President Al-Bashir who is presently in Cairo will proceed to Turkey to participate in an Islamic economic summit. The President will meet with his Egyptian counterpart today before leaving for Turkey.

*Reuters* 6/11/09 reported that a summit of Islamic countries in Istanbul next week will boost Turkey's quest to deepen ties with the Muslim world, but some of its new friends are not to the taste of its traditional ally, Washington.

Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir, who has an international arrest warrant against him for war crimes, and Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, engaged in a standoff with the West over Tehran's nuclear programme, are among leaders who will attend an Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) meeting.

The one-day summit on Monday will add to growing concerns in some Western circles that Turkey, an OIC member which is seeking European Union membership, is shifting away from its pro-Western foreign policy and embracing countries such as Iran and Syria, while distancing itself from regional friend Israel.

"I think this summit will put Turkey again on the frontline, both in regards with Iran and Bashir," said Hugh Pope, a senior analyst for the International Crisis Group.

"Engagement and cooperation can be a way to bring autocratic states into the international system, but the challenge for Turkey is that it needs to show results and that the behaviour of these states is changing," Pope said.

Although the 57-nation body's meeting has been billed as an economic summit to discuss trade and anti-poverty measures among members, the presence of Bashir and Ahmadinejad will likely overshadow its economic goals.

Western powers are seeking to exert pressure on Tehran for concessions on its nuclear programme, and Ahmadinejad could use the summit to undermine efforts to isolate the Islamic republic and to give one of his trademark anti-Western speeches.

The West fears Tehran's nuclear programme is a covert plan to develop nuclear weapons, but Iran has denied this and says it needs nuclear technology to generate electricity.

The visit by Sudan's Bashir, who has travelled to African countries since the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued the arrest warrant against him in March for war crimes in Darfur, puts NATO member Turkey in an awkward position, but a Turkish Foreign Ministry official said there were no plans to arrest him.

"We have invited Bashir as one of the heads of state to the meeting and he will be treated as one," the official said.

Turkey, which has deepened commercial ties with Sudan, has not ratified the 2002 Rome Statute that established the ICC, but is under pressure to do so to meet European Union standards...

### **Journalist Lubna Husein in Yemen**

**Rai Al-Shaab** reports that journalist Lubna Ahmed Hussein arrived in Yemen in an Afghan dress (burgha). She left Khartoum for Cairo and proceeded to Yemen, breaking the ban imposed by local authorities on her trips abroad. She told journalists in Sanaa that she received an invitation to take part in a conference so she resorted to such a trick to be able to leave Khartoum. She said she would continue her campaign against restrictive laws in Sudan.

### **Iranians linked to banned drone videos in Darfur-UN**

**Reuters** 6/11/09 - Two Iranian businessmen working at a Dubai-based firm were linked to video surveillance devices sold to Sudan and used in unmanned drones in Darfur in violation of a U.N. arms embargo, a U.N. report said.

The 94-page report by the so-called U.N. "Panel of Experts," published on Friday, details arms violations by all parties in the Darfur conflict, which began in 2003 when mostly non-Arab rebels revolted in 2003 after accusing Khartoum of neglecting Darfur.

There is no suggestion in the panel's report that the Government of Iran was involved in the sale of drones or surveillance technology to the Sudanese military. The panel first reported on Khartoum's use of drones in Darfur last year, calling it a "clear-cut violation of the embargo"

The latest report includes still photographs from video footage taken by drones over Darfur in May and June, showing that the Sudanese Government continues to ignore the ban.

Sudan's U.N. Ambassador Abdalmahmoud Abdalhaleem reacted angrily to the panel's report, saying Khartoum "will demand that the Security Council terminate the panel's mandate."

"They are just representatives of Western intelligence agencies," he told Reuters. "We are fed up with this committee. Our position is a total rejection of this report."

The panel said the "unmanned aerial vehicles" used in Darfur were equipped with video surveillance technology ordered by a fictitious company based in the United Arab Emirates.

It does not say where the drones came from or who made them, though it does say the video surveillance technology originated in Britain and is "not used for civilian purposes"

For this reason, the panel said, the Iranian behind the sale of the video devices to Sudan had to know their ultimate purpose.

