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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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- Diplomacy has chance in Sudan  
By John Kerry Monday, April 27, 2009 |

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# Highlights

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## Local Arabic and English Language Press

### NEC to delimit constituencies on Wednesday

**Al-Watan** reports the NEC announced that geographical constituencies will be determined on Wednesday based on the census results. NEC Deputy Chairman and spokesperson Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah told **SMC** that minor amendments might be made to the elections schedule. According to **Ajras Al-Hurriah**, NEC member Mukhtar Al-Assam said the Commission was likely to receive the census results today.

### South Sudan Census Commission concerned over census results

GoSS said it would reject the census results if the South Sudan population estimate is less than one-third of the Sudan's population, reports **Al-Rai Al-Aam**. FM Deng Alor told the paper yesterday that when the results were officially released SPLM would comment.

Meanwhile, **Miraya FM** reports South Sudan Statistics and Evaluation Commission Chairman Isiah Chol as saying that the census result announced by the Head of the National Census Population Council Bahkri Hassan Saleh was just reflecting the national level, adding that the final results will be announced after the Presidency's endorsement. Chol said that the South Sudan Census Commission has observations over the results.

### Census is major achievement – Plumbly

**Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports the AEC Chairman Derek Plumbly has described the census as a major and important achievement. He also described Abyei as "Sudan's Kashmir". Plumbly made the remarks at a forum organized yesterday by the Council for International Peoples' Friendship in Khartoum. According to **Al-Ayyam**, Plumbly also stressed the need for clarity on the border demarcation issue.

The **Citizen** reports Plumbly has urged both NCP and SPLM to accept the Abyei arbitration results and cited donor failure to meet their pledges and the recent security tensions as major CPA challenges. Responding to questions, he said the time left for the CPA implementation was getting shorter while some crucial issues have not yet been decided such as the return of the refugees and the displaced, democratic transition and reintegration and demobilization activities.

### Abyei Administration asks for judges to try culprits

While Abyei police has received the file of the case of killing of two Messeriya by JIU members, the Area Administration has called on the Presidency to send judges to investigate the case, reports **Al-Watan**. Abyei Deputy Chief Administrator Rama Al-Nour told **SMC** that five persons involved in the killing have been arrested, four of them are JIU members and that the case has been referred to the local head of police Col. Luka Deng Majok. He said the situation in the area was stable but a quick decision of such cases would bolster the social fabric in the area.

### Energy Minister calls for patience

Briefing the National Assembly on recent power cuts in the capital, Energy and Mining Minister Al-Zubeir Ahmed Hassan said the Merowe Dam which was supposed to provide electricity was still in the experimental phase and called on the people for patience, report **local dailies**, adding the government was considering means to privatize the electricity sector.

According to **SUNA**, the Minister has estimated the shortage in electricity supply in the country at 300 megawatts with the current electricity generation stands at 800 megawatts while the real demand is 1100 megawatt.

### **Energy Ministry refused GoSS participation in oil marketing**

The Ministry of Energy and Mining has turned down a request from the GoSS for participation in oil marketing, reports **Al-Intibaha**. The Ministry explained that oil marketing is the job of the Federal Government.

### **SPLM lacks interest in elections – Malwal**

**Al-Intibaha** reports that Bona Malwal, a southern politician, has issued a statement accusing the SPLM of lack of interest in elections. He claimed that since SPLM lacks democracy within its own institutions, it is trying to block elections based on flimsy grounds. Malwal said he has doubts that elections in southern Sudan might not be free and fair.

### **SPLM for Al-Wifaq suspension through the Judiciary**

**Ajras Al-Hurriah** reports SPLM threatened to push for legal proceedings against **Al-Wifaq** newspaper. Also, SPLM has called on the National Assembly Chairman to move legal proceedings against the paper's editor-in-chief Isaac Fadulallah for disrupting parliamentary work. SPLM official Yassir Arman said **Al-Wifaq** and its editor-in-chief should be suspended by the judiciary rather than by other institutions.

### **Forum participants call for a council to address country's issues**

**Al-Sahafa** reports academicians and politicians who have participated in a workshop at the University of Khartoum which kicked off yesterday painted a grim picture of the status quo in the country. They agreed that the current challenges are the most serious in Sudan's modern history and stressed the need for a serious and constructive dialogue involving all Sudanese to find a way out of the present crisis. While the academicians have called for the establishment of a broad-based panel comprising the political parties' chiefs, the jurists have made several proposals for the government to address the ICC issue including the establishment of hybrid courts. According to **Al-Sudani**, the forum was attended by several research institutions, civil society organizations, political parties, diplomats and other dignitaries.

