

19 April 2010

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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

Voting Watch

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Highlights

NCP, SPLM win all gubernatorial posts and majority legislative seats

Final results of executive and legislative elections will be announced tomorrow, with reports coming from polling centres have indicated that the NCP won all the 14 gubernatorial posts in the North and the majority seats in the national and state legislatures and the SPLM also won the 10 gubernatorial posts and the majority seats of the region's legislative assemblies, **Al-Sahafa** reports.

According to the paper, SPLM candidate for President Yasir Arman won over 500 votes in a polling station in the Nuba Mountains while NCP presidential candidate Omer Al-Bashir won one vote.

Arab league affirms the Success of the Sudanese elections

The Sudan Vision 19/4/10 -The Arab League Ambassador to Sudan Salah Halima has described Sudan's elections as successful, saying they were conducted in accordance with international standards despite the technical errors at the beginning of the process. The Arab League mission at press conference yesterday commended the cooperation from heads and members of polling stations and security men with the international and local observers as well as with the representative of the political parties. The mission also praised the efforts exerted by the NEC.

Sudan opposition laps up foreign criticism of elections

AFP 18/4/10 - Criticism of Sudan's multi-party elections by foreign observers including former US president Jimmy Carter has encouraged the opposition, but also damages the credibility of the former rebels ruling the south, where an independence referendum is due next year.

While struggling to coordinate their strategies, some opposition parties still took part in the election even if they shared the view of those who boycotted it that the vote had been rigged by President Omar Al-Beshir's ruling National Congress Party.

Sudanese Islamist leader Hassan al-Turabi denounced the polls as fraudulent and said his Popular Congress Party, which did participate despite serious doubts surrounding their credibility, would not join the next government.

"The voting and the counting process are fraudulent," said the one-time mentor to Bashir, now one of his fiercest critics.

"We will take the matter to court and if the judge does not rule in our favour, we may have to use other alternatives than the ballot boxes."

But Bashir's powerful aide Nafie Ali Nafie downplayed criticism of the elections and dismissed any rejection of the outcome.

"(The observers) didn't say that the whole election didn't meet international standards. They said some aspects of it didn't, and that is a big difference," he told reporters.

On Thursday he had said that the opposition would not recognise the results. "They will take to the streets to try to change the regime... through conflicts, riots," Nafie said.

"They give the example of Zimbabwe and Kenya (where violent protests led to political change) as if they expect to convince public opinion that this is possible," he added. Mubarak al-Fadil, a prominent opposition voice, said those who opposed the regime should prepare themselves.

"The opposition is talking about organising political rallies and demonstrations, although not right now," he told reporters in Khartoum.

One Sudan analyst, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that if demonstrations were held now, the opposition was more likely to bring about change within the regime than removing it.

While international observers said the election process in the north was flawed, they also pointed a critical finger at the SPLM ruling the semi-autonomous region of south Sudan, where a referendum on independence is scheduled for January 2011.

"They were more irregularities in south Sudan," chief EU election monitor Veronique de Keyser said on Saturday, emphasizing the "weakness" of the election's organisation in a vast region with only the most basic infrastructure.

"The elections in the south experienced a high incidence of intimidation and the threat or use of force," the Carter Centre, also observing the elections, said, while noting the importance of learning from the "irregularities" to avoid repeating them in the referendum on southern independence.

Zach Vertin, south Sudan expert with the International Crisis Group, agreed that lessons should be learnt from the election in order to improve the referendum process from an organisational point of view.

But the SPLM's former presidential candidate Yasser Arman, who pulled out of the race, denied the election's failings had any bearing on the planned referendum. "There is no link between the election and the referendum," he told AFP.

NCP says no national government with parties that boycotted elections

Sudan Tribune website 18/4/10 - The ruling NCP held a meeting yesterday headed by president Omer Al-Bashir to review the outcome of the general elections which came to a conclusion last Thursday with all but certain landslide victory for the party in North Sudan.

Sudan state media said that the NCP stressed that the upcoming national government to be formed by Bashir will be based on the mandate conferred upon him by the people through the ballot boxes and that it would not accommodate political parties that had boycotted the elections and that there would be no room for any political bargaining on this matter.

Several heavyweight Northern opposition parties such as the Umma Party and Sudan Communist Party (SCP) boycotted the elections claiming it cannot be held in a fair and free manner. They accused the NCP of using fraud and utilizing state resources to win the polls.

The Northern sector of the Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) has also boycotted all elections in the North for the same reason dealing severe credibility blow to the country's first multi-party general elections since 1986.

This week, NCP senior figure Ghazi Salah Al-Deen Al-Attabani suggested that his party will invite the opposition to join the government ranks even those who boycotted.

