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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

SPLM to submit proposals to overcome census dispute

The SPLM has announced that it would present to the tripartite mechanism meeting today in Juba alternative solutions to the dispute over the census results, ***Al-Sahafa*** reports. The SPLM political bureau yesterday heard reports from FM Deng Alor, Regional Cooperation Minister Nhial Deng and SPLM Deputy Chairman Malik Aqqar.

Meanwhile, SPLM SG Pagan Amum told reporters that the tripartite mechanism meeting in Juba would discuss a framework agreement to address the CPA pending issues, saying the SPLM would handle the contentious issues in a rational manner especially that the country is passing through a critical stage. Mr. Amum revealed that the SPLM and the NCP had already agreed to finalize the referendum law before mid September to be submitted to the Parliament.

In a related development, ***Khartoum Monitor*** reports Amum as saying that the SPLM Political Bureau meeting which kicked off in Juba on Sunday would discuss the nomination of an SPLM candidate for the upcoming presidential elections.

According to ***Miraya FM*** 17/8/09, Amum revealed that the **Political Bureau would also look into the position of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Sudan, Ashraf Qazi, concerning his statements ahead of the PCA verdict on Abyei last month.**

News NISS chief, National Security adviser sown in

Sudan Tribune website 17/8/09 - The Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir swore in yesterday the newly-appointed director of the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) Gen. Mohamed Atta Al-Moula Abbas and the National Security Adviser Gen. Salah Gosh.

The adviser would oversee all government law enforcement agencies including the NISS, army and police, he said, adding that there are “many complexities” facing the country.

Gosh said that he felt that he was tasked with a “major responsibility” saying he hoped for god’s blessings in his new role.

The ex-NISS chief was considered an influential figure within the regime who handles a number of crucial dossiers including tensions with Chad, Darfur IDP camps, counter-terrorism cooperation with the US and keeping a close eye on political opposition within the country.

He helped transform the NISS into a powerful bureau that is believed to have its own well-trained militia with stakes in business ventures to generate money enabling it to be self sufficient.

The reasons behind the shuffle remains unclear though some speculations in Khartoum say Gosh’s powers became a matter of concern for Bashir.

However others cited Gosh’s failure in providing timely intelligence on JEM advancement into the capital last year as the reason.

Al-Watan quoted Gosh as saying that his promotion to the post had not been the result of

disagreements or differing opinions.

Electoral board pledges good conditions for Sudan elections

Sudan Tribune website 17/8/09 - Sudan's National Elections Commission pledged today to work seriously to ensure favourable climate for elections, saying it would also convey the opposition's demands to the Presidency.

A delegation of the Sudanese opposition forces met today with the NEC to present their demands to amend laws restricting public freedoms.

The opposition forces on Saturday have demanded the dominant National Congress Party to change a number of laws particularly the security law and criminal procedure law which authorize security service to prevent public meetings. They threatened to boycott the elections if these changes are not made before the end of October.

The NEC Secretary General Mohamed Ahmed Galal told reporters the opposition delegation demanded that they should be allowed to conduct public meetings in a democratic atmosphere and without any interference or obstruction.

The NEC, for its part, said it was willing to continuously consult with the political forces for the success of the next year election and to overcome obstacles and difficulties in the way.

Also the NEC promised to convey the memorandum of the opposition to the Presidency and to discuss its content with the concerned organs.

The opposition alliance is comprised of 24 political parties including the Umma Party, The Democratic Unionist Party, the Popular Congress Party and the Sudanese Communist Party.

Meanwhile, **Sudan Vision** reports that the NCP has warned the opposition parties that any move to stop the next year elections would threaten the political stability in the country and would endanger the implementation of the CPA.

Libyan leader invites President Al-Bashir to take part in AU summit

Local dailies report Libyan envoy Mr. Suleiman Al-Shuhoomi as saying that President Qaddafi has invited his Sudanese counterpart to participate in an AU summit in Tripoli. According to **Al-Sahafa**, the AU meeting is part of efforts by Libya to resolve the Darfur crisis. The paper has also learned that the Libyan envoy is in Khartoum in a bid to convince the Sudanese government to free JEM POWs to pave the way for Doha talks in October.

US envoy to visit Juba today for discussion on CPA pending issues

The Sudanese government, the SPLM and the US envoy Scott Gration will resume dialogue tomorrow in Juba on the CPA pending issues, **Al-Sahafa** reports. Mr. Gration, who arrived in Khartoum yesterday evening, will stopover Kenana in response to an invitation extended by the Kenana Company before proceeding to Juba for the meeting. He will return to Khartoum on Thursday for meeting with VP Ali Osman Taha and Presidential Adviser Ghazi Salah Al-Din and will depart for Washington the same day. Juba meeting which sources described as important will focus on pending issues between the NCP and the SPLM.

