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Media Monitoring Report

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Post-Referendum Monitor

UN aid agency says denied access in Sudan border area

Reuters Geneva, 14/06/11 – The UNHCR urged Sudanese authorities on Tuesday to allow road and air access for aid workers trying to help thousands of people fleeing fighting in the border state of Southern Kordofan.

Humanitarian flights have been denied permission to land in the state capital Kadugli for nearly a week and roadblocks manned by armed militiamen have hampered land access, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said.

“Insecurity means our operations are severely constrained and UNHCR is currently unable to reach a warehouse just 5 km (2 miles) from the UNMIS base in the city,” spokesperson Melissa Fleming told a news briefing. Further underlining the deteriorating situation, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organisation said premises belonging to the two UN agencies in the area had been looted.

Fleming said the UNHCR knew of some 41,000 displaced people around Kadugli and the state, but it feared that many more were fleeing their homes, mostly children and women. Aid agencies had been able to deliver food and other help only to 6,000 people.

“This is far below the number we would be able to reach if we had secure access,” Fleming said.

Heavy fighting has been going on since last week and the confirmed death toll included 10 civilians, she said.

Situation in S. Kordofan not suitable for Popular Consultations - governor

Khartoum Monitor, 15/06/11 – Southern Kordofan Governor Ahmed Haroun said on Monday that the current situation in the state does not permit the holding of Popular Consultations. Haroun however reiterated commitment to the conduct of the exercise when the political climate is more suitable.

Al-Rai Al-Aam meanwhile reports that the governor has relieved ministers on the SPLM ticket from his cabinet and appointed caretakers in their position.

“Al-Hilu and company could not be accepted as loyal political partners in any future political endeavour in the state,” the governor said.

Al-Hilu’s plans only serve the northern opposition – SPLM

Al-Khartoum Nairobi, 15/06/11 – An advisor to GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit says GoSS presidential aides and cabinet ministers expressed at a meeting with the GoSS president their rejection to intervention in Southern Kordofan as requested by Abdulaziz Al-Hilu. Osman Al-Toweel, President Salva Kiir’s advisor on economic affairs, told the *SMC* that they had noted that whatever is happening there has nothing to do with southern Sudan. They also pointed out that Abdulaziz Al-Hilu’s plans for Southern Kordofan only serve the interests of the northern opposition groups more than they do that of the SPLM and should not have the backing of the leaders in Juba.

SPLM's Luka Biong to blame over Abyei – NCP

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 15/06/11 – The NCP is blaming senior SPLM figure Luka Biong for the outbreak of violence in Southern Kordofan and Abyei areas. Ibrahim Gandour, the party's information chief, said the former federal minister had carried out a "desperate attempt" in coordinating with the JEM to push Abyei and the Darfur issue on the ICC table. Gandour said Biong was trying to depict the events in Abyei in the same vein as Darfur.

Umma's Sadig Al-Mahdi proposes measures to avert war

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 15/06/11 – National Umma Party supremo, Sadig Al-Mahdi, has proposed a series of measures to prevent the country from slipping into war and to avert confrontation with the international community.

His proposals include an end to hostilities in Southern Kordofan and Abyei, access to humanitarian assistance and the prevention of any unilateral action with regards to the controversial issues. He also called for the formation of a "Commission of Wise Men" to look into measures to implement the outstanding issues of the CPA.

Sudan's ex-foes deny reports of deal on Abyei

AllAfrica.com Juba, 14/06/11 - The African Union sponsored negotiations conducted in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, on Sudan's Abyei crisis has ended without any agreement, according to a senior official of the South Sudan's ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

Upon Kiir's arrival at Juba International Airport from Addis Ababa today, the minister in the office of the President, Cirino Hiteng, said that no agreement has been reached over Abyei by the two parties contrary to reports that have circulated in the media.

Hiteng said the SPLM had demanded SAF's unconditional withdrawal from Abyei and replacement with Ethiopian troops representing the UN while the NCP insisted that a brigade of its forces would remain in the contested region. The North also wanted a new administration established in Abyei that is split 50/50 with the SPLM while the chief administrator would be nominated by the NCP.

"In short there was no agreement on Abyei," Hiteng told the press upon return from the talks.

Hiteng explained that Clinton told the two sides to forget about the Abyei administration and focus on the security arrangements in the area until the region conducts its referendum.

The SPLM official said the two parties will continue to hold further talks and try to reach an agreement on Abyei crisis and the ongoing fighting between SAF and its allied militia and northern members of the SPLA - the military wing of the SPLM - in South Kordofan.

In Khartoum the government sponsored Sudanese Media Centre (SMC) website quoted an army source as saying that the North has no intention of withdrawing from Abyei.

The unnamed military source said that there is no reason for SAF to pull out after establishing full control over the region and extending stability and security to the citizens there. He also denied reports claiming that Bashir has agreed to withdraw from the contested area.

