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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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# Highlights

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## President Al-Bashir pledges free and fair elections

Addressing a rally in the northern State yesterday to mark the launch of Dongola-Suleim Bridge, President Omar Al-Bashir reiterated his pledge to ensure the conduct of free and fair elections to enable the people to choose their representatives, ***Al-Ahdath*** reports.

"We did not come to rule over the people of Sudan... We want the people of Sudan to choose with total freedom the leadership which will govern the country in future. We shall not impose anyone - any government or party - on them. But, it is the elections - free and fair elections - that will decide because the people of Sudan are one people," he said, according to ***Sudan TV***.

With regard to the ICC, the President said, "When they came with the ICC story, they thought that the day they made the announcement, the country would collapse, the government would collapse, the people will revolt against the government and an uprising will follow to overthrow the government" "Our response will be to inaugurate new development projects everyday. We will continue to develop the country because their basic aim is to stop progress of development in the Sudan"

Meanwhile, ***Akhir Lahza*** reports SPLM has instructed its organs to see to it that elections are not held on schedule. Reportedly, SPLM Deputy SG Yassir Arman has been asked to try to convince the northern political parties to boycott the elections so that the NCP is forced to reverse its stand on the census results.

In a related development, ***Ajras Al-Hurriah*** reports NISS new Director Gen. Mohamed Atta as saying that the elections would be a complex issue given the security situation in Darfur and the inter-tribal conflict in the South. Speaking at a workshop organized yesterday by the National Assembly's Defence and Security Committee he said that NISS would take measures to secure the exercise.

The Interior Minister, Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid, who also spoke at the workshop, said his Ministry was building up a force of 27,000 policemen to secure the elections. However, Police spokesperson, Gen. Adil Al-Ajib told the workshop that in the event of violence during elections, police might use excessive force but promised respect to human rights. He said the police was expecting 24 elections-related challenges including violent chaos in certain areas, attack on diplomatic missions by some elements to claim insecurity in the country and threats to lives of leading personalities.

According to ***Al-Sahafa***, Gen. Ajib revealed scenarios that could pose threat to the electoral process including possible threat to the safety and security of some influential personalities, as well as attack on diplomatic missions, international organizations and observers.

The participants have agreed that security measures alone would not secure the elections and called for the involvement of the civil society organizations as well as voter education to avoid catastrophic incidents.

***Al-Rai Al-Aam*** reports that NISS Director Gen. Atta told the workshop that the NISS would focus on securing the "elections results announcement stage" which he described as "the most critical phase" as acts of violence are likely to occur.

According to *Al-Intibaha*, Gen. Atta appeared pessimistic over success of the upcoming elections exercise, saying the political parties want “freedom without responsibility”, which he considers a major threat to the process.

On the other hand, *Sudan Tribune website* 18/8/09 reported Sudan’s political parties’ board yesterday organized one-day training for the political forces on the upcoming general elections in the country with the support of UNMIS and UNDP.

The workshop, the first of its kind, brought together nearly 180 representatives of 62 registered political parties across the country.

The workshop was aimed at providing party representatives with basic knowledge about the National Elections Act and the Political Parties Act, as well as issues affecting political parties during the coming elections scheduled for April 2010.

Speaking to the participants, UNMIS’ Chief Electoral Affairs Officer Ray Kennedy reaffirmed the Mission’s advisory role in the electoral process.

"This includes support in the development of operational and logistical plans and procedures for voter registration, nominations, polling, counting, and the tabulation and announcement of results; development of training plans and materials; and development of civic and voter education plans and materials," the UNMIS said.

### **SPLM to announce important decisions today**

*Al-Ahdath* reports the SPLM Political Bureau will wrap up its meetings today in Juba and the SPLM SG Pagan Amum will hold a press conference to announce the recommendations. The paper has learned that the recommendations would tackle a range of issues including the statements made by SRSG Ashraf Qazi before the PCA ruling on Abyei, SPLM’s presidential nominee, restrictive laws, referendum law and the dispute over the census results.

In a related development, *Akhbar Al-Youm* reports the NCP and the SPLM will sign an important agreement today brokered by US envoy Scott Gration on full implementation of the CPA, with a focus on the upcoming elections and referendum. Informed source said the document to be signed would be submitted to the Presidency for endorsement. Reportedly, Gration will fly to Malakal after the signing ceremony to assess the JIUs’ ability to discharge key security tasks. Gration will return to Khartoum for similar talks with the NCP and will fly to Ethiopia for meeting with Darfur movements before proceeding to Cairo.

### **Misseriya warns of attempts to “fish in troubled waters”**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports the Misseriya emir Mukhtar Babo Nimir as saying that they are well aware of their interests and they have no intention to fight against any group whether in the North or in the South. Nimir has warned against attempts to “fish in troubled waters”, adding that a delegation from the tribe arrived in Mujlad yesterday to hold a consultation conference to inform the government about their recommendations.

Meanwhile, Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie has accused unnamed elements of seeking to incite sedition in Kordofan to replicate Darfur. “This is a bet on the wrong horse,” Nafie told a press conference in Al-Obeid yesterday.

### **Abductor married abductee**

**Al-Rai Al-Aam** has learned that the Irish aid worker, Sharon Commins, one of the two female aid workers abducted in Darfur, married one of her abductors. A source told the paper that the the abductee informed her relatives about her consent to marry one of her abductors. The other aid worker, Hilda Kawuki, from Uganda, is still in captivity. According to the source, the international community, the Irish government and GOAL gave no attention to the plight of the abductees and GOAL did not engage in any move to ensure their release since it was informed about the demand for the ransom.

