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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

More than ten people killed in clashes between SPLA and SPLM-DC

Sudan Tribune website 10/7/10 - More than ten people have been killed in recent clashes between the forces of the SPLA and armed groups said to be allied to the breakaway group SPLM-DC.

The SPLA official spokesperson, Major General Kuol Deim Kuol, said his forces on Friday attacked two locations of the armed group of the SPLM-DC in Upper Nile state. SPLM-DC is headed by the former Sudan's Foreign Minister, Dr. Lam Akol Ajawin.

"Yesterday on Friday July 9, 2010, there were criminals belonging to SPLM-DC who established two bases of militias center in Western Bank of River [Nile]. Our force attacked their position resulting into killing of militias group as well as military equipment seized by our SPLA and both the two centers were completely destroyed," Kuol said.

The villages comprised of Okel in Kodok area and Alel of Lul were areas established by the SPLM-DC militias and we have attack them and more military equipments including 6 AKM rifles, solar fan and generator were seized during an attack," explained the SPLA spokesman.

He said that 11 armed militia members were killed by the SPLA forces as well as three people from SPLA forces sustained injuries.

Kuol however added that the situation in the Western Bank of the river is back to normal as the army was pursuing the militias.

Kuol accused the northern dominant National Congress Party (NCP) of supporting the SPLM-DC militias' operations in Southern Sudan to disturb peace in the region.

"Those militias disturbing South Sudan security are military wing of the SPLM-DC and their support came directly from Lam Akol in Khartoum. Lam himself gained support from Khartoum government and I need to ensure everyone that SPLA is not sleeping, we are protecting our civilians from any attacks," he said.

The militia's commander, Colonel Guang Robert was reported to have been wounded in his arm and "now he is on the run with his few left forces toward forest and our SPLA forces are pursuing him...and I have confidence that he will be brought to the book without failure," he further explained.

SPLM-DC leaders in Khartoum could not be reached for comment by Sudan Tribune.

South Sudan army says kills seven in militia raids

Reuters 11/7/10 - South Sudan's army said on Sunday it killed seven militia fighters in a raid on their camps last week, in the latest sign of unrest ahead of an independence referendum in the oil-producing region.

Recent fighting has raised fears over stability in the run up to the vote, scheduled for January 2011, on whether the south should split away and form a separate country.

The southern army (SPLA) said the militia fighters were loyal to Lam Akol, a southern opposition leader, and accused them of launching a raid on river boats in the Upper Nile state last month. The army raid took place on Friday, it said.

Akol, Sudan's former foreign minister before he formed a breakaway party in the south was not immediately available for comment. He has regularly denied leading a militia in the past.

Sudan's south has been plagued by a series of uprisings by at least three renegade militia leaders angry at the results of April elections, which saw an overwhelming victory for the region's Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM).

So far the skirmishes have not coalesced into a full revolt.

The referendum was originally promised in a 2005 peace deal that ended decades of civil war with north Sudan.

Army spokesman Kuol Diem Kuol said youths led an SPLA division to two hideouts used by a militia loyal to Akol's SPLM- DC (Democratic Change) party in Upper Nile on Friday morning.

"The attacks were really a surprise to them. The SPLA destroyed the two camps. From the side of SPLM-DC seven were killed ... Our forces are now following the remnants and are determined to bring them to justice," he said.

Four SPLA soldiers and many militia fighters were injured in the clash, he added.

South Sudan Ministry of Information lobbies parliament to enact media law

Sudan Tribune website 9/7/10 - A senior GoSS civil service official has urged the parliament to enact media law before the upcoming referendum takes place.

George Garang Deng, Undersecretary in the regional ministry of Information and Broadcasting said the media law has reached an advanced stage and the bill may soon be moved in the regional assembly.

In an interview with *Sudan Tribune* from Juba, Deng said he told key influential members of the August House that the bill would have provisions for establishment of an independent media supervisory board responsible for adherence to ethics, promotion of academic and professional standards.

