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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

## Post-Referendum Headlines

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# Highlights

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## **Four peacekeepers wounded in Abyei**

*Al-Ayyam* 11/5/11 – Four peacekeepers were wounded by unidentified armed group when their patrol was attacked in Goli area, 25 km north of Abyei, says UNMIS statement.

Meanwhile, the SPLM in Abyei has warned of further tension due to military buildup in the Area, describing it as a violation of the Kadugli agreement.

*UN News Centre* 10/5/11 reported that the four blue helmets, all from Zambia, were shot around 4:40 p.m. as they returned from a regular patrol to the north of the town of Abyei. The peacekeepers were evacuated to Abyei for medical treatment and one of them is reported to be in a serious condition. Kouider Zerrouk, a spokesperson for the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), said the peacekeepers had been forced by armed men to turn back at the village of Goli earlier in the day, and were returning to the town of Diffra when they came under fire from unknown attackers.

UNMIS has started an investigation into the shootings, which occurred on the day that the north and southern sides had agreed to start withdrawing their unauthorized forces from Abyei as part of a pact facilitated by the UN.

## **NCP warns of unilateral measure on Abyei**

*Al-Wifaq* 11/5/11 – While the NCP has warned against unilateral action on Abyei, the SPLA has beefed up its forces in Abyei by dispatching 30 vehicles carrying soldiers in police uniform.

NCP Ibrahim Ghandour yesterday stressed the need for direct dialogue under AUHIP and CPA guarantors to resolve the issue.

Sources said SPLM leaders who are originally from Abyei are exercising pressure on GoSS President Salva Kiir to support their approach, warning to withhold their political support if Kiir does not agree to their plans.

## **SAF denies link to clashes in the South**

*Akhbar Al-Youm* 11/5/11 – SAF spokesperson Col. Al-Sawarmi Khaled said SAF has no connection with incidents in the South, describing SPLM's claim of SAF involvement in clashes in the South as incorrect. He accused GoSS of harbouring rebels who battle the North, saying they have evidence to that end. "We have referred the matter to the UN and the Presidency" he said.

## **Misseriya detained in Aweil released**

*Al-Ahram Al-Youm* 11/5/11 – Authorities in North Bahr el Ghazal state have released a group of Misseriya men detained two days ago after blocking Miram-Aweil road. Misseriya Union secretary general Musa Mohamadein said the released group returned to Miram yesterday.

Meanwhile, Abyei Chief Administrator Deng Arop told the newspaper yesterday that the

situation in the Area was “calm”, saying the committee tasked to oversee troops pullout will start its work within the coming days.

## **S. Sudan civil society groups petition UNSC over Abyei crisis**

*Sudan Tribune website* 10/5/11 - A coalition of civil society activists, joined by students in various schools within Juba - South Sudan's regional capital - on Tuesday took to the streets and peacefully marched in support and solidarity with the people of the disputed border territory of Abyei.

The demonstrators, numbering in the hundreds, openly condemned the escalating violence in oil-producing region, agitating for the timely conduct of the long-awaited referendum in the region as per the provisions outlined within the Abyei protocol in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

Since the South Sudan referendum violence in Abyei has killed tens of people. One of the placards held by students on Tuesday read: “Abyei referendum must take place without delay. We want peace.”

At the core of the impromptu demonstration was a memo, signed by representatives of 30 different organizations, which was directly addressed to Haile Menkerios, the special representative of the UN Secretary General in Sudan.

“We, the coalition of southern Sudan civil society organizations constituted as different interest group, who experienced the suffering, destruction, loss of lives and tragedies associated with war do hereby agreed that, as per the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the government of Sudan is reneging to implement the Abyei Protocol and therefore would like to remind the guarantors of the CPA, the international community and specifically the United Nations Security Council that genocide is being committed by NCP[National Congress Party] militias in Abyei,” the memo says.

The NCP, Sudan's ruling party, have insisted that the Misseriya - a nomadic Arab who enter the region to graze their cattle – should be allowed to vote in the referendum. The SPLM, the former rebels who govern South Sudan, have insisted that only the Dinka Ngok tribe and residents of Abyei should be accorded voting rights.

