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Media Monitoring Report

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Post-Referendum Monitor

- Panic in Abyei following government statements (*The Citizen et al*)
- Ngok would reject any post-9th July solution on Abyei (*Al-Sahafa et al*)
- SPLM Political Bureau discusses constitutional review (*Radio Miraya*)
- Sudan's Central Bank fires southerners in the north (*Sudantribune.com*)

Southern Kordofan Elections Focus

- Southern Kordofan gubernatorial elections kick off tomorrow (*local dailies*)
- FVP Kiir fails to make S. Kordofan trip for "security concerns" (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- S. Kordofan's deputy governor rejects award by Sudan President (*Sudantribune.com*)
- Carter Center call on GoSS to release Telefon Kuku (*Radio Miraya*)
- Umma Party calls for postponement of the polls in Southern Kordofan (*Al-Rai Al-Aam et al*)

Other Highlights

- United Nations Security Council delegation to visit Sudan (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- Six rebel factions name Athor president of coalition council (*Sudantribune.com*)
- Tanginye would not face military trial – SPLA (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)
- Jonglei Governor protests withdrawal of WFP (*Al-Ahdath*)
- Sudan protests US criticism of Al-Bashir's comments (*Sudantribune.com*)

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Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

Post-Referendum Monitor

Panic in Abyei following government statements

The Citizen, Khartoum, 01/05/11 – SAF Spokesperson Al-Suwarni Khaled says the SAF is ready to repel any attack or violations the SPLA may commit in the Abyei area, indicating that the SPLA had amassed more than 3,000 troops in police uniform in the area. “The President’s speech is clear and we are awaiting the signal,” he said referring to President Al-Bashir’s recent statement asserting that Abyei is northern Sudanese territory.

The SPLA has countered with accusations, according to its spokesperson Philip Aguer, that some SAF cadres are arming militias on the northern territories near Abyei. He expressed hopes that problems would be solved politically and underlined the need for UN peacekeepers to remain in the area to help maintain security and protect the civilians.

Meanwhile Chol Angok, the Secretary of the Abyei Area Administration, told *The Citizen* that preparations have been concluded in Abyei to celebrate the birth of the Republic of South Sudan. He said that they will join their kinsmen in Bahr-el-Ghazal in celebration even if they are not part of the new state.

In a related development, *Al-Sahafa* quotes GoSS President Salva Kiir as saying that they would not allow a renewed outbreak of fighting between the north and the south. Addressing a mass rally for Abdulaziz Al-Hilu’s campaign in Southern Kordofan through telephone link from Juba yesterday, Kiir asked the people to vote for the SPLM candidate for state governor.

Sky News meanwhile quotes Sudan's UN ambassador Daffa-Alla Elhag Ali Osman as having warned that a 'unilateral' move by southern Sudan to take the contested Abyei region from the north would spark a war.

'We don't want to go back again to war but I think more than one time it has been said in different fora at the United Nations that any unilateral solution of the issue of Abyei will ignite war,' the envoy told the International Peace Institute forum.

Chan Reec Madut, a top judge from southern Sudan who sat on the commission that organised the January referendum, told the forum that if no agreement could be found on Abyei then the south's government would seek international arbitration.

Ngok would reject any post-9th July solution on Abyei

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 01/05/11 – Abyei Chief Administrator Deng Arop has warned that the Dinka Ngok may not accept any solution to the Abyei standoff after 9th July 2011. He warned that AUHIP’s Thabo Mbeki may be “acting in injury time”.

“After July, we would have the absolute freedom to take whichever step we deem appropriate,” he warned. He defended the provision in the transitional constitution of South Sudan that regards Abyei as part of southern Sudan, pointing out that the region was actually annexed to Southern Kordofan through an Administrative Order in 1905.

In a related development, activists in the Abyei Area say they intend to stage a peaceful procession this Tuesday in support of Abyei being part of south Sudan as stipulated in the draft Transitional Constitution, reports *Ajras Al-Hurriya*. The SPLM office in Abyei says it would present a memorandum to the GoSS on the day to that effect.

SPLM Political Bureau discusses constitutional review

Radio Miraya Juba, 30/04/11- The SPLM Political Bureau convened an extraordinary session on Friday to discuss amendments to the constitution. SPLM officials told **Radio Miraya** that the meeting was attended by all members of the Council of Ministers as well as members of Southern Sudan Constitutional Review Committee.