"We are facing important decisions like self-determination in the south and would like to garner

as much support and as much consensus as we can" Al-Attabani added.

The Sudanese presidential assistant Nafie Ali Nafie later qualified these remarks by saying these parties must recognize the results for them to take advantage of this offer saying otherwise it would be "illogical".

But the Sudanese president dismissed his aides' offer saying that the post-election government will consist primarily of those parties that did not boycott and newspaper questioned the wisdom of elections and competition if all parties were going to be part of the national government without regard to the outcome produced by the election.

He said that it is best for the country to have a strong government that enjoys a degree of coherence and harmony that reflects parliamentary and also to have a strong and responsible opposition exercising its oversight role on government performance.

At the meeting today Nafie has pointed out that the upcoming government would be composed of those who are capable of carrying out their duties adding that it is not necessary that this would be a one party government or two party government but said that those who boycotted the elections will not be part of the executive branch.

Nafie accused opposition parties which took part in the elections of backpedaling after losing and making claims of fraud afterwards describing it as a setback "which was not a surprise as the opposition has originally sought to inhibit the organization of the elections in the first place".

He said the outcome of the elections have produced a new political map in the country and shows that the people in Sudan have made up their mind and left behind their back many political parties when they overwhelmingly voted for the NCP "as it become the cradle for confidence to protect and defend the homeland".

Yesterday the Popular Congress Party (PCP) and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) blasted the conduct of the elections and announcing their non-recognition of its outcome.

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

The PCP leader Hassan Al-Turabi who appeared angry at a press conference today said that his party would refuse to 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.

According to *Al-Sudani*, Nafie said elections victory of Al-Bashir and NCP candidates is now certain.

SPLA detains NEC member, burns results in Aweil

Clashes erupted yesterday west of Aweil between SPLA and forces of an independent candidate for gubernatorial post for North Bahr el Ghazal, *Al-Intibaha* reports. Reportedly, the SPLA burned the elections results and detained NEC members after it appeared certain that the independent candidate Dau Kiir John would beat SPLM candidate Paul Malung.

Shootings occurred in bid to steal ballot boxes in Unity state

Sudan Tribune website 19/4/10 - Shootings occurred on Sunday evening, in Leer town of the Sudan's oil-rich Unity state, when five unidentified gunmen suddenly emerged and began to

randomly shoot live bullets into the air at the center where boxes containing ballot papers were being kept while awaiting ferrying to the main office.

No body was however reported hurt or boxes looted as the staff resisted the incident by staying foot at the center before a platoon of SPLA forces was immediately sent in to protect the site. The gunmen disappeared into thin air before the forces reached the center.

The suspected aim by the gunmen, according to a security source in the town, was to try to scare away staff of electoral commission and monitors at the station in order to steal ballot boxes that were to be transported to the state capital, Bentiu.

Leer County is one of the strongholds for the independent candidate, Angelina Teny, where the main challenger and incumbent caretaker governor, Taban Deng Gai, has also suffered an overwhelming defeat according to the figures revealed by party agents.

In one of the centers, for instance, where Teny got 1,879 votes, Gai got only 6 votes. Leer is left behind in reporting the results to the headquarters in Bentiu because of arguments between Gai's agents and the rest of other parties' agents over the filling of forms that were required to accompany the ballot boxes.

Yohanes Musa Pouk who is in charge of Information and Media in Teny's campaign team told Sudan Tribune that supporters of the incumbent governor were suspected to be behind the attempt to loot the ballot boxes because of the big defeat their candidate also suffered in Leer County.

He further explained that out of the state's 9 counties, Teny won the 6 most populous counties by a wide margin and including the state capital, Bentiu, while she only lost to Gai by a narrow margin in the other 2 less populous counties of Abiemnhom and Guit, Gai's home county.

He revealed that Teny has opened a case with NEC office over the ninth county, Pariang, where her agents plus other parties' agents from UDF and NCP were prevented from monitoring the polling by the county officials, forcing them to withdraw.

He however predicted a landslide victory despite the loss in the two counties as revealed by preliminary results and uncertainty over the third county.

Angelina Teny, the wife of Southern Sudan's Vice President, Dr. Riek Machar Teny, has also been the state minister of Energy and Mining in the Khartoum-based Government of National Unity for the last five years.

Disowned by her party, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) after declaring her independent candidature, Teny in her manifesto explained that she was responding to "public outcry for a new leader in the state...and to save the office from falling into the hands of a different political party as the popularity of the current governor severely dwindled throughout the state."

Educated in Great Britain, the 40+ years old gubernatorial contestant criticized the current state administration for failure to provide development services to the people for the last five years despite the presence of resources, which she described as "astonishing experience to every citizen of Unity state."

