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Media Monitoring Report

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<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/mar/16/sudan-elections-april-2010-progress>

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Highlights

GoNU parties sign elections code of conduct

GoNU political parties and the Political Parties Affairs Council (PPAC) have signed the Elections Code of Conduct, *Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports. PPAC Secretary General Mudawi Al-Turabi has described the signing as a step towards free and fair elections.

Government accuses JEM of renegeing on Doha agreement

Al-Sahafa reports that the Chadian mediation has failed to resume talks between the Sudan Government and JEM in Doha, saying the two sides reached a deadlock after JEM insisted on postponement of elections. Reportedly, the gulf of differences between the two sides is widening and that local authorities rearrested 15 JEM elements freed recently. The Government has reportedly accused JEM of renegeing on the Doha agreement. According to *Al-Rai Al-Aam*, head of Government delegation to Doha talks Amin Hassan Omer has dismissed reports that the Government offered JEM a post of presidential aide and two ministerial portfolios, adding that elections delay was out of the question.

SPLM warns of other options

SPLM presidential candidate Yasir Arman, addressing an elections rally in Geneina, warned that the movement might resort to other options should the NCP rig the upcoming elections, *Rai Al-Shaab* reports.

Arman condemns international silence over violence in Darfur

Sudan Tribune website 6/3/10 — Yasir Arman, SPLM presidential candidate Yasir Arman has condemned today the silence of international community over violence against civilians in Jebel Marra, Darfur.

Arman concluded on Tuesday a series of meetings held in the three states of Darfur, where he visited Al-Daein and Nyala in South Darfur on Sunday and was in El-Fasher, capital of North Darfur state yesterday, Monday, and held his last meeting in El-Geneina, the capital of West Darfur.

The candidate and his supporters said security services tried to hinder the local population from attending his public meetings. In Nyala, according to the SPLM, 80 buses of supporters were prevented from reaching the site of the rally. The IDPs were also prevented from attending Arman's rallies in the three towns.

"We condemn the silence of the concerned international parties on the violence exerted against civilians and their properties," said Arman, who was speaking to Sudan Tribune from El Geneina. He further said he was particularly concerned by the repression practiced against human rights activists and civil society organization.

Arman said during his visit that people complained much from the international indifference as security and humanitarian conditions are worsening on the ground. He also denounced the arrest of SPLM members in the restive region as the closure of the party's premises in Al-Daein. "We call for the immediate release of SPLM members in El-Fasher and Nyala including Umda Hussein Sajo and Ibrahim Bakheit," he said.

"I realized that no free and fair election can be held under the emergency law implemented in Darfur," he said.

He also called to involve the African Union and the United Nations in the monitoring of the April elections saying their presence is important to ensure the participation of all the Darfurians in the election.

Arman also said a lasting solution for Darfur could not be attainable without creating a new center of power in which the Darfurian people as with others in the South, East and North of Sudan are involved.

"We must implement the Naivasha Agreement to all regions of Sudan and the making of a new center of power in which the regions take part."

Arman said if elected President he will establish unilaterally one region in Darfur — without requiring this to be negotiated with the rebels — stressing that the region historically was one entity and the people have the right to have their own regional administration.

He pledged to expel the newcomers from the Arab tribes that migrated recently to Darfur and settled in the lands of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

"Tribes that came from beyond the borders of Sudan must immediately exit from the territory of native tribes," he said, adding that they may be granted status as refugees or guests in the country in accordance with international refugee laws, "but not at the expense of the people of the region".

Al-Bashir to visit Upper Nile

As part of his elections campaign, NCP presidential candidate Omer Al-Bashir will visit the Upper Nile state during the two coming days, *Al-Watan* reports. Al-Bashir will visit Bor, Pibor, Akobo and Malakal. The President is also reportedly planning to visit west Darfur state and eastern Sudan early next month for campaigning.