"I have talked to a number of senior officials in the key institutions, particularly the specialized committees at the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, to quickly pay attention to the media law," he said.

Deng said he has asked the house to endorse the act before referendum takes place so that the media can go on disseminating developmental and referendum-related activities with approved law.

On the need to enact a new law, he explained that the act would repeal existing media statutes that had for long attracted widespread criticism for being outdated and some of the provisions were incompatible with the constitution.

The government, he said, would draw up regulations on ownership and registration of media outlets. The rules and regulations will take into account technological dynamism, particularly in

this cyber era.

The official further added that the public-owned media (radio, TV and newspapers) will continue to be improved. The Southern Sudan Radio and TV would purchase more computers and other equipment to improve reporting and news operations, he added.

He further reported that plans to computerize Southern Sudan Radio and TV library will be completed soon. "Plans to computerize the two stations are at the finishing stages. We already have more computers but would like to add more for efficiency at work among journalists at the stations," he said.

He further explained that Southern Sudan TV plans to increase coverage to more regions by installing new receiver stations in all the ten states capitals as well as in remotest areas.

The ministry, he added, will continue with efforts to promote local dialects [languages] through publication of books and programmes on local radio.

The ministry too would like the government of Southern Sudan to finalize talks and plans over building printing press and formation of media supervisory board responsible for adherence to ethics, promotion of academic and professional standards and to continue negotiating with its partners to develop media in the region.

The top civil servant in the ministry of Information equally thanked the media in the region for showing interest and commitment to play its noble role of educating, informing and entertaining the public, despite difficult working conditions in many media houses.

He however pointed out that the ministry continued to face challenges caused by limited budget to enable it implement its planned programmes efficiently.

Sudan's Kiir hospitalized for exhaustion in Kenya – GoSS

Sudan Tribune website 9/7/10 - The First Vice President of Sudan and GoSS president Salva Kiir Mayardit has been in the Kenyan capital since last week for medical check-up after falling ill to exhaustion, said officials from the Government of South Sudan (GoSS).

"It was exhaustion. He simply was not feeling well but there was nothing specific," the minister of cabinet affairs in the oil-producing region, Kosti Manibe, told Reuters.

"He did have some check-up there [in Nairobi]. There was nothing wrong with him. He just needs to rest ... People should not be worried at all" Manibe added.

The GoSS official did not say why this was not disclosed at the time but indicated that Kiir will return to Southern Sudan capital of Juba on Sunday. He said the president's check-up would not delay any of the discussions.

Tabitha Boutros Shokai, a member of the political bureau of Kiir's Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), said the president had gone to Nairobi for a general check-up and was in good health.

Kiir has not been reported to be suffering from any health issues in the past and is generally believed to be fit.

Tremor hits Sudanese capital, no injuries reported

Sudan Tribune website 9/7/10— A light tremor was reported by residents of the Sudanese capital and confirmed by seismological officials but there were no injuries and no damage to buildings.

The director of the General Authority for Geological Research Yousif Samani told the Sudan official news agency (SUNA) that the 3.0 size tremor detected by their devices at appears to be a "residual vibration" resulting from "external effect that may be man-made".

However, SUNA later quietly removed the "man-made" portion of Samani's statement without indicating a correction or a retraction. Scientists say that human activity can also produce earthquakes in some cases.

A recent study reported by National Geographic this year claimed that fluctuations in the amount of water behind China's Zipingpu dam could have been the catalyst behind 2008 deadly quake that killed almost 70,000 people.

Samani said that the tremor had no impact or swarms since it was a light one and thus aftershocks are unlikely.

The Sudanese police said that no reports of losses or victims were reported and called on people not to worry as Sudan is outside the seismic belt.

Earthquakes are very rare in Sudan with the latest one reported earlier this year in the town of Shendi in the North of the country but was not officially confirmed.

French FM welcomes Darfur mediators and rebel leader meeting

Sudan Tribune website 9/7/10 - French foreign minister Bernard Kouchner welcomed the move of Darfur rebel leader Abdel Wahid Al-Nur who announced his support to Qatari efforts to end Darfur conflict.