### **JEM is preparing to launch attack from Chad – Government**

**Al-Sahafa** reports the MFA as saying that security authorities have monitored JEM movements on Chadian soil preparing to launch Israeli-backed attack on Sudanese territories. MFA spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq said the army is ready to repulse any attack on Darfur or any other area.

### **Arab League emergency meeting on Darfur**

The **Sudan Vision** reports the Arab League Secretary General has called for an emergency meeting of its Council at the permanent representative level to discuss Darfur crisis and the DPA implementation. He said the meeting was requested by Sudan.

### **210 cases of meningitis confirmed in Darfur**

South Darfur Health authorities have said meningitis cases in the state reached 210 last month, 12 confirmed dead, reports **Al-Sahafa**. South Darfur State Emergency Committee member Dr. Ali Mirghani said vaccination campaign was continuing and that new cases were reported yesterday.

### **Swine breeders asked to adjust within three months**

**Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports Khartoum authorities have ordered owners of unlicensed swine breeding farms to legalize the farms within three months. Taj Al-Din Osman of the Khartoum State

Ministry of Agriculture said swine breeders were ordered to legalize their swine breeding farms within a period of three months.

## Websites/International News Coverage

### Darfur is now a “low-intensity conflict” - UN

**Reuters**, 27/4/09 - Violence in Sudan's Darfur region has subsided into a "low-intensity conflict," an international envoy said on Monday, but the United States and its allies disagreed, according to diplomats.

Briefing the U.N. Security Council, UNAMID Special Representative to Darfur, Rodolphe Adada, said around 130-150 people were dying each month due to violence in Darfur, a region roughly the size of France.

"The situation has changed from the period of intense hostilities in 2003-2004 when tens of thousands of people were killed," Adada told the 15-member council. "Today, in purely numerical terms it is a low-intensity conflict." But he also said there was a "high risk of escalation." "This risk of active war is ever present, and it is my duty to warn this council about those hazards," Adada said.

Several council diplomats said U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice, who has publicly referred to the conflict in Darfur as "ongoing genocide," disputed Adada's characterization during a closed-door discussion after his briefing.

"The U.S. delegation took issue with the idea that it is a low-intensity conflict," a council diplomat said. Another diplomat said the French, British, Austrian and Mexican envoys also disagreed with Adada's description.

### Fury in Sudan over “repressive” draft press law

**AFP**, 27/4/09 — A draft press law that would give authorities in Sudan powers to impose heavy fines or even close down newspapers has the country's media up in arms.

Africa's largest country boasts around 30 titles in both English and Arabic published daily and representing all persuasions -- pro-government, Islamist or even communist -- showing off the country's multi-faceted political make-up.

Already newspapers are screened by state censors every night before hitting the stands, but the new bill, which was submitted to parliament last week, would impose 50,000 Sudanese pound (21,500 dollar) fines for "infractions" and allow a Press Council to close down newspapers.

"In the beginning the censors stopped you publishing certain issues, now they are asking why you do not cover (President Omar al-) Beshir's visits and pro-Beshir demonstrations," complained Al-Haj Ali Waraq Sid Ahmed, managing editor of the daily Ajas Al-Huriyya (Bells of Freedom). "Now they are putting more of an agenda," he said.

In a recent report, the New York-based Human Rights Watch criticized the draft law as "repressive" and "vague."

It contains "many repressive provisions of the current 2004 Press and Publications Act, including strict media registration rules, vague reporting prohibitions, a National Press Council that lacks independence and has broad regulatory powers, and heavy fines and criminal sanctions for media outlets and journalists," the group said.

An embattled President Beshir is trying to rally public opinion in his fight against the International Criminal Court which in March issued a warrant for his arrest, accusing him of war crimes and crimes against humanity in the war-torn western Sudanese region of Darfur.

But journalists argue that the war in Darfur -- where at least 300,000 people have died in six years of fighting according to the United Nations -- remains a mystery to those inside Sudan

despite massive publicity abroad.