Tons of elections cards arrive in Khartoum

A British plane, chartered by the UN and supervised by the NEC, landed in Khartoum yesterday carrying a cargo of 100 tons of elections cards printed in South Africa for Sudan's northern states, *Al-Watan* reports. Reportedly, the cargo would be followed by another plane carrying 83 tons of voting cards. The total quantity of ballots needed for the northern states is reportedly 183 tons.

Presidential candidates to hold a meeting today

The National Umma Party dismissed yesterday a rumour that its leader Sadiq Al-Mahid survived an attempt on his life, *Al-Sahafa* reports. However, the party stressed the need to provide protection for the candidates. Meanwhile, presidential candidates will hold a meeting today at the residence of independent candidate Kamil Idriss in Khartoum for consultation on a range of issues including postponement of elections until November.

Opposition rejects partial postponement of Southern Kordofan polls

Opposition parties have rejected the partial postponement of the polls in Southern Kordofan State saying the dispute over the census results is nationwide problem and not only confined to Southern Kordofan. *Rai Al-Shaab* quotes URRP leader Mubarak Al-Fadhil Al-Mahdi as saying that the parties have been demanding for a comprehensive solution to these problems and categorically reject the recent development. "Solutions to these problems could only be reached

through a postponement of the polls to November," he reportedly said.

SPLA arrests SPLM-DC campaign team in Western Bahr-el-Ghazal

Al-Wifaq daily reports that SPLA intelligence arrested SPLM-DC campaign team for "wearing tee-shirts with SPLM-DC leader Lam Akol's picture and calling on the state's electorate to vote for him."

A prominent member of the party reports an increase in targeting of SPLM-DC members since the party announced it would name candidates to run at all levels of the elections in southern Sudan. He said that the intimidation continues despite assurance by the GoSS to facilitate political activities.

SSPS suspect political motives behind murder of independent candidate

Reuters 16/03/10 - South Sudanese police said on Monday they suspected a political motive in the murder of a Member of Parliament in Juba, one month before the first multi-party polls in 24 years.

Zacariah Bol Deng, an independent candidate hoping to represent the South's main oil-producing Unity state parliament, died after being shot last Thursday when at least three men broke into his house.

Police were still collecting information but said Sudan's April elections, a key part of Sudan's 2005 north-south peace deal and its first multi-party ballot for 24 years, may have played a role in the incident.

Asked if a political motive was suspected, police Colonel Michael Lasuba said: "Yes, because of the election - maybe there is competition and you eliminate this one." South Sudan's democratic credentials will be scrutinised during the elections as it may become Africa's newest state in 2011 when southerners choose whether to remain united with northern Sudan or to separate.

Police investigator Sebit Joseph Ater said the victim's brother believed the death was connected to Deng's campaign.

"Maybe there are people who paid for this," Ater said. He said Deng and his wife were sleeping under an open-walled thatch roof when the gunmen pulled them out of bed, threw her to the ground and shot the parliamentarian.

Deng, from Unity State, was a member of the ex-rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), which dominates the south Sudan government, a party official said. But he was running on an independent ticket for the April ballot.

Some opposition and independent candidates in the south have complained of harassment and arrests by authorities, hampering their ability to campaign.

LRA plans attacks in South Sudan to disrupt elections

Sudan Tribune website 17/3/10 – LRA rebels are planning to carry out attacks in Southern Sudan during the April elections, says the spokesman of the Southern Sudan army.

Maj. Gen. Kuol Deim Kuol said the SPLA has confirmed that LRA has planned for massive attacks in Western Equatoria state and Greater Bahr el Ghazal region to coincide with the elections in the region. Speaking to the UN-sponsored Miraya FM radio based in Juba, Kuol accused the SAF of supporting the LRA to destabilize Southern Sudan. He said the SPLA forces are ready to repel such attacks and provide security to the people during the elections.

Kuol also echoed the recent statement by the Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni that LRA forces are based in Darfur region. He added that LRA forces have already been spotted in

areas of Western Bahr el Ghazal state in their preparation for the attacks. Earlier Sudan Armed Forces denied the claim that the LRA forces are based in Darfur, describing it as “baseless.”