Meanwhile, opposition Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement - Democratic Change (SPLM-DC) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) have both insisted on their stance of boycotting the All Political Parties Leadership Forum organized by the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS).

UDF Chairperson, Peter Sule, said in an interview with **Radio Miraya** that unless views of other political parties on the Draft Interim Constitution are considered, his party would not recognize the charter.

Sudan's Central Bank fires southerners in the north

Sudantribune.com Juba, 30/04/11 - The fate of South Sudanese, who hitherto, worked as employees in the Khartoum-based Central Bank remain in jeopardy after management reportedly issued them with termination letters, **Sudan Tribune** has learnt.

The move, according to **Sudanese Media Center (SMC)**, a pro-government agency, was taken by the bank and other departments within the federal government after southerners overwhelmingly voted for separation during the January self-determination referendum.

Juma Malok, who returned from Khartoum where he worked as a court magistrate, told **Sudan Tribune** that the majority of southerners currently holed up in north of the country have embarked on an exit strategy to vacate the region before the July independence declaration of the south.

“What do you do when you have no clue of what to do next? It’s better to define your next move before things get out of order. In any case, southerners were well aware of all these and it was simply a matter of time,” Malok said.

Southern Kordofan Elections Focus

Southern Kordofan gubernatorial elections kick off tomorrow

Local dailies Kadugli, 01/05/11- Voters head to the 555 polling stations in Southern Kordofan to start casting their votes tomorrow. The High Elections Committee said in a statement yesterday that all preparations are complete and polling stations have been staffed. Adam Abdeen, head of the committee, said that the process would be monitored by some 10,000 local and 37 international monitors.

The over 600,000 eligible voters in the state would tomorrow have to choose from three candidates for governor – the incumbent Ahmed Haroun (NCP), his deputy Abdulaziz Al-Hilu (SPLM) and independent candidate Telefon Kuku. They would also have to elect 126 members to the state’s legislative assembly.

An SPLM delegation led by Malik Aggar and Abdulaziz Al-Hilu assured the Southern Kordofan High Elections Committee at a meeting yesterday that the SPLM has faith in the impartiality of the committee. According to **Al-Khartoum**, the SPLM delegation had requested that meeting and had

assured the committee that the SPLM would accept the results of the polls, whatever the outcome.

A *Radio Miraya* correspondent in Kadugli reports that the situation is calm amid a heavy police presence.

Meanwhile UNMIS Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haile Menkerios travels today to Southern Kordofan ahead of the polls. A press release issued by UNMIS yesterday that that the SRSG would hold talks with the state governor and his deputy as well as with members of the High Elections Committee.

FVP Kiir fails to make S. Kordofan trip for “security concerns”

Al-Rai Al-Aam, Khartoum, 01/05/11 – FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit had to cancel a trip to Southern Kordofan yesterday for “security concerns”, sources report. Reports have it that the trip was cancelled on the basis of intelligence of an assassination plot targeting the GoSS president should he visit the area. SPLM intelligence suspect Telefon Kuku’s supporters of masterminding the foiled plot. Kiir was expected to declare amnesty to Telefon Kuku at a press conference in Kadugli Airport but this was not to be.

The development comes in the wake of reports of major differences between GoSS President Salva Kiir and GoSS Vice-President Riek Machar over the disarmament of militia groups and the position of the southern Sudanese political parties over the draft transitional constitution for the region. Sources report that the GoSS VP is pushing for the reintegration of the forces of Gabriel Tanginye to the SPLA as happened with the other militias while the GoSS President is against the suggestion.

S. Kordofan’s deputy governor rejects award by Sudan President

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 28/04/11 – Southern Kordofan Deputy Governor Abdul Aziz Adam Al-Hilu has refused to accept an insignia of achievement awarded to him by President Al-Bashir, citing his unhappiness with the leader’s recent threats to wage war in his state.

Sudan’s official news agency *SUNA* on Wednesday reported that Al-Bashir had issued a decree awarding the Insignia of Political Achievement to South Kordofan governor, Ahmad Harun, and deputy governor, Al-Hilu, “in recognition of the two men’s role and efforts in the past period.”