"Because of the censorship, for the ordinary people in Khartoum... Darfur is veiled," said Sid Ahmed, whose newspaper lost three consecutive editions to the censor in mid-April.

Sudan recently removed some 15 articles from proofs of the Al-Midan weekly, which preferred not to go to print under such conditions.

Each evening, so-called "state editors" scour newspaper proofs for articles or editorials that are deemed sensitive to the government, a form of censorship from which foreign outlets are not exempt. The new bill has outraged many.

A fine of 50,000 Sudanese pounds, "this is a lot of money!," exclaims Moheddine Titawi, head of the Sudanese Journalists' Association, who describes as "unjust" the powers accorded to the country's Press Council, whose independence is not guaranteed by the bill.

"The law insists only on punishment. It is aggressive punishment," regrets Mohammed Abdel Qadir, who sits on the editorial board of the pro-government daily Al-Rayy Al-Aam.

"It did not address the issue of freedom of expression and the right of the public to information," he said.

The draft law comes at a critical time in Sudan which is due to hold its first general elections in more than 20 years in February next year.

"It's a horrible (bill), it needs a lot of amendments," said Yasir Arman, head of the parliamentary bloc of the southern former rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement. "How do we go to elections without free media?" he asked.

### **Mbeki's Darfur panel meets with Egyptian officials**

***Sudan Tribune***, 27/4/09 – The Au panel headed by former South African leader Thabo Mbeki met with the Egyptian President during their visit to Cairo on Sunday.

The visit is part of a regional tour that will take them to Chad, Libya, Eritrea, Egypt and Saudi Arabia as parties with interest in the Darfur conflict.

Egyptian state media did not provide any details of the meeting which was attended by Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul-Gheit and followed by lunch banquet.

The commission has been tasked with looking into ways to balance accountability with bringing peace into Darfur and will submit a report to the summit next July.

Also in Cairo, the Libyan Foreign Minister Al-Baghdadi Al-Mahmoodi met with Mubarak for talks on the Darfur crisis.

The Libyan official said his government is coordinating efforts with Egypt on the issue. He also said that any resolution should come through the Arab League or the United Nations and other countries such as Qatar.

### **Lakes governor holds talks with his clan in Cueibet**

***Sudan Tribune website***, 27/4/09 - The Governor of Lakes state Lt. General Daniel Awet Akot has concluded heated talks with Warap state authority over a mass rape incident that occurred last Tuesday at a rural village of Agugi for Tonj South County of Warap state, and moved to visit his own clan in Lakes state.

Reportedly, Gok clan youth of Lakes State on Tuesday raped twenty-eight women and girls from the Bongo community, one of whom died, so Lakes officials are trying to assert their authority in the area until local authorities bring the accused youth to face justice.

Awet himself appeared displeased at the incident carried out by his home-town clan, which surely seems to undermine his powers toward other states.

Now, Governor Awet is still holding hot talks with his own clan at Cueibet county just a distance of 35 miles away from Rumbek town centre.

In the two days of closed talks with his clan within Cueibet County as well as with Warap state authorities, the participants presented their resolution to Lakes State for the government to deal with.

Kongor Deng Kongo, the commissioner of Cueibet County, has aired out his apologies to the Bongo people, criticizing Lakes youth for making their own government voiceless toward other states.

In a new development, the Lakes state authority announced that five people are already captured by security forces and arrested in Warap State. However, Awet promised that all those captured suspects must to be judged within Agugi villages, said a source close to the governor.

State officials have struggled to quell inter-communal violence, local and inter-state cattle raiding, and routine banditry and gun violence.

### **Lakes Governor accuses JIUs of arm smuggling**

**Miraya** 27/4/09 - The Governor of the Lakes State, Daniel Awet Akot, has accused JIU officers of smuggling arms from northern Sudan to the south. Governor Akot said that he himself had caught two officers from the SAF with two boxes of weapons locally made and sent to Juba.

Speaking in a joint press conference with his Warrap counterpart in Tonj South County, Governor Akot said he has ample ground to say the north is infiltrating arms into the south. The Governor said the proliferation of arms from the north is the reason for the failure of the disarmament exercise in the south. **Miraya FM** did not reach the Sudan Armed Forces for immediate comment.

### **Five US lawmakers arrested in Darfur protest**

**AFP** 27/4/09 - Washington police arrested five US lawmakers Monday during a protest outside the Sudanese embassy over the humanitarian crisis in Sudan's Darfur region.