Other Highlights

Government asks UNMIS to desist from sending negative signals

Akhir Lahza reports SRSG Haile Menkerios as saying that UNMIS will continue to assist the implementation of the CPA. State Minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Al-Samani Al-Waseela who met with the SRSG has called on UNMIS to fully coordinate with the Government on all programmes and issues and to desist from sending negative signals that impede efforts to achieve stability in the country. He also asked the Mission to continue to urge donors to honour their pledges for development and return of IDPs and refugees.

CPA partners implemented most benchmarks, little remain –SRSG

Akhir Lahza newspaper conducted the first interview with Mr. Haile Menkerios who took over as SRSG and head of UNMIS.

Asked about his priorities for the forthcoming stage the SRSG said, “These are not personal priorities. UNMIS priorities are to assist in the conduct of upcoming elections in a proper manner. The Mission stands ready to provide necessary technical and logistical assistance that contribute toward improvement of the security situation in the South. The Mission will also assist in the preparations for the conduct of the referendum by building a common ground to address challenges”.

Asked about the roadmap to address the challenges the country is facing, he said, “On the top of these challenges is elections. I regret coming at a time when the elections process is coming to a close. I notice that preparations for the exercise are proceeding in a good manner”.

Asked whether he expects elections success he said, “Certainly. We are hopeful that it will be free and fair”.

Asked about the issues the SG advised him to focus on, the SRSG said, “The same advice for my predecessor Ashraf Qazi. That is to implement the Mission’s mandate with regard to the implementation of the CPA”.

Asked to comment on a visible welcome on the part of the Government he said, “Yes, I have conveyed to the Acting Foreign Minister Al-Samani my greetings. We had a deep discussion on my mandate. I affirmed that assistance to the CPA partners will continue to ensure the implementation of the remaining benchmarks. I told him that the two partners have succeeded in implementing most of the protocol. I have conveyed to him the encouragement of the Mission for the implementation of the remaining benchmarks. We will continue to assist the two partners in an impartial and transparent manner”.

Oil figures in Sudan still marred by discrepancy - report

Sudan Tribune website 16/3/10 — The Sudanese Government has failed to follow through on their promise to conduct a full audit into the accuracy of their oil production data in light of significant discrepancy with figures released by the main Chinese oil company operating in the country, UK-based Global Witness said today.

Last September, the same group alleged that their investigation into the subject revealed that

revenues from some oilfields published by Sudan's Ministry of Finance — among the figures used to calculate the southern share — were lower than revenues for the same oilfields published by operator China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC).

If true, this meant that the South has been shorted millions of dollars in oil revenue. The group said in a release today that the situation has not changed six months after its initial findings.

Global Witness has discovered that oil production figures published by CNPC for 2009 for the blocks it operates in Sudan's Upper Nile State are 12% bigger than those published by the Sudanese Government.

"The difference in question - 12 million barrels of oil - is significant. The oil is worth \$370 million and is enough to power a city in the US the size of San Francisco for a year," said Global Witness campaigner, Rosie Sharpe.

"The authorities in the North are responsible for stating how much oil was produced. The South has no way of checking whether these figures are correct and therefore whether the revenues the Southern Government receive are correct. This is a critical issue and one which could be decisive in determining whether the upcoming referendum on independence passes off peacefully."

"While it is impossible to know for sure which figures are correct, it is clear that both cannot be. Six months after we first raised this issue we still haven't seen the reforms that are necessary and that have been promised. The continued discrepancies are a cause for grave concern and cast a shadow over the prospects for peace," said Sharpe.

"The authorities in the north have not done enough to allay the suspicion held by many southerners that they are underreporting the volume of oil produced in order to transfer less money to the Southern Government than is due under the peace agreement. Transparency - of which a first step is conducting an audit - will be needed for both sides to trust the current revenue sharing agreement, and any future one," said Sharpe.

The group said that they put the allegations of production discrepancies to the Ministry of Finance and CNPC but has yet to receive a reply from either.

