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Media Monitoring Report

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Elections Watch

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Highlights

Taha, Kiir agree to accept elections results

FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit and VP Ali Osman Taha met in Juba yesterday and agreed to accept elections results, *local dailies* report. "We agreed to accept the elections results, respect court rulings with regards to objections, maintain security and stability and accelerate the formation of national and state governments," Taha told reporters following the meeting, according to *Khartoum Monitor*. He added that the two partners also agreed to conduct referendum for the South freely and on schedule and emphasized unity as a top priority. The two sides also stressed the need to allow citizens of south Sudan to vote in an atmosphere that will enable them to choose between unity and separation. "After the meeting between Kiir and Taha, it is now certain that the NCP-SPLM partnership will be sustained and the forthcoming government will not be any difference from the pre-election one," says Ahmed Al-Ballal, editor-in-chief of *Akhbar Al-Youm*.

According to *Khartoum Monitor*, SPLM political bureau held an urgent meeting after Kiir-Taha meeting yesterday reportedly to discuss participation in some of executive positions, SPLM's post-election position, defeat of some SPLM leading figures in elections such as Malik Agar, boycott of elections by SPLM northern sector in the North and conflicting statements within the SPLM.

In a related development, *Sudan Radio* reported that Blue Nile state Governor Malik Agar issued statement calling on residents to remain calm when elections results are announced. "We will accept whatever results of the competition in the Blue Nile," the Governor said. Reportedly, the situation in the Blue Nile state is tense and the NEC sent a team to the region to revise vote counting. According to *Radio Miraya*, the delegation which arrived in Blue Nile to inspect vote counting after reports of tensions in the state is reportedly satisfied with the manner in which the state's Elections Committee is handling the process.

Al-Raed reports that indications are that NCP candidate for the state's gubernatorial post Farah Ibrahim Al-Agar will beat the SPLM candidate Malik Agar.

NCP and SPLM pledge to form Sudan's next government

Sudan Tribune website 20/4/10 - Sudan's CPA partners have agreed to accept the election results at all levels in the country and pledged to jointly form the next government.

During a meeting held yesterday in Juba between SPLM chairperson Salva Kiir Mayardit and NCP deputy chairperson Ali Osman Mohamed Taha the two leaders pledged to accept the results at all levels despite complaints from parties.

The Juba meeting between Kiir and Taha also discussed the way forward in the expected formation of the next elected Government of National Unity with participation or membership of the two parties.

They also expressed the need for immediate resumption of dialogue on implementation of the other remaining outstanding issues in the CPA following the formation of the new government.

Observers say that the agreement between the two ruling parties in the North and South, committing themselves to acceptance of the results before they are officially released, signifies

a giant step towards maintaining the status quo.

The meeting was also joined by the former SPLM presidential candidate and Deputy Secretary General for Northern Sector and withdrawn candidate for the Sudanese presidency, Yasir Saeed Arman and the party's Secretary General, Pagan Amum, who also arrived to Juba from Khartoum on Tuesday.

Juba Alliance to meet today to agree on way forward

The opposition political parties (Juba Alliance) have agreed not to participate in the new government, **Al-Sahafa** reports. The Alliance's members are reportedly meeting today to discuss a work plan for the upcoming period. Meanwhile, the PCP will convene a decisive meeting on Saturday to discuss a strategy to re-energize opposition mechanisms in the post-election period.

Final results of elections on Sunday

Al-Ayyam reports NEC information official Salah Habib as saying that the Commission will announce final results of elections on Sunday. "We thought we can release the results on 21 April but now it seems we can not set a date for the announcement because the process is massive and complicated," says Al-Hadi Mohamed Ahmed, NEC Technical Committee Chairman.

Parties that boycott elections will not join government – Al-Bashir

President Omer Al-Bashir has pledged not to ban or restrict activities of the political parties which boycott elections but made it clear that they would not participate in the new government, **Al-Sahafa** reports.

The President made the remarks yesterday at a meeting with SRSG Haile Menkerios who is reportedly preparing to submit a comprehensive report to the Security Council next week on Sudan's elections, Darfur issue and the CPA. The President emphasized his personal commitment and the commitment of his party and the prospective government to implement all the remaining CPA benchmarks particularly the demarcation of the North-South and the Abyei area borders.

According to the paper, the SRSG expressed UN satisfaction over Sudan's elections despite technical errors, saying the extension of the voting period contributed towards resolution of these mistakes.

No security threats – Police

Police Inspector-General Al-Adil Ajib Yagoub has said that the security situation is stable all over the country and all indications are that no poll-related violent incidents will occur, **Al-Wifaq** reports. In a statement broadcast on state TV yesterday, Gen. Yagoub urged citizens not to heed to rumours and to report any incident on 999 (police emergency telephone number).

NEC dismisses East Sudan electoral fraud video as "fabricated"

Sudan Tribune website 20/4/10 - The NEC today dismissed a widely circulated video showing its staff filling up the ballots and putting inside the boxes fuelling opposition accusations of vote rigging during the polling period that concluded last Thursday.

