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# Media Monitoring Report

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## Elections Watch

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# Highlights

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## **NCP in the lead in the North, Kiir in the South**

Preliminary results from polling centres in Khartoum and states indicate that NCP candidate for president Omer Al-Bashir is in the lead, other NCP candidates are also reportedly making steady progress, *Al-Sahafa* reports. In the South, SPLM candidate for President Salva Kiir is also ahead of his SPLM-DC rival Lam Akol.

However, *Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports Akol as saying that until yesterday he was ahead of Kiir in the Upper Nile and Unity states. Akol said in Upper Nile he won 31,202 votes while Kiir won 20,840 and in Unity state he won 7,574 while Kiir won 2,598 votes.

## **NCP appears heading towards a landslide victory in North Sudan**

*Sudan Tribune website* 16/4/10 - The ruling NCP in Sudan is heading steadily towards a solid victory in North Sudan on all levels as opposition parties are beginning to concede defeat in some parts of the country citing widespread fraud as the reason behind this outcome.

The NEC has started counting votes since the polls officially closed on Thursday in Sudan's first multi-party elections since 1986. However, this election has been marred by opposition boycott and technical issues that have undermined its credibility in the eyes of the observers.

In the presidential race, the NCP leader and incumbent Omer Hassan Al-Bashir maintained a comfortable lead over his rivals scoring no less than 85% in the districts announced so far by NEC including foreign posts with Sudanese expatriates voting abroad.

But the race was expected to be an easy one for Bashir after his main challengers, the Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) candidate Yasir Arman and the ex-PM Al-Sadiq Al-Mahdi who is the Umma party chief withdrew from the race.

## **Sudan poll does not meet world standards - Observers**

*Reuters* 17/4/10 (Khartoum) - Sudan's first open elections in 24 years fell short of international standards, international observers said on Saturday, the first authoritative judgments on the polls tainted by a wave of boycotts.

"These elections have struggled to reach international standards. They have not reached them all," the head of the European Union observer mission in Sudan, Veronique de Keyser, told reporters.

"It is apparent that the elections will fall short of meeting international standards and Sudan's obligations for genuine elections in many respects," said a statement from the US Carter Center, the only long-term observers of the polls.

The preliminary statements will be a blow to President Omar al-Bashir who, analysts say, is looking for an internationally recognized win to legitimize his rule and fend off the ICC charges that he masterminded war crimes in Sudan's western Darfur region.

But the few opposition political parties which entered the elections also said they would never recognize the results.

"Even if we win one seat, and it looks like we won't even get one, we will never take it," said opposition Islamist Hassan al-Turabi, adding his party totally rejected the results. "Now they went straight to the ballots and took them and exchanged them," he said, adding their monitors had caught some officials in the act of fraud.

A member of Sudan's National Elections Commission defended the election, saying it was not surprising there had been problems given the country's war-torn history. "We cannot be expected to meet international standards. We are a country just emerging from the war with very little electoral experience ... We have tried our best as a commission," Philister Baya Lowiri told Reuters.

De Keyser said there had been "significant deficiencies" including logistical problems, intimidation and irregularities. She said there had been a small opening of political space with the opposition parties free to voice complaints, but said it was important that trend continued.

Both missions praised the patience and enthusiasm of voters and polling staff. Overall turnout would be around 60 percent, De Keyser said.

The elections as a whole were marred by complexity and confusion, and dominated by the ruling parties in the north and south, the EU's preliminary statement said.

A separate mission from the European Parliament echoed many of the concerns but said the polls were still a step forward in the 2005 peace process.

"They enabled an unprecedented political debate in a war-torn country," MEP Ana Gomes said.

The European Union deployed around 140 observers but pulled its team out of Darfur, the site of a seven-year civil conflict, saying safety concerns were limiting its movements.

Around 70 observers from the Carter Center, led by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, watched the vote.

### **Sudan's elections successful – Arab League**

Head of Arab League observers for Sudan's elections Ambassador Salah Haleema has confirmed the success of Sudan's elections and described the process as a model in terms of fairness and transparency, *Al-Khartoum* reports.

### **Darfur elections do not meet national and international standards**

**Sudan Tribune website** 17/4/10 - The Carter Center emitted an adverse opinion on the electoral process in the restive Darfur region saying it did not meet national and international standards.

The difficulty to conduct valid monitoring led the European Union team to withdraw its observers from the troubled region citing security reasons. The US-based Carter Center further said "the reach of the Center's observation in Darfur was restricted due to security considerations".

The report cited state of emergency and repression of civil liberties, continued displacement of IDPs, intermittent armed clashes in Jebel Marra and the "equity of census process as well as voter registration.

"In North Darfur, a number of IDP camp leaders were arrested," the report mentioned. The Center also underscored the rejection of the electoral process in Darfur by rebel and political

leaders in the region saying its legitimacy was absent.

"The boycott of almost all political opposition cannot be ignored. The confidence of many parties and citizens in the legitimacy of a process occurring in a region still in constant turmoil was absent."