Global Witness said it has also discovered that the pipeline fees stated by the Sudanese Government do not match those stated by the Central Bank of Sudan in 2005, 2006 and 2008.

In response to an inquiry from Global Witness, the Ministry of Finance said that they are using two different methods of accounting meaning they cannot be compared. In 2006 alone the difference amounted to \$162 million.

"While the two accountancy methods do generate different figures - as one relies on the date the fees are incurred whereas the other relies on the date they are paid - it is difficult to see how this alone could generate such large discrepancies".

Food gap in Warrap state

Governor of Warrap state Salva Matok has confirmed the existence of a food gap in his state, ***Al-Rai Al-Aam*** reports. He attributed the food shortage to the lack of rainfall last season, adding that the state would face a critical situation in terms of strategic stockpile of grains.

VP Taha to visit Doha tomorrow

VP Ali Osman Taha will visit Doha tomorrow leading a delegation to attend the signing of a

framework agreement between the Sudan Government and Darfur rebels which united under the umbrella of the "Liberation and Justice Movement", *Al-Watan* reports.

US considering to set up military base in the South

The US is considering to set up a military base in southern Sudan, *Al-Intibaha* reports. Reportedly, a commander of a special US force is visiting southern Sudan within two days to discuss aspects of cooperation between the US army and SPLA on fight against terrorism and the LRA.

Sudan to grant local companies priority in oil industry

Energy and Mining Minister Al-Zubeir Ahmed Al-Hassan has confirmed his ministry's commitments to remove obstacles to the nationalisation of Sudan's oil industry, reports *Al-Rai Al-Aam*. Addressing a workshop yesterday on Sudanese oil companies, the minister said that the state would grant local oil companies priority over their foreign counterparts in the country's oil production and would help promote these companies.

Government accuses UN of politicizing human rights issues

Undersecretary of the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mutrif Siddiq has accused the UN Security Council of politicizing human rights issues and of relying on member states' views rather than the reports compiled by competent experts, *Al-Intibaha* reports. Siddiq made the remarks at function organized by the Ministry to mark the international Day for women and child rights.

Investigation ordered into corruption at humanitarian affairs ministry

Sudan Tribune website 16/3/10 — The Sudanese Cabinet issued an unannounced decision to investigate the disappearance of 10 billion pounds (8 billion for emergency programme and 2 billion for the humanitarian action) from the ministry of humanitarian affairs, a newspaper reported today.

The *Akhir-Lahza* newspaper said that the Council of Ministers wants a probe into the performance of the ministry and the relationship between the minister and the state minister.

Furthermore the report indicated that the humanitarian aid commissioner Hasabu Abdel-Rahman has been relieved from his duties but did not say when the decision was taken.

The Sudanese official is running for parliamentary elections and is therefore prohibited from keeping his position at the ministry.

Al Bashir to attend coming Sirte summit

Sudan Vision 17/3/10 - Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail reported that President Al Bashir would participate in the 22nd Arab Summit scheduled to convene in Sirte, Libya at the end of the current month.

Ismail held meetings with the Arab League Secretary General, Amru Mousa, Egypt Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Ghait, for discussing arrangements prerequisite for convening Darfur Rehabilitation Conference to be hosted by Cairo on current March 31st, under the joint chairmanship of Egypt and Turkey, and the auspices of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

The presidential adviser said that the aim of the conference was to focus the contribution of the OIC to Darfur development, pointing out that, up to now emphasis have been on humanitarian relief, but developments that occurred in the region and the ongoing peace

process have motivated restoring things back to normal in the region, and therefore they want to preempt events and begin setting the stage for the economic and social development process.

Ismail excluded postponement of the national elections on the grounds that ample time was allowed as elections were announced four years ago.

Al-Bashir orders sacking of physicians

Local dailies report while President Al-Bashir has instructed the Health Ministry to dismiss all doctors who went on strike and that their financial entitlement be settled immediately, the Federal Ministry of Health announced that it would wait until 9:00 AM today for the doctors to raise their strike or else the presidential order will be carried out.