### **Darfur peacekeeping mission establishes sexual abuse unit**

**Sudan Tribune website** 18/8/09 – UNAMID announced today the establishment of an investigation unit to deal with sexual abuse in the troubled Darfur region.

"UNAMID has established a gender crime special investigations unit within the police component that will be responsible for monitoring and reporting on investigations of crimes committed against women and children," it said on Tuesday.

The unit will focus on addressing sexual based violence, rehabilitate victims, reduce stigmatization of victims of sexual abuse, and will work to encourage victims to report incidents freely to law enforcement agencies.

Further, it will provide support to the local law enforcement agencies in the investigation of complex cases of violation, such as sexual harassment, child abuse, human trafficking, domestic violence, child abandonment and prostitution.

The unit will work in coordination and collaboration with UNAMID Gender unit, criminal investigations unit, Human Rights, international non-governmental organizations and other agencies, the local communities concerned with gender related issues.

### **Militias clash in new south Sudan violence**

**AFP** 18/8/09 - Clashes between rival militias broke out in south Sudan's oil-rich Unity state yesterday, the latest to hit a region still recovering from two decades of civil war, a regional aid official said. "Fighting broke out in the early hours," said Paul Dhel Gum, an official with the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission run by the autonomous regional government of the south.

"It is still continuing now, and reports from people on the ground say there are between 300 to 350 militiamen involved."

Mayom County is in the west of Unity state, Gum said an area close to Sudan's north-south border and the flashpoint oil district of Abyei.

He said there were reports that the clashes may have spilled over into Gogrial County in adjoining Warrap state. The reports could not immediately be confirmed. Gum said the gunmen from the Nuer ethnic group were armed with automatic weapons and heavy machine guns. It was not clear who else was involved in the fighting.

"We have no details of casualties as yet because the fighting is still continuing," said Gum. "But the fighting is serious, so deaths are expected." The south has suffered a string of deadly clashes in recent months.

In a related development, President of Egypt Hosni Mubarak, at a joint press conference with President Barak Obama at the White House yesterday, warned of the danger of the separatist

tendencies and inter-tribal conflict in Southern Sudan, *al-Rai Al-Aam* reports. The summit between Presidents Mubarak and Obama focused on a range of issues including Darfur.

### **UN trains 14,000 policemen in south Sudan since 2005**

**Miraya FM** 18/8/09 - The United Nations Police Advisor and Chief of Training in South Sudan, Cyprian Gatete, said that UN police has trained over fourteen thousand (14.000) police officers across south Sudan since 2005. Meanwhile, the Deputy Police Commissioner in Central Equatoria State, Brig. Joseph Sobit Makelele said that the UN Police in Juba commenced the training of a new batch of about two hundred (200) south Sudan Police recruits in Central Equatoria State.

Makelele pointed out that these police officers will receive an exclusive training on emergency response:

"This group, I am sure when they are graduated they will be of great use to us here, because security is our main goal."

### **Tripartite Committee says committed to neutral aid delivery**

**SUNA** 18/8/08 - The Tripartite Joint Technical Committee which comprises the United Nations, the Government of National Unity and the UN Agencies, has reaffirmed its commitment to an impartial and neutral aid delivery.

In a statement it issued Tuesday to mark the World Humanitarian Day, the committee has commended the efforts exerted by aid workers in the Sudan, saying that most of the over 15 000 persons working in relief and humanitarian assistance in Sudan are Sudanese.

The statement reads: - on the inaugural World Humanitarian Day, the tripartite joint technical committee reaffirms its commitment to impartial and neutral provision of humanitarian assistance based on need alone and remembers with gratitude all those who give tirelessly of their time, energy and resources to assist the needy.

### **“Just Peace Forum Party” elects chairman**

**Al-Intibaha** reports the “Just Peace Forum Party”, at a meeting yesterday in Khartoum, elected Mr. Al-Tayeb Mustafa as its chairman. Mustafa has promised to safeguard Sudan’s unity, thwart plots, maintain Islamic values and restructure the Sudan.

According to **Al-Sudani**, the Just Peace Party has demanded self-determination for the northern Sudan similar to the right accorded to the South.

### **UN begins largest food aid programme in southern Sudan**

**Sudan Radio Service**, 16/8/09 reported that the UN has initiated its largest food airdrop aid programme in southern Sudan to help the hundreds of thousands that now face severe hunger there. Ian McDonald from the UN World Food Programme said yesterday that extremely high food prices, tribal violence in the region and low rainfall had combined to cause a much-extended hunger gap period in the south.

He said the hunger season would be extended to mid-October to November this year adding that most of the south had only received 20 to 40 per cent of rains expected this year.

Mr. McDonald added that as many as 1.2 million people may face shortages this year and the agency has begun the process of hiring helicopters and airplanes for food drops.

The UN Food Programme official confirmed that the operation will be the largest of the nature since the CPA was signed; adding that between 375,000 and 400,000 extra people will need food aid this year for three months.

### **“Gays and whores” to protest Public Order law in Khartoum**

“Preparations have been finalized by some quarters to organize a demonstration of whores and sodomites in Khartoum as part of campaign to resist Sudan’s Public Order Act”, writes Ishaq Ahmed Fadlallah, editor-in-chief of *Al-Wifaq* newspaper. “The protestors, supported by western embassies in Khartoum, intend to take advantage of the momentum created by journalist Lubna Ahmed Hussein to step up fight against the law” he writes.

“Sources told *Al-Wifaq* yesterday that the organizers have convened meetings and set up three groups to carry out the campaign, saying the case of journalist Lubna Ahmed Hussein has provided them an opportunity that should be fully exploited to step up the campaign to defeat the law” he adds. “The gays and prostitutes will march to the UN office to hand over a petition against the Public Order Law”