The petition seen by Sudan Tribune, the coalition members urged the international community to exert pressure and ensure that the Khartoum regime accepts and abides by its international obligations to fully implement all the CPA provisions, citing the Abyei protocol and all provision addressed within the July 2008 Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling.

“The referendum for the people of Abyei must be concluded before 9th July, 2011, and are not marred by violence and human rights violations that could lead to a humanitarian emergency,” further agitates the memo.

However, in addition to the referendum issue, the activists called for efforts towards ongoing post-referendum negotiations between the south and northern parties, particularly regarding border demarcation, oil sharing, citizenship, national debts and water, to be expedited.

Two other separate memos were also written to South Sudan's president, Salva Kiir and James Wanni Igga, the speaker of South Sudan Legislative Assembly. In both letters, the demonstrators lauded the duo for their able leadership, urging them not to give up in their struggles to fulfill the mandates to the southern population.

### **Foreign Minister and SG discuss future of UNMIS**

*Al-Sahafa* 11/5/11 – Foreign Minister Ali Karti and UNSG Ban Ki-moon discussed, in a closed meeting on the sidelines of UN conference of least developed countries in Turkey, mutual issues between the Sudan and UN, future of UNMIS and the upcoming visit of the SC members.

Karti told the SG that Sudan would take a final decision on the future of UNMIS after completion of a study being conducted by the Government, and the decision would take into consideration Sudan's interest and protection of its national security.

According to *SUNA* 11/5/11, the UN Secretary General affirmed the commitment of the UN to support the Sudan with regard to maintaining its stability and the sustainability of peace. Spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Khalid Musa, said to the press Tuesday that the coming visit of the members of the Security Council to Sudan is a routine one and comes as part of an African tour. Musa explained that the visit would provide a good opportunity for the members of the Security Council to be informed about the real situation on the ground and the efforts of the government as part of the peace process.

### **Prices shot up as North-South road blocked**

*Al-Tayyar* 11/5/11 – Residents have complained of price-hike of essential commodities in the South particularly in the Upper Nile and Unity states with some attributing the increase of prices of commodities to the blockage of land and river routes between the North and the South.

People coming from Malakal said prices had shot up in many towns because of authorities' blockage of movement of trucks and river barges, saying the situation could explode if the routes are not re-opened, adding that goods in these areas might not last for three days. They said movement of trucks and river barges between the North and the South has been brought to a halt by an order from the GoSS.

### **Sudan to establish strong ties with Southern Sudan – Taha**

*Sudan Vision* 11/5/11 – VP Ali Osman Taha has affirmed that Sudan is determined to build positive relations with the GoSS after July 9 and will also seek to resolve problems facing south-north relations to promote the spirit of African unity. Taha made the remarks during his meeting with leaders of Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) in Khartoum yesterday.

## **Southern Kordofan Elections Focus**

### **SPLM withdraws from vote-counting committees**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 11/5/11 – The SPLM yesterday withdrew from the vote counting and result matching committees in southern Kordofan, protesting what it described as change in a constituency without its consultation, questioning the credibility of the process, saying unless the situation is addressed it would not rejoin the committees. The SPLM also demanded cancellation

of results at one centre but the High Elections Committee said it had no mandate to do that and advised the SPLM to complain to competent legal bodies .

Meanwhile, political circles have said the situation in the region is tense and serious.

**Sudan Vision** 11/5/11 reports that the SPLM withdrew for the second time from the vote-counting process and the polling centres results' matching in southern Kordofan elections.

Vote-counting in gubernatorial and legislative elections of Sudan's central state of South Kordofan has been marred by disputes, leading to postponement of polls results.

A delegation from the National Elections Commission (NEC), which oversees the exercise, arrived in the state after vote-counting was put on hold all day on Sunday following the refusal of the SPLM to increase the number of vote-counting committees.

The SPLM on Tuesday announced its withdrawal from the committee handling aggregation of Southern Kordofan elections results, citing claims of spotting a "bogus" polling site amid appeals for calm by foreign observers, according to **Sudan Tribune website** 10/5/11.

