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Highlights

NCP& SPLM sign Accord, fail to agree on census, referendum law

Local dailies report the NCP and the SPLM have failed to overcome their differences over the census results and the referendum law but decided to resume their dialogue in September to resolve the pending issues. However, the tripartite meeting between the NCP, the SPLM and the US envoy in Juba signed a memorandum of understanding yesterday on a range of CPA issues including on border demarcation, security, elections, power and wealth sharing as well as a resolve to address Darfur crisis peacefully before the elections take place.

Al-Ahdath reports that Presidential Adviser Ghazi Salah Al-Din who represented the NCP at Juba meeting as saying that the SPLM has objected to the oil revenue accounts but an agreement was reached on an IMF expert to oversee banking performance.

However, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports VP Ali Osman Taha will lead a high delegation to Juba today for discussion with GoSS on CPA pending issues.

Sudan Tribune website 19/8/09 reported the NCP and the SPLM signed an accord today in Juba on the CPA implementation.

The US State Department said that the agreement "commits the NCP and SPLM to a series of timed benchmarks for implementing key aspects of the CPA, including border demarcation and election preparation".

The head of the US bureau at the Sudanese foreign ministry Nasr Al-Deen Wali told the state news agency (SUNA) that the issues of referendum and the census remain outstanding and further discussions on them would commence during the second week of September.

The London based **Al-Sharq Al-Awsat** newspaper quoting informed sources that attended the Juba meetings said that the NCP sticks to its position that the census results are to be used to determine the geographical constituencies for the purposes of the upcoming 2010 elections.

The SPLM wants the geographical constituencies to be based on the 1956 census percentages alleging that the 2008 census results were "rigged" understating the population of the South and overstating that of Darfur.

According to the newspaper, the SPLM proposed alternatives all of which were rejected by the NCP.

Meanwhile, the US envoy Scott Gration said his country works to make sure that the people of Southern Sudan shall exercise their right to self-determination in an internationally monitored referendum in January 2011 as stipulated in the CPA. He made the remarks at a meeting with GoSS VP Riek Machar yesterday in Juba.

AFP 20/8/09 reports Former enemies from north and south Sudan signed a deal yesterday aimed at bolstering the 2005 peace agreement that ended Sudan's 22-year civil war.

The "action plan," witnessed by US special envoy Scott Gration, sets out a framework for

resolving outstanding issues in the north-south Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

"It will result in better cooperation and stronger relations, that will result in, I believe, a brighter future for Sudan," Gration told reporters after the signing in the southern capital of Juba.

The document -- the result of months of negotiations between the two sides and the US envoy -- has added fresh impetus to implementing remaining key aspects of the peace deal, Gration said.

It covers key areas that both sides will work together on, including upcoming elections next April, peace efforts in the war-torn region of Darfur, demarcating the north-south border, and power sharing.

However, further negotiations will continue on two major issues which "remain to be fully worked out," Gration added. These are the details of an independent referendum for the south due in 2011, and the results of a disputed census seen as key to the 2010 elections.

"We have been discussing how we can successfully restart the implementation of issues of the peace agreement," SPLM deputy chairman Malik Agar said after signing the deal.

Ghazi Salahuddin of Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir's National Congress Party (NCP) said the agreement would support the CPA.

"It is a way of re-expressing commitment and putting deadlines on work to be achieved," he said. "We have been through difficult times, we have differed as usual, but I think we have achieved a lot."

Mechanism formed to ensure fair elections

The alliance of opposition parties, the Political Parties' Affairs Council and the National elections Commission have agreed to set up a joint mechanism to guarantee freedoms for the conduct of fair elections, reports *Al-Ayyam*. Kamal Omar, a prominent member of the Popular Congress Party (PCP) pointed out that the head of the Political Parties' Affairs Council assured the opposition parties the right to freedom of expression and political activities.

AU Panel on Darfur to visit Sudan tomorrow

The AU Panel on Darfur, headed by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, is due in Khartoum tomorrow on a nine-day tour to complete its report for submission to the African Union, *Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports. Reportedly, the Panel has already compiled its report and the visit is intended to put the finishing touches.

Humanitarian Affairs Ministry denies famine in the South

Al-Wifaq reports the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs has dismissed reports of famine in the South. HAC Commissioner Hasabo Mohamed Abdul Rahman told journalists yesterday that reports about famine in the South were exaggerated. "It is a mere food gap in Aweil," he said.

UN warns of imminent famine in southern Sudan

Miraya FM 19/8/09 - The United Nations has warned that hundreds of thousands of people in southern Sudan are at serious risk of famine and that they are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. UN Deputy Humanitarian/Resident Coordinator for South Sudan, Lise Grande, said that on the occasion of World Humanitarian Day on Wednesday the UN and other humanitarian agencies would address humanitarian challenges in southern Sudan.

Grande added that humanitarian agencies working in south Sudan feel that a lot of attention has been given to the humanitarian situation in Darfur while a significant population in the south is also in need of the same services.