Meanwhile, Gration is also scheduled to visit Addis Ababa for meeting with several Darfur rebel leaders. He will also meet with the Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi before proceeding to

Cairo for a meeting on Darfur with Egypt's FM Abul Al-Gheith, Sudanese Presidential Adviser Ghazi Salah Al-Din, Arab League Secretary General Umr Musa and the Libyan Foreign Minister.

In a related development, ***Sudan Tribune website*** 17/8/09 reported the United States announced today that it is finishing up its comprehensive policy review of Sudan that will determine its conflict resolution strategy for the largest country in Africa.

"I think we are getting close to the point where we will announce a new policy approach on Sudan. I would expect that in the next couple of weeks," the Assistant US Secretary of State Philip Crowley told reporters today.

The release of the long awaited policy review was delayed by behind the scenes divisions within the Obama administration on the balance between the use of sticks and carrots with Khartoum.

The US presidential envoy to Sudan Scott Gration, currently visiting the region complained to US lawmakers last month that the decade-long unilateral sanctions imposed through executive orders and the status of Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism are undermining his diplomatic leverage.

SPLM inciting the Misseriya to revolt against the state – source

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports a delegation from the Misseriya met with the SPLM in Juba where the movement called on the Misseriya tribe to take up arms to fight for their rights. Reportedly, the SPLM told the Misseriya that the NCP had taken up the issue of Abyei with the PCA simply because it was interested in oil only. A source told the paper that the meeting between 27 Misseriya leaders and the SPLM was intended to sabotage relationship between the Misseriya and the NCP, claiming the NCP was the one which insisted on the PCA arbitration on Abyei. The source added that the SPLM also told the Misseriya that Higlig is part of the Unity State and urged them to fight for their rights, citing the Nuba Mountains, the Inqissana, Darfur and Eastern Sudan as examples of areas where rights had been taken by force.

Palestinian President due in Khartoum tomorrow

Local dailies report that the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas Abu Mazin is due in Khartoum tomorrow on two-day official visit. According to ***Al-Rai Al-Aam***, Abu Mazin will meet with President Al-Bashir and several other state officials for talks on bilateral relations and the situation in the Middle East.

Assembly Speaker accuses GoSS of embezzling 8 billion dollars

Speaking at a meeting between federal and GoSS officials in Khartoum yesterday, National Assembly Speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir said that lack of information was to blame for the differences over the oil revenue, ***Al-Intibaha*** reports. He called on the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly to visit the oil producing regions and to get in touch with the Ministry of Energy for verification. The Speaker also underlined the need for transparency in the GoSS and asked about the fate of about \$8 billion in revenue remitted to the GoSS account.

Meanwhile, ***Al-Khartoum*** reports that the Federal Minister of Finance has warned that differences over compensations and oil revenue might lead to secession of southern Sudan. However, the minister pointed out that the National Petroleum Commission is partly to blame for these differences.

GoSS Energy Minister John Luke told the meeting that most southern Sudanese would opt for secession so that the south could fully benefit from the oil revenue instead of sharing it with the

north.

NCP is ready to quit if the people so desire – Presidential adviser Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail has said that elections would be held on schedule and that the political parties have to get ready for the exercise, reports *Al-Watan*. Addressing the General Union of the Sudanese Students in Gedaref yesterday, Ismail pointed out that the NCP was ready to leave power if such would be the wish of the Sudanese people through the ballot.

Abyei Administration to meet with the Presidency

Arop Moyak, the head of the Abyei Area Administration (AAA), has said that the AAA would soon hold a meeting with the Presidency to discuss the recent Presidential Decree on the administrative status of the Abyei Area. Speaking to *Radio Miraya FM*, Moyak urged the presidency to release funding for the AAA.

Kenya threatens to sever relations with Southern Sudan

The Government of Kenya has warned it may sever relations with the GoSS over what it described as the suppression in the region, reports *Al-Raed*. Kenya's Interior Minister George Saitoti called on the GoSS to desist from practices that might create border tensions especially around the Ilemi Triangle. Kenya complains that the Kenyan Immigration Minister was denied access to Sudan last week at a time when SPLA forces continue to cross the triangle into Kenyan territory.

GoSS Ministry of Investment denies selling land to foreigners

The Ministry of Investment in the GoSS has denied recent foreign media reports that the Ministry has sold some 20 million acres of land to foreigners, reports *Khartoum Monitor*. Undersecretary for Investment Awad-el-Karim Balla pointed out that Sudanese agricultural land is not for sale, adding that the laws however do allow temporary leases for strategic purposes.

Sudan party official killed, north-south tension rises

Reuters 17/8/09 - Sudan's main party has called for a speedy investigation into the killing of a woman party official in the semi-autonomous south that highlights rising north-south tension in the run-up to 2010 elections.