The report emphasized in its conclusions that due to the limited participation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Darfur in the census and voter registration, much of the population was left out of the process.

### **Opposition rejects elections results, promised to remain calm**

The opposition political parties (Juba Alliance) announced its categorical rejection of the elections results but pledged not to take to streets for protests, **Al-Sahafa** reports. The Alliance also directed harsh criticism to the Carter Centre, saying the Centre is seeking recognition for false elections. Alliance leading figure Farouq Abu Essa said following a meeting of presidential candidates including Yasir Arman and PCP Deng Nyal that the Alliance would not recognize the results and criticized Carter Centre's report, saying it contained lies.

### **Police raises security level ahead of announcement of election results**

**Radio Miraya** 17/4/10 - The police force has raised security alert procedures to secure the voting stations and the office of the NEC in Khartoum State. Opposition parties promised not to organize demonstrations following the announcement of elections results. Results are expected to be announced on Tuesday.

In Sennar, the State's Director of the Police, Major General Jalaladin Al Desis, said that the police are ready to respond to any riots resulting from the announcement of the polling results. However, he called on citizens in the State to exercise self restraint.

Opposition parties have said that they will not come out to the streets after the announcement of the results. This statement came after the opposition parties met in Khartoum on Saturday.

However, speaking to **Radio Miraya**, a leading member in the National Alliance, Farouk Abu Issa, said that the leaders of the parties have united their stance rejecting the outcome of the elections.

### **Sudan's Turabi threatens tougher stance over "fraudulent" elections**

**Sudan Tribune website** 17/4/10 - The Islamist opposition leader Hassan Al-Turabi expressed fury over what he described as "fraudulent" elections and vowed to escalate his resistance against the poll results in coordination with other parties.

The official results of the elections are not due until next Tuesday though the parties' monitors at the polling stations got early indications of how they fared at Sudan's multi-party elections since 1986.

The DUP and the Popular Congress Party (PCP) appeared to acknowledge that they have failed to make any gains according to the preliminary results.

"Everything is totally corrupt. We are fed up and we will never recognize these elections," the DUP's Salah al-Basha told Reuters yesterday.

Prior to the vote, Al-Basha said the party was sure to win the governorships of at least six states. Friday he said it looked to have won none.

Hatim al-Sir, the DUP candidate who ran against Bashir in the presidential race, said he would not recognize the results. "I reject the results of the elections and I will not recognize them," he said. "The result does not reflect real participation."

The PCP leader Al-Turabi appearing visibly angry at a press conference today said that his party would not recognize the results even if they are shown to win in some constituencies and accused the National Elections Commission (NEC) of poorly managing the polls.

"The voting and the counting process are fraudulent. We will take the matter to court and if the judges do not rule in our favor, we may have to use other alternatives than the ballot boxes," said Turabi at the PCP headquarters in the Riyadh district of the Sudanese capital Khartoum.

"We are still gathering information in several regions of the country before talking with our local officials and other parties," he added.

Turabi said that the NCP has control over the media and other state resources that were used for the benefit of their candidates in an "indifferent" attitude to the limited capacity of their contestants noting that despite that the PCP has determined to run in the elections dissenting from other opposition parties which decided to boycott.

Furthermore, he claimed that NCP officials informed him beforehand of their intention to rig the elections.

He said that election results so far show "illogical" variance between the gains of the NCP and its rivals and pointed out that Article (76) of the Electoral Act stipulates that vote counting should be commenced immediately after the polls close and continue without interruption but this is not taking place.

The PCP leader also brushed aside an offer by the NCP this week to join the future government.

### **Elections in the South may be better than in the North – Kiir**

GoSS president Salva Kiir Mayardit paid a short visit to Ethiopia yesterday for consultation with Ethiopian Prime Minister Melez Zenawi, *Al-Akhbar* reports. Kiir told Zenawi that elections in the South were proceeding in a normal way, saying the errors occurred in the South were minor and would not affect the overall results. Kiir said elections in the South might be better than that in the North.

### **Candidates reject NEC decision to freeze elections in a Malakal constituency**

*Radio Miraya* 18/4/10 - Three candidates from different parties in 41 Lilo Constituency in Malakal town of the Upper Nile State have rejected the decision made by the NEC to freeze polling process and delay elections in the constituency for two months due to technical problems.

Addressing the press yesterday in Malakal, Rebecca Isaiiah Ottor one of the candidates in the 41 Constituency said that she has realized that her electoral symbol was not included in the ballot paper. However, she said she did not ask the elections body to freeze polling in the constituency.

### **Sudan votes, and stands on the brink of splitting in two**

*The Observer* 18/4/10 - Africa's biggest country could divide between north and south - and a new nation would face an uncertain future.

Britain can take general elections for granted, but millions of voters queuing in Sudan last week carried historic significance: it was the country's first multi-party poll in almost a quarter of a century. The five-day ballot was part of a peace deal that ended 20 years of war between the majority Muslim north and mainly Christian and animist south that left more than 1.5 million dead.