Three killed in south Sudan gun battle

Reuters, 19/8/09 - Three people from an armed tribal group in south Sudan have been killed in a gun battle with the semi-autonomous region's army, officials said on Wednesday.

The incident took place on Tuesday in the south's oil-producing Unity State where some of the bloodiest fighting occurred in a 22-year war between the north and south.

The southern government, set up under the 2005 peace accord, has struggled with inter-tribal raids and counter-attacks between pastoralists, often with cattle theft at the core of the violence. This year fighting in some areas has intensified.

Unity State's Information Minister Andrea Kuong told Reuters that members of the Bul Nuer tribe were returning from a revenge attempt on the Mayen Jur Dinka clan in the neighbouring state when they were intercepted by the army.

"Three were killed and seven injured," he said, adding the situation was calm now.

An army spokesman, Malaak Ayuen, said the army was trying to police the border between the two states.

The area's disarmament chief, Charles Machieng, said five people, including at least one from a family attacked in their home, were killed when members of the Mayen Jur Dinka attacked the Bul Nuer three days ago.

This was believed to be the reason for the Nuer revenge attempt, Machieng said. A senior member of the army, Biar Ajang, confirmed the fighting and death toll.

The southern army has sent soldiers to particularly bloody areas and have begun civilian disarmament in Lakes State that will continue into other areas in the next months, Ayuen said.

But after the war, in which some southern tribal militias were sponsored by Khartoum, trust in the southern army is low and disarmament and policing efforts have turned bloody before.

Growing discontent at slow peace dividends and perceived political meddling by north Sudan are two reasons given for the killings. Unity State residents have complained they did not receive compensation for oil producing land seized in the war.

The discovery of oil in the south inflamed a war that was fought between the mainly Christian and animist south and the largely Muslim north.

Jordanian police boosts UNAMID presence in Darfur

UN News Centre 19/8/09 – An advance party of Jordanian police officers arrived in Darfur today ahead of a larger deployment due later this month to strengthen the efforts of the UNAMID peacekeeping force in the strife-torn Sudanese region.

The 46 members of the Jordanian formed police unit (FPU) will be responsible for setting up equipment and accommodation in preparation for the remaining 280 personnel scheduled to arrive on 28 August.

The entire unit will be divided into two and deployed to El Fasher and Kabkabiya in North Darfur state.

FPU's are comprised of police officers who have received specialized training in high-risk operations. Their main task is the protection of civilians, including through conducting community policing, especially in camps housing internally displaced persons (IDPs).

They also assist UN agencies in the delivery of humanitarian aid in Darfur, where some 2.7 million people have been displaced from their homes over the course of six years of conflict pitting Government forces and allied Janjaweed militiamen against rebel groups.

Show Commitment to the CPA - Says Southern Sudan official

VOA (US) 19/08/09, Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth, who heads the GoSS' Mission to the United States told **VOA** that the US Administration is serious about ending the Darfur crisis and the implementation of the CPA.

"Of course the agreement that was signed today is basically the implementation of the CPA or on implemented issues. If you can recall the initiative that was initiated by special envoy of Obama, General Gration, we had the CPA conference here this year. Trilateral discussions went on here in Washington and the second one was in Khartoum and this is the third round in Juba," Gatkuoth said referring to a recent NCP, SPLM agreement in Juba.

He said the signing of the agreement shows commitment from both sides.

"We have agreed that we need to recommit ourselves into the implementation of the CPA. Basically the agreement is saying that we need to implement the issue of the north-south border. We need to implement the Abyei roadmap or the Abyei protocol for that matter," he said.

Gatkuoth said the Obama Administration has been instrumental in calming tensions and suspicions.

"The only difference at this time is that the U.S administration with the special envoy leading this process is to implement the CPA or to recommit ourselves to implementing the CPA with the moderation or the supervision of General Scott Gration," Gatkuoth said.

He said President Al-Bashir's NCP has undermined the CPA's implementation."So far, we have been trying our best to implement this CPA, but the National Congress Party has been very reluctant to move an inch," he said.

Meanwhile, a senior NCP official, Ghazi Salaheddin, said both the SPLM and NCP have agreed on 10 out of 12 trouble areas, including power sharing between the north and south.

But Gatkuoth said the NCP has thwarted efforts to fully implement the CPA.

"This is exactly what we need to ask the National Congress Party. How committed are they to implement the CPA or the unimplemented provisions at this time? And I hope they are seriously meaning it because they have been known for signing agreements and not implementing them," Gatkuoth said.

He said President Obama's Administration has demonstrated in many ways its commitment towards resolving the Darfur crisis as well as the full implementation of the CPA.

Two killed, two injured in Khartoum

Local dailies report Khartoum has been shocked by a third murder crime in two weeks. According to **Al-Ayyam**, masked men broke into the house of Fadlalla Yasin Tabidi, a prominent Khartoum goldsmith and former head of the goldsmiths' union in Omdurman, and

stabbed him and his son to death while two other family members were injured. Reportedly, theft was the motive of the killing. Police arrested suspects who are being investigated.