Addressing a public rally in the state’s provincial capital, Al-Dilling, on Thursday Al-Hilu thanked Al-Bashir for the award but said he declines to accept it. He said that the first reason for his refusal is the threats issued by Al-Bashir to wage war in Southern Kordofan.

Al-Hilu said that the second reason for his refusal was the use of state-resources in supporting the electoral campaign of Ahmad Harun, citing as an example the live-broadcasting by the so-called national media of Harun’s rallies in a “clear violation of the elections law.”

The Carter Center (TCC), a US-based organization, expressed concern on Thursday over “deterioration in Southern Kordofan’s security environment,” in reference to the violence that broke out in El-Feid. The only international elections-observation mission in Southern Kordofan warned that “continuing tensions between rival candidates in certain areas could negatively affect voter turnout, impact the results, and therefore reduce the credibility of the electoral process.”

It urged increased efforts by Sudan government and that of South Sudan to diminish tension in the state and refrain from negative campaign rhetoric. On a positive note, however, TCC noted that the recently concluded candidate nomination period was “largely conducted transparently, efficiently, and peacefully.”

Carter Center call on GoSS to release Telefon Kuku

Radio Miraya Juba, 29/04/11- The Carter Center has called on the Government of Southern Sudan to release Telefon Kuku, an independent candidate in Southern Kordofan state's gubernatorial election, to let him campaign, or announce formal charges that justify his detention. In a statement released on Thursday, the Center also expressed concern over the security situation in Southern Kordofan and tensions in some areas of the state between rival candidates for the upcoming elections.

Umma Party calls for postponement of the polls in Southern Kordofan

Al-Rai Al-Aam et al Khartoum, 01/05/11 – The National Umma Party has accused the NCP of trying to drag the country to war. In a press release yesterday, the party called for a postponement of the polls for fear of an outbreak of violence.

Other Highlights

United Nations Security Council delegation to visit Sudan

Al-Rai Al-Aam Khartoum, 01/05/11 – A United Nations Security Council delegation is expected to visit Sudan this month within the context of a week-long tour that would see the delegation travel to Kenya and Sudan (Khartoum and Juba), the French Permanent Representative to the UN has revealed. The declaration of independence for the state of South Sudan would be among the issues for discussion during this trip, he revealed.

Six rebel factions name Athor president of coalition council

Sudantribune.com Wau, 29/04/11 - A coalition of six rebel factions on Friday named renegade General George Athor as president of the newly formed council, saying the body would serve as an entity for strategic planning and organisation of the unified operations.

The council also selected Abdel Bagi Ayii Akol as vice chairman and named Peter Gadet secretary of defence. Other members of the council include Gatluak Gai as chief of general staff and deputy secretary for operations and Bol Gatkuoth Kol as secretary of foreign affairs and official spokesman.

Speaking in an interview with *Sudan Tribune* from an undisclosed location inside Sudan on Friday, Abiel Riing Mijak, a senior member of the rebel movement, confirmed the formation of what he said was transitional council and that George Athor was unanimously selected to the head the coalition.

'Yes, it is true. The council has been formed. It was formed on Wednesday 27 April, 2011", said Abiel, adding that there were suggestions and discussion over the last three months to form a coordination command council.

The senior member of the rebel movement said they are ready and open for talks with the Government of South Sudan should the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) respond to the call for peaceful settlement of the post-election differences. "We have never rejected any proposal to settle our differences. We have always shown willingness to talk with the Government of South Sudan. We have never rejected any proposal to end the conflict in the area", said Abiel

However, Atem Biar, a senior member of the SPLM in a separate interview with *Sudan Tribune*, from Juba, said that Athor was not being direct.

"There is no time to waste with Athor and his like now. They do not need peace. What they say in the media is not what they do. They do the opposite", said Atem, explaining that Athor used the amnesty offered by the South Sudan president, Salva Kiir Mayardit, last year, to recruit and attack.

"They are criminals who have killed innocent people because of power. They used amnesty offered by the president to recruit and kill innocent people. They used amnesty as weakness of the government to raise unnecessary demands thinking that they had power", explained Atem, rejecting proposals to negotiate with the rebels.