Al-Nur who is based in Paris met on Thursday 8 July with the Qatari state minister for foreign affairs Ahmad bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud and the Joint Chief Mediator Djibril Bassole to discuss ways allowing him to join the ongoing efforts to end the seven years conflict in Darfur.

The rebel leader who refuses to join the negotiating table told Sudan Tribune on Thursday he discussed the issue of security of civilians in Darfur stressing "There was a strong convergence of views, and we agreed to pursue future meetings to seek ways to join the peace process in Doha".

Minister Kouchner said he met Al-Nur on Thursday evening at the foreign ministry and the later confirmed his intention to back the Doha peace process.

"During our meeting yesterday evening at the Quai d'Orsay, Abdel Wahid Al- Nur has indeed confirmed his intention to contribute actively to the peace process, personally and through his representatives," Kouchner said in a statement released in Paris on Friday.

"This new position of chief of the SLM is the culmination of months of talks held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with Abdel Wahid Al-Nur. I am glad he finally took up the challenge of peace," he added.

Speaking to Al-Jazeera today, the rebel leader reaffirmed his supportive position for peace

pointing out that the issue of security remains his major demand. He also welcomed the Qatari sponsorship to the peace process to end Darfur conflict...

Meanwhile, the NCP has welcomed the meeting of the Qatari State Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Joint Chief Mediator with Al-Nur.

Fathi Shila, information secretary of the ruling NCP, in statements to Al-Rai Al-Aam daily, welcomed the supportive position of the rebel leader saying, "We welcome this position, which take in consideration the suffering of civilians in Darfur and realize the seriousness of the government to achieve peace in Darfur before the end of the year".

He further said Nur's participation in the Doha talks would create a breakthrough and new addition to the talks.

Presidential adviser and responsible of Darfur dossier Ghazi Salah Al-Deen, told the Sudanese MPs this week that his government intends to improve the security situation and to facilitate the return of displaced populations as well as implementing development projects.

Ghazi stressed on the important role that local elected institutions and the civil society can play in the conflict settlement besides the negotiations with the rebel groups.

However, **Al-Sahafa** 11/7/10 reports Al-Nur has denied that he agreed to join peace talks in Doha. Also, *AFP* reports Al-Nur as saying that "supporting the peace process does not mean agreement to take part in the talks".

Sudan says no decision made on Bashir's attendance at AU summit in Kampala

Sudan Tribune website 11/7/10 - Sudan has yet to determine the level of its participation in the African Union (AU) summit that will take place this month in the Ugandan capital, the foreign minister said.

A diplomatic row erupted when a statement attributed to Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni that he had asked Khartoum to send someone other than president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir to the summit.

Uganda is a member of the International Criminal Court (ICC) which issued an arrest warrant for Bashir on charges of war crimes in Darfur and therefore has a legal obligation to apprehend him should he set foot in the country.

Afterwards, Kampala said that Museveni was misquoted and that Bashir was already invited to the summit. Sudanese officials have said they will demand relocating the AU conference to another country.

Sudan insists that all African nations must abide by an AU resolution adopted a year ago stating that member states, even signatories to ICC statute, shall not arrest Bashir if he visits. Several African states however, have backed away from the decision and warned the Sudanese president to stay away from events on their territories.

The top diplomat in Sudan Ali Karti told the official news agency (SUNA) that the misunderstanding with Kampala has been resolved and noted the recent visit by Ugandan state minister for foreign affairs Isaac Musumba in which he re-invited Bashir to the summit.

"[The] Ugandan envoy came with explanations that were convincing to the President of the Republic, and accepted the clarifications and apologies, Sudan will participate positively at the African Union summit in Kampala, but has not yet decided who would take part and level of participation" Karti said.

Last month the Sudanese presidential adviser Bona Malwal said that it is unlikely that his boss will be present in Kampala "because of presidential commitments in forming a government in the coming days and other pressing national matters".