The panel investigated the video recorders' origin and determined that the real firm behind the sale is Millennium Product Company LLC, with a sales manager the report named as Mojtaba Sadegbi and managing director Saeid Mousaei, both Iranian nationals.

The report said the U.N. monitors visited the company in June. A few hours later Sadegbi and Mousaei left the country.

"The administrative assistant explained to the Panel that Mr. Sadegbi and Mr. Mousaei had left for vacation in their home country, the Islamic Republic of Iran," the report said. "They have apparently not returned to their offices since then"

According to the report, neither the company's main shareholder, a citizen of neither the UAE, nor the UAE government has replied to the panel's request for further information.

Iran's U.N. mission had no immediate comment.

The panel documents many other violations of the 2005 embargo against the transfer of military hardware to Darfur, a remote region of western Sudan that is roughly the size of France. Khartoum can import arms, but not for use in Darfur.

Much of the weaponry, ammunition and hardware in Darfur originated in China and the panel said it was "seeking the cooperation of China in order to determine where in the chain of ownership violations of the embargo are taking place"

The report said that troops, weapons, ammunition and vehicles have been illegally transferred to Darfur where the arms are used by rebels as well as government troops.

"The Darfurian population continues to be victimized by the effects of attacks and counter-attacks involving most of the armed movements that frequently lead to the disproportionate use of force by the Sudanese Armed Forces," the panel said.

It said those attacks "result in killings, injuries and displacements."

### **Kiir declares public holiday to mobilize for voter registration**

**Sudan Tribune website** 7/11/09– President Salva Kiir Mayardit of the semi-autonomous Southern Sudan has issued a presidential order declaring a public holiday of seven days throughout the region in order to enable Government officials to participate in the mobilization for voter registration.

The registration for the Sudan's upcoming April 2010 general elections began on November 1 and scheduled to end on November 30 all over the country and in some other selected countries around the world.

The order that aims to reverse the low voter registration turnout which officials describe as "serious" will come into effect as from Wednesday November 11 through Tuesday November 17.

All constitutional post holders as well as civil servants at all levels of government and from its different organs are covered by the order and expected to mobilize for the registration and participate in the exercise.

The order enables them to travel to their respective localities to assist in the registration exercise.

Kiir directed all the ten state Governments to abide by the order and implement it accordingly.

The order, however, does not include the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and other organized forces.

The forces are being registered in their respective designated units.

Southern Sudan is hit by very low voter registration turnout as the region prepares for its first post-war general elections due in six months.

Officials say some of the registration centers in the region have remained almost empty for the last one week while others with the maximum of less than a hundred voters to register per day.

Responding to the situation, the regional government's cabinet on Friday resolved to request for 30 more days of the registration period to try to mobilize and register a good number of voters.

The government's official spokesperson, Paul Mayom Akech, blamed the turnout failure on lack of earlier voter registration campaign, inadequate logistics, insecurity and unavailability of finances among others.

The SPLM-led government also complains about the registration exercise being dominated by members of the National Congress Party (NCP).

The Southern Sudan's ruling political party had earlier declared its position to contest for all political seats in the country including the post of the incumbent President of the Republic Omer Al-Bashir.

### **Sudan politicians report widespread electoral fraud**

**Reuters** 8/11/09 - Sudan's political parties accused each other of widespread fraud and intimidation as voters began to register for the oil-producing state's first multi-party elections in 24 years due in April 2010.

The reports came along with evidence of a growing rift between the two main parties in the country's coalition government, who fought each other in a two-decade civil war that ended in a faltering 2005 peace deal.

Opposition political party monitors told Reuters they had evidence of intimidation, buying of votes and other irregularities by Sudan's dominant National Congress Party (NCP), headed by President Omar al-Bashir.

The NCP dismissed the allegations and accused its junior coalition partner, the former southern rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), of trying to sabotage the election, saying NCP supporters had been tortured in the south.

The SPLM and 20 opposition parties have threatened to boycott the elections if a long overdue package of democratic laws is not passed. They walked out of parliament last month.

Bickering between the NCP and SPLM boiled over at a U.N.-sponsored meeting last week with witnesses saying relations were at their worst since the 2005 deal shared wealth and power in Africa's largest state.