A senior member of the National Congress Party (NCP), Mohammed al-Mahdi Mandour al-Mahadi, told **Reuters** on Monday that his party had reports that members of a militia linked with the south's army had killed NCP official Miriam Biringi on Friday.

"She was assassinated by them, she was killed by militia from SPLA troops in the area," Mahadi said. Biringi had just been elected head of the NCP women's secretariat in the south's Western Equatoria State, he said.

The head of the SPLM southern sector, Anne Itto, denied the SPLM or the south's army was involved in Biringi's killing in the town of Yambio and said she was probably killed by thieves.

"We have no reason for murder, we are partners with the NCP," Itto told Reuters. "It does not help at all blaming this thing on the SPLM. These criminals must be caught."

Itto alleged the NCP was already trying to buy votes in the south, now led by the SPLM, ahead of elections due in April.

"The NCP are going around with a lot of money and people may have thought that as a chair, she had money," Itto added. The NCP's Mahadi told Reuters the men had demanded money from Biringi before killing her and setting her house on fire.

An NCP member of the south's parliament, Caesar Bayo Yolalala, said Biringi's death had been a big shock and the government of Western Equatoria was investigating it.

Mahadi said the NCP was having difficulty in the south. "Political freedom of the NCP and other political forces in the south is hindered by the SPLM, the SPLA (the southern army) and military intelligence," he said.

He said a meeting organized by NCP students on Monday at the university in Juba, the southern capital, had been closed after only half an hour by southern soldiers.

Sudanese president makes new appointments in information ministry

Sudan Radio 17/8/09 – President Omar Al-Bashir has issued a republican decree on new general director appointments at the Ministry of Information and Telecommunication. According to the decree, Mutasim Fadul Abdul Gadir, was appointed general manager of the National Corporation for Radio and Muhammad Hatim Sulayman general director of National Corporation for Television, and Muhammad Abdul Magid al-Sadiq as the general director of the Sudan National Broadcasting Corporation.

Famine in south Sudan worsened by tribal clashes - Official

Miraya FM 17/8/09 - The Chairperson of the Humanitarian Affairs Committee at the national interim assembly, Joseph Ajwang, said that parliament will summon the minister of humanitarian affairs if the humanitarian situation in southern Sudan continues to worsen. In an interview with Miraya FM, Ajwang said that famine has become a reality in southern Sudan following the escalation of tribal conflicts in the region. He urged the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) to play its role in maintaining security in all southern States. Earlier, the 7th South Sudan Governors Forum recommended forceful disarmament and expulsion of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) from Western Bahr al-Ghazal and Western Equatoria States. In a separate context, the Head of the Humanitarian Affairs Committee at the National Assembly, Joseph Ajwang, urged the authorities in South Sudan to immediately investigate the killing of the National Congress Party (NCP) leading member, Maryam Brinji, in Yambio, Western Equatoria State. He added that the Assembly has condemned the incident and considered it as strange to the Political Community in southern Sudan.

Eritrean president barely escapes assassination attempt – report

Sudan Tribune website 17/8/09— The Eritrean President, Issayas Afewerki narrowly survives an assassination attempt at the outskirts of the capital, Asmara. An exiled opposition website claims.

The UK-based website, **Asena-online.com** said that the attempt on the life of President Issayas Afeworki was carried out by members of the Eritrean Defense forces on 13th of August 2009 around 4 pm (local time) on the road between Asmara and the port city of Massawa at a local area called Atal.

In the failed assassination attempt, the president barely escaped death, it said.

The man who tried to kill the president, recognized as former freedom fighter and first lieutenant Daniel Habte Yihdego, after an exchange of fire with president's personal body guards, was

shot dead, it added.

900,000 IDPs return to Southern Sudan - IOM

Miraya FM 18/8/09 - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) issued a report yesterday saying that over nine hundred thousand (900,000) Internally Displaced Persons have returned to southern Sudan including Abyei and Southern Kordofan from 2007 to 2009. The report also indicates that returnees are facing serious problems of safe drinking water, education and health facilities. The Chairperson of the South Sudan Relief, Reintegration Commission (SSRRC), Simon Puoch, told Miraya FM that the report is important because it shows the government the exact number of internally displaced people that have returned to the south.

SPLA denies Ugandan incursion into south Sudan

Miraya FM 18/8/09 - The Chief of Staff of the SPLA, General James Houth, denied that Ugandan forces have penetrated the borders of south Sudan. However, General Houth told Miraya FM that SPLA soldiers were not involved in the recent tribal conflicts that took place in several areas of southern Sudan. Houth said, "Some elements affiliated to militias in some states of Southern Sudan appeared in military uniforms during the clashes, giving the citizens a wrong impression. Earlier, media claim the presence of Ugandan forces at the south Sudan borders and that members of the SPLA were involved in the recent intertribal conflicts in the region.