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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

NCP, SPLM differences over referendum widening

Al-Ayyam 15/8/10 – Differences have widened between the NCP and the SPLM over the southern Sudan referendum scheduled for January next year. While NCP political secretary Ibrahim Ghandour announced that the Referendum Commission has officially requested a delay and that his party is ready to consider the request, the SPLM political bureau warned against a delay and called on the NCP to address the issue of the Commission's Secretary-General as quick as possible.

Five southern members in the Referendum Commission voted to defeat the appointment of Omer Al-Sheikh as secretary-general, insisting that the secretary-general should be a southerner since the head of the Commission is a northerner but the head of the Commission refused and the matter was referred to the Presidency for decision, GoSS representative in Washington, Ezekiel Jatkoth revealed, according to **Ajras Al-Hurriya** 15/8/10.

Today, several local dailies report that Head of the Referendum Commission Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil has dismissed claims that the Commission had requested a delay of the referendum, saying it is up to the central government and the GoSS to decide. Khalil reportedly said the Commission has no connection with the political parties and that it deals directly with the Presidency.

However, **Al-Ahdath** 15/8/10 reports that NCP political secretary Ibrahim Ghandour yesterday confirmed that his party received a request from the Referendum Commission for delay of the process. "Postponement of the process is within the competence of the Referendum Commission, the Federal Government, GoSS and the political forces and that if the Commission forwards a request for postponing the referendum, which is a matter within its competence, the central government and the GoSS would look into it and decide on it" Ghandour said, according to the **Citizen** 15/8/10.

Reportedly, the NCP is surprised over the SPLM insistence that the post of the secretary-general of the Commission should be occupied by a southern figure.

Meanwhile, SPLM SG Pagan Amum told a press conference that the CPA includes other mechanisms which could be invoked should a timely referendum fail, saying the decision then lies with the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly.

In a related development, the UN has denied any clear agreement on postponement of the referendum. "UN will continue to work on the basis of the specified date in the agreement," UNMIS spokesperson, Ashraf Eissa, told the newspaper. He revealed an integrated plan to assist the country to overcome the referendum crisis which he described as the last CPA test. "Despite security concerns, the UN is optimistic about a successful referendum"

On Saturday 14/8/10, **AP** reported a northern Sudan party official as saying that the commission organizing the crucial southern independence referendum requested the vote to be delayed on technical grounds, while the chief negotiator for the south insisted that the delay is not an option.

Fathi Sheila, spokesman for the northern National Congress Party headed by President Omar al-Bashir, said the commission in charge of organizing the vote has asked the two parties to approve a delay. He would not say by how long the commission wanted the vote pushed back.

"The commission doesn't see that it practically has enough time" to prepare for the referendum expected in January. "The two parties have to agree to a delay."

The chief negotiator for Southern Sudan on the upcoming independence referendum, meanwhile, said Saturday that postponement of the vote is not an option despite calls from the referendum commission. He said that his party would pursue "other options" instead of accepting a delay.

Pagan Amum, Secretary General of the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement, said in an interview that his party would continue to engage the north to overcome obstacles to the scheduled Jan. 9 vote.

But Amum said that if the referendum "process is obstructed (there) will not be postponement." Instead, he said the SPLM would "look for other mechanisms than the referendum," and he cited a provision in the internationally brokered 2005 accord that ended decades of north-south civil war that killed more than 2 million people and called for the southern referendum.

Amum declined to discuss the possibility of a military response by his party's former guerrilla movement, now the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army. He said that his party will "choose the mechanism through which people will express their vote" because "we want to ensure that there is peace, no war."

“Avert genocide in Abyei” – SPLM appeals to international community

The Citizen 15/8/10 – Following the two-day meeting of the SPLM Bureau in Juba, SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum yesterday reported that the Bureau unanimously agreed on the need to wipe out the security threat posed by people resettled in Abyei area by the Northern Government.

The Bureau as a means of solving this problem appealed to the international security bodies to come to the rescue of the people of Abyei before the problem takes a different turn, from a mere tribal conflict to genocide.

“There are now 75,000 people resettled in Abyei by the Northern Government. These people look like the Janjaweed of Darfur. We believe that in the long run, Abyei problem will turn into ethnic conflicts which we SPLM shall not allow,” Amum stressed. “It will come to be like that of Darfur,” he continued, adding that the conflict might revolve into

genocide. He said the Bureau also called for the conduct of a timely referendum in Abyei.

Amum also accused Khartoum of destabilizing the South by arming George Athor and also accused it of directly linked to the suspects arrested in a chopper in Fulug, carrying soldiers loyal to Athor.

South Sudan to deploy 200 civil servants from foreign countries

Sudan Tribune website 14/8/10 - The autonomous Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) has resolved to identify and select up to 200 highly qualified civil servants from the neighboring countries in Africa for a rapid intervention to support the civil service institutions in the region.