U.S. Sudan envoy Scott Gration has failed to persuade the former enemies to reach a resolution after extending last week's trip to the country to hold three days of intensive talks.

"The (NCP) are using government resources for their campaign," said opposition Umma Party official Mariam al-Mahdi.

She told Reuters her observers had seen many cases of faked papers and other fraud. "We are going to double up efforts in the coming week to collect this (evidence)," she said.

Sudan's elections have already been delayed until April 2010, from July 2009, but the country's elections commission is still struggling to meet deadlines.

Registration made a slow start on Nov. 1 with an information blackout in Khartoum and confusion outside the capital.

The SPLM said the NCP was bussing in hundreds of people without identity cards to register at centres where they are not resident. An SPLM monitor had been offered a bribe to turn a blind eye and had refused to take it.

"If there is no registration this (electoral process) will be a failure," said SPLM head in Khartoum Bol Ring.

NCP officials dismissed the reports saying they would not tolerate any electoral violations by party members.



Late on Saturday the NCP launched a scathing attack on the SPLM, accusing it of arresting, torturing and intimidating NCP members trying to register in the south, saying the threatened boycott was a veiled attempt to sabotage the election.

"They don't want this election...because they know they will lose in the south and in the north," presidential assistant Nafie Ali Nafie told a press conference. "There is no political will on the side of the SPLM," he added.

SPLM officials said they would look into any reports of irregularities by their members.

### **Deadly tropical disease strikes in south Sudan**

**Reuters** 6/11/09 - A deadly tropical disease has killed two people and sickened 375 in southern Sudan, aid agency Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF) said on Friday, warning that many more were likely to be infected.

The parasitic kala azar disease is almost always fatal if untreated and can kill those with weak immune systems within weeks, MSF said in a statement, adding that 95 percent of patients survive with timely treatment.

"We suspect that the number of kala azar patients reaching clinics in some areas is just the tip of the iceberg," David Kidinda, MSF's South Sudan Medical Coordinator, said. At least two people have died, the statement added.

The disease, also known as leishmaniasis, is caused by a parasite transmitted through sand fly bites. It multiplies in the body, attacking the immune system, and symptoms include an enlarged spleen, fever, weakness and wasting, MSF said.

The disease is endemic to parts of southern Sudan. MSF said it treated 100 cases last year and that outbreaks occur every five to 10 years.

Poor roads and few hospitals, clinics or other medical services in the south, emerging from more than two decades of civil war, mean that outbreaks of disease are common. The bitter north-south war claimed 2 million lives before ending with a 2005 peace deal.

"In southern Sudan, where almost three quarters of the population have no access to even the most basic healthcare, it's a race against time to reach patients," Kidinda added.

### **UN airdrops food into affected areas in South Sudan**

**Sudan Tribune website** 5/11/09 – The UN food agency has begun air drops of food assistance to feed 155,600 people in the most inaccessible parts of Southern Sudan. The affected population had been cut off from aid due to the rainy season and security conditions.

These are the first airdrops by World Food Programme (WFP) into Southern Sudan since 2007. Trained teams will collect the food from the drop zone and distribute it.

The airdrops, which began last Thursday, will continue for two-and-a-half months and will provide 4,000 metric tons of food to three of Southern Sudan's 10 states – Jonglei, Upper Nile and Warrap.

"We can't wait for food prices to drop or the roads to be passable again. We need to save people from hunger. Airdrops are the only way for us to reach them," said WFP Sudan Country Director Amer Daoudi. T

Southern Sudan covers 650,000 square kilometres yet the region only has 5,500 kilometres of

main roads and only 50 km of those are covered in tarmac. Many roads are in bad condition and cannot be used during the April to December rainy season. Increased tribal fighting has also blocked road and river access to some areas.

The airdrops complement airlifts from June to September of 820 metric tons of WFP food which helped to feed some 40,000 people displaced by conflict in Akobo, a county in Jonglei State.

"The need is so immense that we need to use all our resources to feed so many people facing food shortages," said Daoudi. Airlifts will continue to serve selected areas in Jonglei State.