Bashir, the only sitting head of state wanted by the ICC, has had to choose his trips carefully but he has made a point of traveling to friendly nations in the Middle East and Africa, including Saudi Arabia, Libya and Eritrea and others that are not members of the court.

He has skipped a couple of invitations for conferences that were held in Uganda last year.

South Sudan Bank shut down ten exchangers in Juba

Local dailies 11/7/10 – South Sudan's Central Bank yesterday shut down 10 out of 29 exchangers operating in Juba on charges of violating exchange rules and regulations for 2002.

Pre-referendum Watch

AU's Mbeki submits four proposals to the CPA partners on post-referendum arrangement

Local dailies 11/7/10 – The NCP and the SPLM have embarked on considering four proposals presented by AUHIP chairman Thabo Mbeki on post-referendum arrangement. Reportedly, the four options on Mbeki's document include: unity of Sudan on new basis, confederation in which two independent countries will exist in a negotiated framework of cooperation including shared governance institutions, two independent countries existing within a broad and negotiated framework of cooperation including freedom of movement for both people and goods and the last option is two independent countries where citizens will be required to obtain visas to cross the border. The two CPA partners began their talks on post-referendum arrangement last Saturday in Khartoum. The partners did not set a time-frame for completing their talks but hoped to conclude their negotiations before the kickoff of the referendum process in January.

Sudan Tribune website 10/7/10 reported that the NCP and the SPLM will discuss in the coming days the possibility of establishing a North-South confederation system rather than two separate states.

The former South African president Thabo Mbeki who chairs the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), addressing the participants at the meeting said that the choice made by the people of the South at the referendum would be respected by the AU and the international community.

Mbeki however appeared to be attempting to steer the NCP & SPLM away from the option of full independence of the South.

"In the 21st century, the world has changed, and especially Africa has changed. No nation is an island sufficient unto itself. The African Union is itself an expression of the African continent's desire for integration and unity. The striving towards economic and political integration is more than a manifestation of Africa's deep-seated recognition that our strength comes from our common identity. Closer ties among ourselves are a necessity for our continent's security and

development" he said.

But the AUHIP chairman stressed that this vision does not contradict with the right of self-determination for the Southern Sudanese.

"They have and shall exercise that right, at the time and in the way determined in the CPA. But the drive towards African integration and unity provides a context to the establishment of the nation-state different from what obtained fifty years ago" Mbeki said.

Mbeki said his document was not intended to serve as an agenda or a draft agreement.

Meanwhile, SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum who spoke at the opening session of the negotiations Saturday said the referendum would allow the south to "reset" its troubled relationship with the north, whether southerners chose unity or separation.

"If the choice is separation, then we will be ensuring that there will be good cooperation between the two independent states. It could take the form of a confederation. It could take the form of a common market," Amum said.

Amum promised to negotiate with the NCP "in good faith" to reach an agreement on post-referendum issues and reiterated his warnings that the self-determination must be held as planned.

"Failure to conduct it concurrently with the referendum for the people of southern Sudan, as stipulated in the CPA, renders risk of slipping our country back to the conflict, a scenario none of us want to see," he said.

But Idris Mohamed Abdel-Gadir, an NCP figure, told the meeting his party was still working on making unity attractive and emphasized the southerners' right to freely choose between unity and separation.

"Sudan's unity is still our priority and at the same time we stress on the southerners' right to decide their destiny according to the international principles and standards," he said.

AFP 10/7/10 reported that the North and the South began talks on Saturday on a strategy to ensure a smooth transition should a referendum next year result in independence.

Talks between the NCP and the SPLM were focused on planning a peaceful transition for January's referendum.

"Today we are together to launch negotiations of post-referendum arrangements to clearly establish a vision that after the referendum life shall continue," said SPLM negotiator Pagan Amum.

"These negotiations are an opportunity for us to strengthen our relations because in the past they have been bitter," he said.