The program entitled “Regional Initiative for Capacity Enhancement with IGAD Partners” is an initiative by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as part of the UN’s initiative to support what it calls “fragile” countries in Africa.

In a cabinet meeting on Friday chaired by President Salva Kiir Mayardit, the memo on IGAD rapid capacity placement for Southern Sudan was presented to the Council of Ministers by the Vice President, Riek Machar, on behalf of the Minister of Labour and Public Service, Awut Deng Acuil.

In a press statement, the Acting Minister of Information and Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Service, Madut Biar Yel, said the purpose of the project is to enable GoSS to rapidly identify and deploy highly qualified and competent civil servants from the region to deliver essential public services at the level of GoSS and states. This is with the ultimate goal to, “strengthen governance infrastructure in order for it to deliver essential public service, community security and rule of law.”

Three IGAD countries which include Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia were initially identified as the regional states from which such highly qualified civil servants or retired civil servants can be selected and deployed in various institutions in the semi-autonomous government.

As southern Sudan is left with only five months to decide whether to confirm the current unity of Sudan or establish its own independent country, research recently carried out by the public service ministry has alarmingly indicated that up to 60% of the current civil servants in the government are unclassified staff, while the classified staff constitutes only 40%; most of whom are inexperienced.

Officials say highly qualified civil servants from the IGAD countries will bring a wealth of experience that will provide southern Sudan with an invaluable opportunity for mentoring and coaching.

UNDP will cover the salaries and any administrative cost of the program, while GoSS will address key capacity gaps and areas of need.

If successfully implemented, Southern Sudan will be among a number of African

countries with weak civil service that the United Nations has supported through providing them with highly qualified civil servants from foreign countries.

Role of UN in referendum

Op-Ed by Mahjoub Mohamed Saleh

Al-Ayyam 15/8/10 (summary) – “The upcoming referendum is essential and any mistakes in the process may produce a questionable and an unacceptable result. Therefore, efforts should continue in order to address the contentious issues particularly the demarcation of the border”.

“I believe that three quarters should move quickly to play the roles assigned to them if referendum were to take place on schedule. These three bodies are the CPA partners, the Referendum Commission and UN which has the resources, experience and experts to assist the conduct of a successful process”.

“An effective UN role remains essential and important to ensure that international standards of credibility and fairness are met. The two CPA partners indicated that they have requested the UN to supervise the conduct of the referendum but so far we see no role being played by the international organization”.

Other highlights

UN pleads for humanitarian access to Darfur camp

Reuters 13/8/10 - The UN humanitarian chief on Friday urged Sudanese authorities to allow humanitarian aid workers into a Darfur refugee camp that they have been prevented from entering for nearly two weeks.

Aid agencies have been barred from the Kalma Camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sudan's conflict-torn western Darfur region since Aug. 2 due to a stand-off between international peacekeepers and Khartoum.

"I am extremely concerned about the welfare of the IDPs at Kalma camp, to whom we have not been able to deliver relief for 13 days," U.N. humanitarian chief John Holmes said in a statement.

"Deliveries of food and fuel for water pumps have for example not been possible," he said. "Sanitation is also a major concern as it is the middle of the rainy season. Many thousands of IDPs from Kalma remain unaccounted for."

The reason for the standoff is that Khartoum is demanding UNAMID to hand over six Darfuris accused by Khartoum of instigating clashes in South Darfur's Kalma Camp in late July that killed at least five people.

UNAMID has refused to do so without seeing evidence of their crimes and guarantees that they will have a fair trial.

"If access is not urgently restored, the situation risks deteriorating rapidly," Holmes said...

Two UNAMID peacekeepers kidnapped in Darfur

Local dailies 15/8/10 – Unidentified gunmen have kidnapped two UNAMID peacekeepers in Nyala, the capital of southern Darfur.

Governor of South Darfur state Abdul Hameed Musa Kasha said security authorities were tracking down the kidnappers but held the mission responsible for abduction of its personnel because of refusing government protection.

According to **Sudan Tribune**, two Jordanian police advisors "who had been walking to a UNAMID transport dispatch point, were 100 meters from their residence in the city's Almatar area when they were blocked by three individuals in a 4 x 4 vehicle," Sudanese authorities and UNAMID are investigating the incident.

Although the conflict began in 2003, the abduction of foreigners only began since Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir was indicted for war crimes in March 2009, for his government's response to the insurgency.

However, the People's Democratic Struggle Movement (PDSM), a breakaway faction from the former rebel SLM-Free Will last April, had kidnapped four peacekeepers from South Africa and released them after settling a difference with the Sudanese government.

Darfur rebels accuse SAF of attacking their positions in Jebel Marra

Sudan Tribune website 14/8/10 - A rebel group accused the Sudanese army on Saturday of carrying out a series of attacks against their positions in Jebel Marra South Darfur since last week, adding they expect new assaults during the next days.

Sudanese troops attacked the positions of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) led by Abdel Wahid Al-Nur on August 9 in the mountainous area of Jebel Marra and continue to carry out assaults on daily basis, a rebel commander told Sudan Tribune today.