But the process was marred by allegations of vote-rigging and a boycott by many opposition parties. Another key condition of the peace agreement means this could also be the last election of its kind. Africa's biggest country is poised to split into two. In January the south is due to hold a referendum on independence. If, as widely expected, it votes yes, it will create the continent's first new nation since Eritrea declared independence from Ethiopia in 1993.

"It is highly likely that the south will choose independence," Scott Gration, the US special envoy to Sudan, said last month. "I don't see that the north has to re-invade the south and start the war again. If we can resolve these issues, I think there is a fairly good chance that... the south can have a civil divorce, not a civil war."

But diplomats fear that secession could encourage similar movements in Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo and elsewhere, leading to a Yugoslavia-style fragmentation. Libya's Muammar Gaddafi recently caused a diplomatic spat by arguing that Nigeria should divide into a Muslim north and Christian south. He then modified the proposal, suggesting several states along ethnic lines.

But there are important practical considerations. Last week, Time noted that Juba, set to become the world's newest capital city of the world's newest country, has no landline telephones, no public transport, no power grid, no industry, no agriculture and few buildings; some government ministries are built from prefab cabins and shipping containers. The magazine added: "How can southern Sudan become an independent nation when it possesses so little of what defines one? Many aid workers and development experts in Juba doubt it can. They have coined a new term to describe its unique status: pre-failed state."

Then there are the questions of a flag, a national anthem and a name. Novelist Philip Hensher mused on the last of these in the Independent last year: "Naming it after an ancient tribe or modern ethnic group won't work. The Dinka are the largest group, but it is a considerable melting pot... And though we live or have lived with two Yemens, two Koreas, two Germanys and now two Congos, two Sudans wouldn't seem an ideal situation. No, I think it has to be called after its predominant feature, and the greatest of rivers... the Republic of the White Nile has a fine ring to it."

### **Editorial: Sudan's elections and international observers**

"The Sudanese political forces disagree with the international community on the objective of the current elections. While Sudan's political parties want the elections to achieve a democratic transformation and a peaceful transition of power to end one-party system, the international community views the electoral process as a mere phase in the road to referendum scheduled to be conducted early next year and that is why it does not give sufficient attention to the importance of democratic transformation" says *Al-Ayyam* newspaper's brief editorial.

"For this reason, the Sudanese political parties have been pushing for strict controls to ensure that the elections are free and fair. But the international community is taking a soft stance on the need to meet international standards because it is only interested in an unimpeded self-determination for the South".



## Commentary: West accepts polls in return for south separation

SAF's Newspaper *Al-Quwat al-Musalaha* (via BBC monitoring) 15/4/10 - The Western position, particularly the American position, toward the Sudan elections is not hostile at present. It does not involve mentionable condemnation of the progress of the electoral process even though they affirm the victory of the NCP presidential candidate. Many might not care much about this Western opinion. But politics, the course of international events, and the existing single [superpower] polarity say that there is paramount importance to the Western position, the Western gate that now controls our technological future. Is there now a future for anything without technology?

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed this approval when he stated on the second day of the electoral process: "The elections in Sudan are proceeding without real problems." We care very much about the opinion of Mr. Ki-Moon, for he does not express himself but speaks in the name of an organization, of which we are one of the oldest members.

[The organization] It is following with eyes and angry statements most of our steps and actions, but we are grateful for it that it has not adopted the resolution of The Hague Court that demands the extradition of our President. The poet says: I was wrong in thinking well about you, for it would be more decisive [safer] to mistrust people. This means that in order to be decisive, you must expect the worst assumptions followed by the better ones. This way you will not go wrong. I say this as I look at the separation of the South as a bad alternative but one that is very relevant, and to unity as a better alternative, which is also relevant.

The West, particularly the United States, has now based all its expectations on that worse alternative which is the separation of the South. Our government has prepared itself for this if it happens. This is the required decisiveness. Politics are not built on illusions or wishes but on sound expectations concerning the tasks of the future. Separation has many negative aspects, but it also has positive aspects that must be put to an in-depth study so that the people--whether in the North or the South--should not be taken by surprise by the results of the referendum.

The required decisiveness here would be to make all our calculations on the [basis of the] South separating completely and on preparing all real, not make-believe, arrangements on this basis. Thus, the affairs of the Southerners in the North and the Northerners in the South are to be reviewed, together with their identity papers, properties, and means of cooperation and contacts between the two separate States, and even the names and references to these two States. One person told me that if the South separates we would hate to be called "the Northern Sudanese", so let them find another name for us other than this lengthy, complex one. This would be part of decisiveness and not of pessimism at all.

The West has now prepared itself for accepting the results of the Sudanese elections. It is not now counting the shortcomings of the Elections Commission through the eyes of the Sudanese opposition. This indicates approval. But this approval has consequences that follow, for it has also prepared itself for accepting the result of the referendum in which it will not look either at the shortcomings of the "Referendum Commission". It supports Separation. We ask Allah to spare us disgrace.