

31 May 2011

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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

Post-Referendum Monitor

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Post-Referendum Monitor

South Sudan accepts NCP conditions on Abyei

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 31/05/11 – The Government of Southern Sudan has accepted conditions by the Sudan Government that SAF forces would not withdraw from Abyei until a political settlement is reached.

Machar said following a meeting yesterday with Vice-President Ali Osman Taha that Taha had agreed to hold talks with him only in the absence of the four GoSS ministers who had accompanied Machar. He said that he also held a separate meeting “in the open air near the fountain at the Republic Palace” with President Al-Bashir.

The GoSS VP revealed at a press conference yesterday that his talks with the leaders in the north focused on Abyei, Blue Nile State and Southern Kordofan, closure of the border points between north and south and resumption of talks on the outstanding issues. He said the two sides had agreed to the formation of a committee to help resolve the Abyei problem.

On SPLA troops in Southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile areas, Machar said he had proposed that UNMIS forces remain in those areas since differences still exist between the two sides especially following the NCP’s assertions it would not accept SPLA presence in those areas. “We saw that there are issues on these two areas that are yet to be resolved and therefore believe it is necessary that UNMIS forces remain in those areas to preserve security and to prevent a security lapse as happened in Abyei.

But SAF Spokesperson Al-Suwarni Khaled said that the Sudan government position on this matter is “clear and candid”.

“In these two states, any remaining southern forces north of the border after June 1 will become legitimate targets,” he told *Bloomberg News* over phone from Khartoum today.

North, South Sudan agree on demilitarized zone -AU

Reuters Juba, 31/05/11 - Representatives from north and south Sudan have agreed to set up a demilitarized zone along their shared border, the African Union said on Tuesday, ten days after the north seized the disputed Abyei region.

Northern and southern officials met this week in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa to discuss Abyei and other issues ahead of the split.

The two sides agreed to establish a joint body headed by their ministers of defence, chiefs of staff, heads of intelligence and police and other officials, the AU said.

"The agreement ... establishes a Common Border Zone between North and South Sudan, which is to be demilitarised and jointly monitored and patrolled," the statement said, without adding further details. It made no specific reference to Abyei.

United Nations Security Council in consultations over UNMIS mandate

Al-Rai Al-Aam Khartoum, 31/05/11 – Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Khaled Musa says Sudan is yet to receive a response from the UN to its note expressing wishes to see an end to the UNMIS mandate on 9th July. He told *Al-Rai Al-Aam* that his ministry has not received note from the UN on whether or not the Mission’s mandate would come to a close on that date.

Sources intimate that the United Nations Security Council is in consultations for a three-month

extension for the UNMIS mandate to enable the Mission help address the issues of Abyei, reports *Al-Ahram Al-Youm*. The sources also reveal that the Sudan Government would not cooperate with UNMIS beyond 9th July 2011 and has decided not to provide protection for the Mission on the grounds that it would by then be considered an illegal presence.

The sources say they expect international bodies to put pressures to bear on the Sudan government to allow for an extension of the Mission. They also said that only if some exceptional developments happen may the government consider accepting an extension of the UNMIS presence and even then through direct consultations with the UN.

US Special Envoy speaks on Abyei

Al-Ahdath London, 31/05/11 – US Special Envoy Princeton Lyman says there are plans underway for the withdrawal of the two armies and beef up the UN military presence in the Abyei Area to enable them better monitor and verify redeployment schedules agreed upon. Lyman said that these new security arrangements have to be agreed upon by all sides – President Al-Bashir, FVP Salva Kiir, the UN and the AU at the soonest possible time

The US Special Envoy also revealed that the US is concerned over failure of efforts to bring President Al-Bashir and FVP Salva Kiir to talk. The two men, he said, have not spoken for weeks. “We feel great disappointment over this (failure to bring them together) and it is a big blow to the spirit of cooperation that culminated in the conduct of the referendum on schedule,” he said.

AEC to discuss Abyei with the partners

Al-Ayyam Khartoum, 31/05/11 – The Assessment and Evaluation Commission (AEC) says it would hold talks with the NCP and the SPLM in efforts for a peaceful solution to the military and political escalation in Abyei.

Meanwhile, the African Union has issued a statement calling on the two parties to seek a peaceful settlement to the Abyei crisis.

HAC to resume voluntary returns to southern Sudan

Ajras Al-Hurriya et al Khartoum, The Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) says it intends to resume voluntary returns operations to southern Sudan before 9th July this year and is requesting support for these operations.