Tanginye would not face military trial - SPLA

Al-Rai Al-Aam, Juba, 01/05/11 – SPLA Spokesperson Philip Aguer has rebuffed recent statements that Gabriel Tanginye would face a military tribunal. He pointed out that it is the political leadership in southern Sudan to decide whether or not the dissident soldier would be tried.

Jonglei Governor protests withdrawal of WFP

Al-Ahdath Jonglei, 01/05/11 – Jonglei State Governor Kol Manyang has criticised the withdrawal of the WFP from his state in the wake of the killing by unidentified gunmen of one staff member last week. The governor pointed out that the citizens are facing a food shortage especially following cattle-raids in the Pibor and Lokongole areas last week.

The governor further lamented that he did not receive formal notification from the organisation that it was pulling out of the state.

Meanwhile the WFP coordinator for southern Sudan said the organisation has only cut down in its operations in Jonglei, especially in the trouble areas. He pointed out that the WFP still maintains operations in seven out of the eleven counties in the state. He also said that a WFP, UN team would launch investigations on the murder of the WFP staff member.

Sudan protests US criticism of Al-Bashir's comments

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 30/04/11 - Sudan on Saturday faulted criticism levelled by the US State Department at recent comments in which the country's president Omer Al-Bashir threatened not to recognize South Sudan independence if the latter approves a draft constitution laying claims to the contested region of Abyei.

The Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs at the US State Department, Johnnie Carson, on Friday deplored Al-Bashir's comments, reminding both north and south Sudan of their obligation to finalize the implementation of the CPA. "Those comments are not helpful at all, and they only serve to inflame and heighten tensions," Carson said, adding that "It is important that both sides — those in Khartoum and those in Juba - focus intensely on trying to resolve the key issues that have not been completed under the CPA."

The US official went on to stress that outstanding issues in CPA implementation, like Abyei, must be resolved before South Sudan's Independence Day on July 9.

But the official spokesman of Sudan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Khalid Musa, on Saturday told *SUNA* that the US criticism had unfairly targeted north Sudan. He said the US should be exerting pressure on the GoSS to drop the clause concerning Abyei from the draft constitution and not to show the region as a part of South Sudan.

“The US criticism should be first directed at the political behaviour of the SPLM which seeks to impose a unilateral administrative solution by annexing Abyei in the south’s constitution” Musa said. “This is a violation of the CPA, Sudan’s constitution and bilateral agreements.”

Sudan urges total removal of US economic sanctions

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 30/04/11 - The Sudanese government has called for a total and unconditional abrogation of U.S economic sanctions, one day after Washington suddenly exempted the country’s largest private bank from the blacklist of Sudanese entities and individuals subjected to the sanctions imposed since 1997.

Sudan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Saturday called on the U.S Administration to repeal economic sanctions on Sudan “without a condition or reservation,” as put by the ministry’s spokesman Khalid Moussa. Moussa said that although Sudan commends the positive step of removing the Bank of Khartoum from the sanctions list but at the same time notes that the partial removal of financial institutions is not very beneficial despite its positive signal. The spokesman added that the Sudanese people are entitled to enjoy the fruits of the peace for the achievement of which they had sacrificed so much.

Sudan’s calls come one day after the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) unexpectedly removed the private Bank of Khartoum and its 50 branches from the blacklist, rendering it effectively able to ask the return of blocked funds and assets and resume its activities with the US financial institutions.

However, A US official said the decision is motivated by the fact that it is no longer under the Sudanese government’s control.

LJM rebels support Doha draft agreement for peace in Darfur

Sudantribune.com Doha, 30/04/11 - A Darfur rebel group, Liberation and Equality Movement (LJM) defended the draft peace agreement negotiated with the Sudanese government in Doha describing it as reasonable agreement bringing a acceptable solutions to a wide range of disputed issues.

The mediation on 27 April handed a draft peace agreement to the Sudanese government, LJM and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) urging them to give their response before the 7 May. The six-chapter deal provides for the appointment of a vice-president and a number of national ministers from Darfur and establishes, during an interim period, a regional authority as the people of Darfur would have to decide through a referendum the administrative status of their region one year before elections.

Considering that the agreement was mainly negotiated by LJM and Khartoum, JEM demanded to hold direct talks with the Sudanese government over some issues such as the administrative status of Darfur, security arrangements, wealth sharing; and human rights, before giving its response.

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Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200