Failing to conduct the vote according to the terms of the 2005 treaty would "run the risk of slipping our country back in conflict, a scenario none of us want to see our country returning to," he warned.

The NCP said it wanted to ensure the crucial vote would not be followed by conflict in a country

and region prone to war.

"We are hoping that the negotiation will lead to sustainable peace not only in Sudan but also all over the region," NCP negotiator Idriss Mohammed Abdel Qadir said at the ceremony.

"We are confident that we can reach a framework agreement on post-referendum arrangement," Amum said.

"If the choice is separation then we will be ensuring that there will be good cooperation between the two independent states, it could take the form of a confederation or a common market," he told reporters.

Al-Ayyam 11/7/10 reports that the two CPA partners have decided to resume their negotiations on 19 July in Juba.

In a related development, **Al-Khartoum** 11/7/10 reports that Presidential Adviser Mustafa Osman Ismail, addressing a symposium on "challenges of unity and secession" revealed that the NCP was ready to consider "oil for unity deal".

Umma Party leader Al-Mahdi proposes roundtable meeting on unity and separation issues

Al-Ahdath 11/7/10 – National Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi has urged the Sudanese political forces to organize a roundtable conference to debate issues of unity and secession, calling on them to rise above their partisan differences and contribute efforts to avoid the separation option.

Al-Mahdi has criticized the NCP's manner of running the country, urging it to organize a roundtable conference of all the political forces to discuss the issues of unity and separation.

NBGS: referendum pressure group rejects call for united Sudan

Sudan Tribune website 10/7/10 - Thousands of citizens from southern town of Aweil, capital of Northern Bahr el Ghazal on Friday flocked to the streets to stage a peaceful procession rejecting political calls against separation of the South from the North.

The procession reportedly organized by the newly-formed local referendum pressure group dubbed as "The Concerned Youth for Separation of Southern Sudan (CYSSS)," in collaboration with SPLM state Youth league, started from Aweil freedom Square through the corridors of downtown to UNMIS where the speakers gave out their speeches before returning to Aweil downtown to freedom for conclusion remarks.

Marched through Malou Awer, Maper Akot Aru, Sakadit, Gabat, Ayuung, all in Aweil town, capital of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, the procession is expected to be extended to county headquarters and villages. The procession was addressed by Jacob Yel Garang Yel; SPLM youth league chairperson in the state.

In a procession memo seen by *Sudan Tribune*, Mr. Yel said the CYSSS acting in collaboration with SPLM League, is non political party but a pressure group inspired to sensitize people of Northern Bahr el Ghazal about the importance of the upcoming referendum so that they show readiness to participate in the conduct of the exercise. This group is just a pressure group. It is not a political party affiliated group, Yel reportedly clarified to the audience at the procession.

Calling upon individual political figures and activists to bury their differences and campaign as

an entity rising beyond all divisive factors such as race, religion, political affiliation, educational orientation to name a few, he urged the citizenry to campaign against unity and say yes for separation by using peaceful means possible.

"We have to adopt the use of peaceful campaign against unity because of our solid belief in the strength derived from our unity and common goal; he said stressing that Sudanese youth have hideously suffered bondage of many civil wars in the country in the course of justice. You should remember that we Youth from both sides dearly paid for price of this peace, and we should therefore watch out very carefully to avoid repeat of the past," he said.

He said youth everywhere become the victims of any conflict, adding that in Darfur youth are dying on daily basis as direct result of the seven year conflict in the restive region.

He further said that northern Sudan failed to make unity attractive since Juba conference in 1947 including the five years of interim period of the CPA implementation, "I do not see when will northern elites make unity attractive for southerners to avoid separating from the north," he posed.

However, Garang Baak Yel, a southern Student at Bahr el Ghazal University in Wau, condemned both calls against unity and separation, saying none of them has been attractive by the ruling parties.

"Neither has SPLM made separation attractive to the people of southern Sudan nor did NCP make unity attractive to the people of southern Sudan too. They have all done us no good than creation of political classes for poor and rich," said Mr.Baak.