HAC head Suleiman Abdulrahman told a press conference in Khartoum yesterday that the Sudan Government would cooperate with the relevant authorities in the south to expedite voluntary returns for those southern Sudanese wishing to return homes before 9th July. He called on the Sudan government to assist the GoSS on the returns operations.

On Abyei, he said a task force has been set up to coordinate relief aid. He said between 15,000 – 20,000 people fled Abyei – all of them southward - in the wake of the recent wave of violence.

SPLA says planning raid on Abyei

Al-Ahram Al-Youm Khartoum, 31/05/11 – The US did nothing to help stop the Sudan government from arming and modernizing its forces despite reports it had received from the SPLM that the government was building a large arsenal including fighter aircraft and drones, lamented GoSS Regional Cooperation Minister Deng Alor. According to the *SMC*, Alor told the United Nations Security Council’s Susan Rice at a recent meeting in Juba that the weaponry positioned in Southern Kordofan along the border strip is far superior to what the SPLA has.

Alor said that the GoSS would seek an extension to the UNMIS mandate in southern Sudan and would enter agreements with neighbouring countries on joint defence in order to wipe out militias. The SPLM, he said, would also provide logistics support to its members in Blue Nile, Southern Kordofan and Darfur in a bid to topple the regime in Khartoum.

He revealed that the SPLA is plotting an offensive against the north “to regain trust of the people in the SPLA”. He pointed out that the recent SAF raid on Abyei has caused great disappointment within the ranks of the SPLA and has made the people lose trust in that army.

United Nations Security Council in consultations over UNMIS mandate

Al-Rai Al-Aam Khartoum, 31/05/11 – Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Khaled Musa says Sudan is yet to receive a response from the UN to its note expressing wishes to see an end to the UNMIS mandate on 9th July. He told *Al-Rai Al-Aam* that his ministry has not received note from the UN on whether or not the Mission’s mandate would come to a close on that date.

Informed sources told *Al-Ahram Al-Youm* that the UN Secretary-General would request in his forthcoming report to the United Nations Security Council a three-month extension of the UNMIS mandate in order to resolve the Abyei problem.

The paper also reports that the Sudan government maintains it would not cooperate with the UNMIS beyond 9th July and would not provide protection for the Mission beyond that as its presence would be regarded illegal.

The sources expect Sudan to face pressures from hostile parties including the US Congress to allow an extension of the UNMIS presence. The sources maintain that the UNMIS mandate could only be extended against the background of exceptional circumstances that may dictate the need for its presence and only through talks and agreement with the government.

Other Highlights

Ahmed Haroun is sworn-in as Governor of Southern Kordofan

Al-Rai Al-Aam Khartoum, 31/05/11 – Ahmed Haroun was sworn-in before President Al-Bashir as Governor of Southern Kordofan State. Speaking to the press after the ceremony, Haroun promised to follow up on his campaign promises and to be a “governor for all the people” regardless of whether or not they voted in his favour.

Sudan agrees to appoint a vice-president from Darfur – top negotiator

Sudantribune.com Doha, 31/05/11 – The All Darfur Stakeholders Conference agreed that a draft peace agreement crafted by the mediation should constitute a ground for peace in Darfur while the government announced in Doha it has conceded to demands to appoint a Vice-President from Darfur.

The Qatari capital witnessed Monday a huge gathering for over 500 delegates from Darfur region including civil society, tribal leaders and local institutions but also are there representatives of the internally displaced people (IDPs) supporting both government and rebel groups.

Envoys from the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, regional organizations and neighboring countries took part in the assembly where the delegates behaved like football

supporters applauding and shouting the speakers.

State minister Amin Hassan Omer who chairs the government negotiating team told the gathering that Khartoum in principle rejects the idea to include in the constitution a position of vice-president for Darfur region because this might push other regions to claim the same position.

"However because we are keen to achieve peace and stability in the country, the government agrees, after discussions and concentrations, to appoint a vice-president from Darfur during the current presidential term only," Amin said followed by the applauses of the National Congress Party supporters.

Delegates at the conference showed consensus during the different meetings over the draft peace agreement proposed by the mediation as valid ground for peace in Darfur.

Nonetheless, the head of the governmental delegation pointed out that they are willing to seat with any rebel groups only to discuss "improvements of the drafted text" in a way to elucidate things and make the text clear to all the parties. But he ruled out any possibility to open new discussions of the seven chapters of the peace document.

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