NEC on Saturday had begun announcing preliminary executive and parliamentary elections results from individual states and the final results are expected by Tuesday from all the 25

states of the Africa's largest country.

Arman won 60,875 votes in Warrap, 894 for Bashir

Preliminary results of polling in Kiir's birthplace (Warrap state) indicated a landslide victory for SPLM presidential candidate Yasir Arman who won 60,875 votes against 894 for NCP candidate for president Omer Al-Bashir, **Ajras Al-Hurriya** reports. In the same state, SPLM candidate for GoSS president Salva Kiir Mayardit won 50,495 votes against 185 votes for his rival Lam Akol.

Kiir says voted for Al-Bashir

GoSS president Salva Kiir Mayardit has revealed that he had voted for NCP candidate for president Omer Al-Bashir, **Al-Ahdath** reports. Speaking to the **BBC** yesterday, Kiir expected Al-Bashir to win the majority of votes.

Juba Alliance set up four committees

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports that the Sudanese Political Parties (Juba Alliance) convened a consultation meeting yesterday where they formed four committees, one tasked with assessing the Alliance's performance over the past period, the second tasked with arranging peaceful demonstrations for the Alliance in Khartoum and states, the third tasked with the job of liaising with political forces, international community and international NGOs and the fourth committee is asked to arrange a summit meeting of the Alliance.

Police says ready to secure post-elections phase

Al-Raed reports Khartoum state Police Director Gen. Mohamed Al-Hafiz Hassan Attiya has said the process of vote counting is proceeding and the police forces are ready to secure the state and to protect civilians and their properties during the phase of results announcement.

NCP agent survives attempt on his life in Kassala

Al-Intibaha reports that NCP agent for constituency (4) in Kassala Murtada Salah survived an attempt on his life when unknown gunmen fired at him. The incident is reported to Kassala police and is being investigated.

Meanwhile, reports reaching the polling centre indicated that the NCP is certain to win all levels of elections in the state.

Sudanese elections met international standards

The Sudan Vision 19/4/10 -Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Elections Observers Mission issued yesterday, in a press conference at Coral Hotel its preliminary report on the elections.

The Mission described the election process as peaceful and democratic. "The election process was credible, peaceful and democratic" said the Head of the team, Hon. Wondimu Ghezahegn.

IGAD also appreciated the great number of women who participated and the cooperation of the National Elections Commission with observers.

The statement explained that its assessment depends on African, as well as international standards.

NEC slams international observers' reports

The Sudan Vision 19/4/10 - The Deputy Head of Sudan National Election Commission (NEC), Abdallah Ahmed Abdallah has criticized reports of international observers, who considered Sudan elections below international standards.

These reports have not taken into account conditions under which the elections were held, said Abdallah in a press statement. He described the elections as extremely complicated as they were held on presidential, parliamentary and gubernatorial levels.

"The main standards the missions should have taken into consideration are fairness, the percentage of participation and secure climate" the Deputy Head of NEC said.

Abdallah described the elections held in Sudan as unique, pointing out that they were held on six levels at the same time, which has not happened in any country.

Abdallah described the report of Jimmy Carter, the director of Carter Center for Monitoring Elections, as inaccurate for making comparison between elections in Sudan and elections in Western nations, affirming that the huge participation throughout the electoral stage proves success.

Darfur rebel leader urges Sudanese forces to rebuff NCP government

Sudan Tribune website 18/4/10 - Darfur rebel leader has rejected today the outcome of the "fraudulent" elections in Sudan urging opposition forces and the southern Sudan ruling party to not legitimize the National Congress Party (NCP) by participating in the next government.

Abdel Wahid Al-Nur the leader of Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM-AW) group did not join the peace process brokered by the Joint Chief Mediator in Doha asking to disarm the government militias and to provide security for civilians in the restive region before to negotiate with Khartoum.

Speaking to Sudan Tribune from Paris, the exiled rebel leader said his group does not recognize the results of the general election since the beginning because no election can be held in a region of war.

Al-Nur further urged the opposition parties and the SPLM to not participate in the post- elections government as it is proposed by the National Congress Party. Instead the rebel leader said they should work with the SLM and form a large coalition that can seek "Sudanese solution" for a national government.

AU leader satisfied with Sudan's elections

Miraya FM 19/4/10 -The Chairman of the African Union Commission, Jean Ping, has said he is satisfied over Sudan's peaceful elections despite technical problems. In a statement released by the African Union office, Ping congratulated the Sudanese people and the political parties on holding the peaceful multi-party elections.

The statement said that elections constitute a basic stage in the process of democratic transformation according to the provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.