Results of Southern Kordofan gubernatorial and legislative election were due to be announced on Tuesday, 10 May, but disagreements over how many committees should handle results aggregation suspended vote-counting. The deadlock was broken after a delegation from the Khartoum-based National elections Commission (NEC), which oversees the exercise, arrived in the state and brokered an agreement to assign three committees comprising party agents and observers to review results of all polling stations.

NEC officials said that the three committees would be able to finish vote aggregation within three or four days after which the results would be announced.

"These committees have the power to make any corrections to the forms if they are filled out wrong. Then they go to the data center where they are added onto the central software and tabulated," a source privy to the situation told Sudan Tribune on Tuesday.

But the situation has been complicated again when the SPLM announced on Tuesday the withdrawal of its representatives from the results-aggregation committees.

The SPLM's spokesman in Southern Kordofan Mohamdeen Ibarhim told the pro-government satellite TV channel Al-Shoroug TV that the SLM had discovered "a bogus polling station" in Kaddam constituency at Laqawa locality in the state's western sector. Mohamdeen said that the center was unknown to NEC and political forces. Moreover, he added, the center had no party agents or observers. The SPLM's spokesmen claimed they had seized five filled ballot boxes at the polling center.

He added that the SPLM had asked for a probe into the "bogus center" but the committee referred the matter to NEC which in turn responded by saying it can't cancel that particular station.

SPLM's spokesman Mohamdain further accused the geographical constituency official of

creating an unknown center using an electoral register belonging to the year 2010 and not 2011 as required.

The SPLM's chairman in South Kordofan, Qamar Dalman, told reporters on Tuesday the SPLM had decided to suspend participation in the process of vote-aggregation until the arrival of NEC representatives or a decision is made on the objections raised by the group.

In response, the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) in north Sudan issued a press statement on Tuesday, accusing the SPLM of looking for an excuse to scuttle the elections.

"SPLM's behavior shows it is not interested in finishing the job and unable to see any results that would not bring it to the seats of power," the NCP statement said.

The NCP further called on the SPLM to be "responsible and abandon the childish mentality in political affairs."

The party, whose candidate Ahmad Harun is contesting in gubernatorial elections against the SPLM's candidate Abudul Aziz Al-Hilu, called on the committee to continue its work, saying it refuse to hold the electoral process hostage to the will of one party.

Meanwhile, the only international mission monitoring the vote has urged the contesting parties and their candidates to observe calm.

In a press release issued on Tuesday, the US-based Carter Center urged "contesting parties and candidates to continue to observe the results aggregation peacefully, to ask their supporters to remain calm and to seek recourse to potential electoral disputes through established legal channels"

The Carter Center said that the vote-aggregation process was "being closely watched by the agents of the contesting parties and candidates and must be allowed to be completed before results are announced."...

## **Other Highlights**

### **Hundreds of farmers stage demonstrations in central Sudan**

*Sudan Tribune website* 10/5/11 - Hundreds of farmers in El-Gezira state in central Sudan staged demonstrations to reject what they described as injustice inflicted upon them by the government in evaluating rental price of land plots they own.

The protestors marched in Barakat town and set up tents in front of the headquarters of the El-Gezira agricultural project and threatened an extended sit-in until their demands are met. They chanted slogans including "No for sale, Yes for rental" and "Your land is your honor".

The El-Gezira project, which includes over 2 million acres of land by the Blue and White Nile rivers and employs 130,000 farmers, traces its origins to British colonial times. It initially developed land for cotton through a system of canals.

Among demands made by farmers is a reversal of the rental value assessed by the government technical committee which was lowered from 3,650 Sudanese pounds per acre to 1,585. They also refused to sell their lands and threatened to bring their families to join their protests.

The authorities arrested dozens of demonstrators and prevented journalists from reaching the area.

Separately the office of Sudan's 2nd Vice president Ali Osman Taha denied reports that he has agreed to grant Egyptian farmers one million acres during his meeting with a visiting Egypt delegation from Al-Wafd party and other figures.

Taha's office said that such a step has to be made through the proper channels after working out the details.

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