Organizers said the five, who included Democratic representative John Lewis, a leading veteran of the US civil rights movement, were detained for civil disobedience after refusing a police order to disperse.

The protestors called on the government of Sudanese President Omar al-Beshir to reverse a recent decision to expel international humanitarian groups from Darfur and end what they called his use of starvation as a weapon of war in the region.

"President Bashir has a choice," said another Democratic lawmaker, Jim McGovern, before the group was arrested.

"He can choose to let the humanitarian groups return, he can choose to end the violence and the killing, and he can choose serious negotiations for a just and lasting peace, or he can continue to commit crimes against humanity," he said.

The other detained lawmakers were Donna Edwards, Keith Ellison and Lynn Woolsey, all members of President Barak Obama's Democratic Party.

Police also arrested three organizers of the protest, including Jerry Folwer of the Save Darfur Coalition and John Prendergast, a former State Department advisor.

Obama's administration has vowed renewed efforts to end the conflict in Darfur.

During Monday's demonstration, protestors urged Obama to increase the pressure on Khartoum.

"We know President Obama and members of his administration care passionately about ending the Darfur crisis and promoting peace in Sudan," Fowler said.

"As President Obama nears his 100th day in office this week, he can demonstrate that Sudan is a strategic priority for the United States by committing to build a multilateral coalition for peace and investing in the diplomacy necessary to achieve an equitable and lasting solution for Darfuris and all Sudanese," he said.

## Commentary

### Diplomacy has chance in Sudan

By John Kerry Monday, April 27, 2009 |

For years, the conflict in Darfur has horrified millions - and defined Sudan for the outside world. The plight of people driven from their homes remains desperate, as I saw for myself when I visited the camps earlier this month. I share the passionate desire of so many to break this pattern of despair.

The visit reinforced my conviction that broad and direct engagement is the best way to promote peace in Darfur and throughout Sudan. We must start by recognizing realities on the ground. The violence of 2003 and 2004 has declined substantially, but the consequences of the genocide remain unresolved. Expanded sanctions and coercive measures against Sudan remain an option. But a new White House has given us a chance to put sustained diplomacy to the test, which strengthens the force and reach of sanctions if diplomacy fails.

U.S. policy has long focused on pressuring Sudan to allow the full deployment of the joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping mission to Darfur. While 16,000 peacekeepers are in place and more are on the way, the global community must ensure that these peacekeepers have the necessary resources.

The world's largest humanitarian effort has saved countless lives in Darfur. But those efforts were interrupted in March when Sudan expelled 16 aid organizations after the International Criminal Court charged President Hassan al-Bashir with war crimes in Darfur.

There was cause for hope when President Obama's special envoy to Sudan, Gen. Scott Gration, persuaded the government to agree to restore much of the lost capacity for humanitarian assistance. But the true test lies in the implementation. As I stressed to senior Sudanese officials, serious gaps in assistance and bureaucratic obstacles that impede delivery of aid must be eliminated. Gration will evaluate the progress next month.

People trapped in the camps must be allowed to return to their homes, which will require land, compensation and security. But these conditions can be met only through a sustainable peace accord between Sudan and various rebel groups.

The Sudanese government has signaled its willingness to come to the negotiating table and we must hold it to this commitment. But the rebels need to come together, and they need to come to the table.

Successful negotiations will require redoubled efforts from the United States, regional players with influence like Egypt, Qatar and Libya, as well as China and other members of the international community. We must forge a coherent policy that reflects the interconnectedness of the conflicts in Chad and Sudan, which share a porous border and a history of using rebel groups to destabilize one another.

Renewed conflict between North and South Sudan looms as a new potential catastrophe. The recent civil war claimed 2 million lives in the longest running conflict in African history.

In 2005, the U.S. helped broker the agreement that finally ended that war. But that agreement could collapse. In 2011, the South is scheduled to vote in a referendum on separation. If core issues like border demarcation and revenue sharing are not addressed, war becomes tragically likely.

The National Congress Party of the North and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement, which represents the southern government, agreed during my visit to re-engage in efforts to implement the agreement.

In both Darfur and the North-South conflict, we must seize this opportunity for engagement and, we hope, begin to redefine the relationship between the United States and Sudan.