"Mr. President [Bashir] made it clear that SAF would stay in Abyei and not withdraw because it is Northern [land]" the source said. However he revealed that talks on the deployment of Ethiopian forces is still being discussed.

Agreement over Abyei is a major development – Mbeki

Al-Sahafa Agencies, 15/06/11 – AUHIP chief Thabo Mbeki says the deal reached over Abyei by leaders of north and south Sudan is a major development.

Mbeki told the *AFP* over phone from Addis yesterday that the two sides have agreed over the general principles but admits there still remains a lot to be sorted out such as funding for the Ethiopian peacekeepers once deployed and the force strength.

China welcomes north, south Sudan withdrawal agreement on disputed Abyei

Xinhua 15/06/11 - China said Tuesday it welcomes an agreement reached by north and south Sudan to withdraw their troops from the country's disputed oil-rich area of Abyei.

"The Chinese side has noted the recent development of the Abyei situation and exchanged views with the parties involved," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said at a regular news briefing.

"We appreciate that the leaders of both north and south Sudan adhere to the peace option and welcome all moves that help ease tensions in the area of Abyei," Hong said.

"We hope that north and south Sudan will commit themselves to calmness, exercise self-restraint and adopt the principle of dialogue to resolve the outstanding issues between them," he added.

Britain warns Sudan over 'shocking' attacks

AFP London, 15/06/11 - Britain on Tuesday condemned the "shocking and disturbing" escalation of violence in central Sudan.

Foreign Secretary William Hague said he was "deeply concerned" at reports of attacks in the country's Abyei and Southern Kordofan regions.

"Reports of ongoing attacks on civilians and aerial bombardments are shocking and I condemn all such actions," Hague said in a statement. "Equally disturbing is the denial of access to humanitarian agencies." Hague responded after the United Nations said that Khartoum had stepped up air strikes in Southern Kordofan causing "huge suffering" to the civilian population.

The British minister warned Khartoum of its "obligation to protect civilians" and called on all parties to "cease hostilities immediately".

Sudan split to cut Khartoum's income by over 1/3

Reuters Khartoum, 15/06/11 - Sudan's national revenues will fall by more than a third after losing the south's oil output when the country splits, pushing the north to cut state spending and find other sources of income, the finance minister said.

While most of Sudan's oil fields are in southern territory, its pipelines and refineries are in the north, meaning the two will need to cooperate to keep crude flowing. They have not yet agreed how much the south should pay to use the infrastructure.

"As a result of the south's separation after July 9 and the exit of the south's petroleum returns from Sudan's budget, the national budget will lose 36.5 percent of its revenues," Finance Minister Ali Mahmoud told reporters late on Tuesday.

He said 73 percent of the country's oil came from the south and 27 percent originated in the north. The disputed Abyei region represented just 1 percent of Sudan's oil, he added.

Khartoum's state spending is expected to fall after the split as it has less of the country to fund. However, this is likely to be modest compared with the drop in income, as the south has provided a disproportionately large amount of state revenue due to its oil reserves.

The north, facing high inflation and a weakening currency, has prepared a three-year economic programme to try to ease the effects of the split.

"To address the economic effects of the separation, the three-year economic programme is focusing on remedying the situation by lowering government spending and increasing revenues," Mahmoud said.

Other Highlights

Peter Gadit's forces said to advance towards Bentiu and Aweil

Reuters Juba, 15/06/11 - A rebel militia killed 29 people including police and civilians in a south Sudan cattle raid, the SPLA said on Tuesday, adding to the region's woes ahead of independence in July.

"This was a cattle raid assumed to be carried out by armed militia from Unity state," said army spokesman Philip Aguer. "Seven police were killed including two officers, and 22 civilians." These were preliminary figures, he said, adding that the raid took place in Warrap state.

The southern army said it was holding defensive positions near the north-south border after it accused the north of twice bombing its territory, on Friday and Monday.

In a separate development, *Radio Miraya* reports meanwhile that at least 71 people have been reported killed and 36 wounded in inter-clan clashes between the communities of Rumbek East and Rumbek North counties of Lakes State. The Commissioner of Rumbek East County, David Marial Gumke, said on Tuesday that the fighting was due to cattle raiding.

Meanwhile, the Commissioner of Cueibet County, Isaac Mayoum Malek, said that at least 38 people were also killed in a separate incident in the county. The government of Lakes state has deployed the army in the stricken areas.

On the other hand, southern Sudanese renegade forces loyal to Peter Gadit say they have blocked all roads leading to Bahr-el-Ghazal and Abyei and are advancing towards Bentiu and Aweil. According to the *SMC*, Paul Kuoth, a spokesperson for the Southern Sudan Liberation Army, said that their forces are preparing for an attack on these major towns in the coming few days.

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