"Troops transported by 50 vehicles attacked our positions in Marra, Bombonah and Singo in eastern Jebel Marra," said Saleh Abdelrahman Tibin who was speaking by satellite telephone with the Sudan Tribune.

The spokesperson of the Sudan Armed Forces was not reachable, but the army routinely denies attacking this area affirming control of the region.

NCP says Darfur crisis may complicate if the South secedes

Al-Sudani 15/8/10 – NCP political secretary Ibrahim Ghandour has rejected hints that the islamists who have been ruling the country since 21 years would be held responsible for the expected partition of the country, saying that all the Sudanese political forces including the opposition would share the blame because they have

agreed to self-determination for southern Sudan. Ghandour, who was speaking to the Saudi *Al-Hayat* newspaper yesterday, anticipated aggravation of the Darfur crisis if the South separates, saying his government is keen to resolve the crisis before the referendum is due. Ghandour appeared optimistic that the southerners would vote for unity.

The people of Nuba and Darfur demand self-determination

Sudan Tribune website 13/8/10 - The people of Nuba Mountains should carry out the exercise of self-determination similar to the exercise on independence by the people of Southern Sudan, says a leading figure in the Nuba Mountains.

Mariam Koshuib, the organizing chairperson of Ideal Strategic work in the region was quoted on Friday by the Sudan Tribune Daily newspaper as publicly saying that her people should conduct similar exercise like the southerners in the referendum.

In a related development, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) has also had demanded self-determination for Kordofan and Darfur states. This was revealed by the SPLM Chairman for Southern Kordofan state, Abdul Aziz Adam Al Helow, who is also member of the party's Political Bureau.

The top party leader in the region said his people had the right to choose self-determination especially if they failed to coexist with the people of the North in case of secession between the North and the South.

The statement confirmed previous remarks by the official spokesman of the Darfur rebel, Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), Ahmed Hussein, who said his people would be left with no other option but to demand self-determination for their region.

"Our people need hope; they have the right to live under state of citizenship, freedom, democracy, equality and rule of law. We cannot accept this indefinite state of status-quo," said Ahmed Hussein who is the official spokesperson of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).

"There is an ongoing genocide in Darfur which is entering a new phase. The [Khartoum] regime is working towards having a forcible return by dismantling the IDPs camps, using food as weapon, expelling and intimidating aid groups through abduction, assassinating IDP leaders, assaulting peacekeepers," Hussein added.

This is the first time JEM, considered to be the Darfur's most powerful rebel group, makes such a call for self-determination. The Sudanese government has flatly rejected this demand saying this not even a topic for negotiations.

“South Darfur greatest security threat to the South” –governor

The Citizen 15/8/10 – Governor of West Bahr el Ghazal state Brig. Rizig Zakaria Hassan has censured the governor of South Darfur Abdul Hamid Musa Kash for his statement annexing Huftrat Al-Niha region to his state and his comment that “he will not allow that region to become another Abyei between the North and the South”.

Rizig described Kasha's statement as irresponsible and described the South Darfur

state as a major security threat that faced Southern Sudan during the past period.

He said the difference over Hafrat Al-Nihas has been decided by the CPA when it made the borders of January 1st 1955 the term of reference.

JEM to have a military base in Uganda

Local dailies 15/8/10 – JEM delegation made a secret visit to Ugandan capital Kampala last week during which the delegation met President Yuweri Museveni in the presence of Sudan People's Liberation Movement's delegate, who arranged for the meeting.

Kampala-based sources told Sudanese Media Center (SMC) that JEM's delegation comprised of Ahmed Adam Bakhit, Mansour Arbab and Ahmed Tugud Lisan requested the Ugandan president to support their movement militarily by establishing a military base in the Ugandan soil and supplying necessary weapons and training and requested Museveni to solicit leaders of central and east African states to cooperate with JEM.

On his part, Museveni agreed to help JEM, pointing out that Uganda would be open for the movement, pledging to provide all support and needed facilities including weapons, passport and required document for mobility of JEM members between states.

The Ugandan president called on JEM to play a role in bridging relations with the states of the region, suggesting that Salva Kiir to assume such role in his capacity as First Vice-President, President of South Sudan. Cooperation between the two sides will begin by opening an office for the movement in Kampala...

In another development, Sudan Tribune website 12/8/10 reported the Sudanese President Omer Al-Bashir revealed that the leader of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) Khalil Ibrahim will leave Libya in the coming days.

SUNA quoted Al-Bashir as telling his cabinet that he agreed with his Libyan counterpart Muammar Gaddafi during his visit last week to Tripoli that Ibrahim must leave the country and that this would take place in the coming days.

But JEM spokesperson Ahmed Hussein dismissed Al-Bashir's assertions saying "There has been no change in the status of Dr. Khalil's stay in Libya. Bashir is simply trying to cover up for his army's defeats. Our movement's presence on the ground is as strong as ever and they know it".

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