"This [video] is fabricated. We cannot investigate everything that is on the internet," Al-Hadi Mohammed Ahmed, head of the technical committee at the NEC told reporters in Khartoum.

The video posted on YouTube showed around seven NEC workers along with a child, apparently in an Eastern Sudan polling station, filling up the voting slips and stuffing it into the

boxes. The information attached to the video stated that it was recorded in the Red Sea state, constituency 4 in Hamashkoreib region.

The electoral staff was wearing the official orange-coloured NEC vest on top of traditional eastern Sudanese attire with the semi-transparent sealed ballot boxes on the floor.

The sound quality of the video was poor but one voice is heard expressing relief that the voting period has been extended "so we can finish our work".

The authenticity of the video could not be verified independently.

Opposition parties said the video is the solid proof on the extent of vote rigging by the ruling National Congress Party (NCP).

"This video is proving everything we said that the elections are rigged and they rigged the boxes," Sideeg Yousuf, an official from the Sudan Communist Party (SCP) told Reuters.

GoSS embarks on separation strategy

The GoSS has embarked on preparing a strategy to consolidate separation of the South **Al-Intibaha** reports. Part of these preparations includes agreements on a series of projects linking the region with its African neighbours and commissioning of studies on managing the regions natural resources.

Gold rush in Southern Kordofan

The Al-Leeri area in Talodi Locality, Southern Kordofan State, is the latest site of a gold rush with scores of people from all over the country pouring in with hopes of getting gold ore, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports. Taha Abu-al-Hassan who heads the Al-Leeri Administrative Unit said that the concerned authorities are cooperating to facilitate the work of the gold seekers. He said that the influx of people searching for gold ore has increased the demand for consumer products. He invited companies to come in to explore the opportunities of commercial mining.

Jonglei preliminary results to be delayed - official

Sudan Tribune website 20/4/10 - Preliminary results for April 11—15 polls in Jonglei state may take days to be officially announced, says the head of the State Election High Committee. Delays in transportation of materials and counted results from rear constituencies to Bor, the State capital, among other constraints contributed to postponement of fractional outcomes of elections.

Speaking at Radio Jonglei on Monday, Mecak Ajang Alaak called on political forces and the public to wait the results with calm and prepare for either a win or a loss.

UNMIS helicopter is helping to transport election materials from Counties that are not connected to Bor by land, Ajang added giving credits to UN support for successful conduct of election here.

US slams irregularities in Sudan election

Reuters 20/4/10 - The White House charged on Tuesday that Sudan's national elections were plagued by "serious irregularities" and said it was committed to helping ensure a 2011 referendum on southern Sudanese independence was conducted fairly.

Early results from the election, the oil-producing nation's first in 24 years, suggest President Omar al-Bashir and his party are headed for a strong win in presidential and parliamentary polls marred by boycotts and alleged fraud.

"Political rights and freedoms were circumscribed throughout the electoral process, there were reports of intimidation and threats of violence in South Sudan, ongoing conflict in Darfur did not

permit an environment conducive to acceptable elections, and inadequacies in technical preparations for the vote resulted in serious irregularities," the White House said in a statement.

"The United States regrets that Sudan's National Elections Commission did not do more to prevent and address such problems prior to voting," it said.

"In the months and years ahead it will be critical to continue pressing for progress for the civil and political rights of all of the Sudanese people," the White House said.

"The United States also remains committed to working with the international community to ensure that the referendum happens on time and that its results are respected,"

Other Highlights

Former UNAMID deputy commander arrested in Rwanda over “immoral conduct”

Sudan Tribune website 20/4/10 - The Rwandan government announced today that it had taken into custody two senior military officials including the former UNAMID deputy commander.

The arrest took place few weeks after Rwandan Paul Kagame initiated a major shake-up in the military leadership that took place at the anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. Former air force chief Lieutenant General Charles Muhire and Major General Emmanuel Karenzi Karake, the former deputy commander of UNAMID were arrested on accusations that they committed serious offenses.

"Lt-Gen Muhire was suspended due to serious charges of corruption and misuse of office," the military spokesman, Major Jill Rutaremara told reporters in Rwanda. "Major-General Karenzi was suspended on serious charges of immoral conduct."

"This action was taken in order to enforce discipline, moral conduct and accountability in the Rwanda Defence Force" he added.

The two generals were members of an exclusive circle of top military officers in the former Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) rebel movement which brought an end to the 1994 genocide.

The RPF is currently Rwanda's ruling party headed by Kagame, who is widely expected to seek, and secure, re-election in presidential polls due in August.

The arrests come months after a series of grenade attacks hit Rwanda, one coming just a day after President Kagame declared that a coup d'état could never be pulled off in the country.

Local media had reported that Karenzi was questioned over the attacks, which were eventually pinned on other renegade generals.