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Highlights

NCP, SPLM to meet today on referendum

Al-Wifaq 22/8/10 – The two CPA partners, the NCP and the SPLM, will hold an important meeting today to reach a final agreement on the referendum commission.

Also, the Referendum Commission is expected to hold a plenary meeting tomorrow in Juba to discuss the obstacles it is facing and the coordination needed with its southern arm.

Reportedly, the SPLM has agreed to drop its demand for the post of the Commission's secretary-general provided his deputy should be from the South. SPLM Deputy Chairman Dr. Riek Machar said the crisis between the NCP and the SPLM over the referendum commission is approaching its end.

Al-Raed reports that NCP leading figure Rabie Abdul-Atti appeared optimistic that the meeting will achieve a breakthrough on the sticky issues.

Sudan's NCP accuse SPLM of working for secession

Sudan Tribune website 19/8/10 - The NCP lashed out at its partner in the Government of National Unity (GoNU) over a meeting held with president Omer Al-Bashir that was boycotted by most heavyweight opposition parties.

The major opposition parties invited to the meeting including the Umma Party, Popular Congress party (PCP) and Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) did not attend. The Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM), the dominant party in the South, also rejected Bashir's invitation suggesting it would achieve nothing particularly if it did not tackle issues like the Darfur crisis, deteriorating economic conditions of the people, democratic transformation and political freedoms.

The NCP's deputy leader Nafie Ali Nafie speaking to reporters chided the SPLM saying "they are not supportive of Sudan's unity and want to go around the country's issues".

"[The SPLM] do not want to put themselves in a corner by discussing the issue and conducting the referendum in a free and fair manner, especially after the [April] elections in the south, which was marred by much scepticism," Nafie said.

He also warned that any attempt by the SPLM to declare independence unilaterally would amount to "political suicide".

"No one can declare the secession of the South from within its parliament" Nafie said before affirming the NCP's commitment to holding the referendum as planned.

Referendum Commission endorses Committees' membership

Al-Rai Al-Aam 22/8/10 – Head of the Referendum Commission Mohamed Ibrahim

Khalil said the Commission was working to salvage what could be salvaged during the remaining time for the process and stressed the need to expedite the appointment of a secretary-general to complete the Commission's structures, expecting the secretary-general to be appointed during the few coming days. Khalil described the remaining period as "difficult".

He revealed that the Commission members would travel to Juba tomorrow aboard a UN aircraft to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the Commission's committees in the South, saying the Commission would not be fully operational until the secretary-general is appointed.

Meanwhile, deputy head of the Referendum Commission Chan Rec Madut said that members of Commission's subcommittees in the ten southern states – 50 members - had been endorsed and they would take oath of office tomorrow in Juba.

In a related development, *Al-Ayyam* 22/8/10 reports that Head of the Referendum Commission Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil has denied receiving any suggestions from the SPLM with regard to the appointment of the Commission secretary-general, adding that the problem is not in appointing a secretary-general for the Commission, it is more serious than that because the differences have taken the turn of a North-South confrontation.

"We are exerting efforts to overcome a serious obstacle, to work with a national spirit free of political and geographical affiliations," he said, adding that the Commission has begun preparing the budget with the help of some firms, UN and USAID.

Sudan Tribune website 19/8/10 reported the leadership of Southern Sudan Referendum Commission on Thursday said it decided to leave decision to appoint Secretary General to the Presidency.

Chan Reec Madut, Deputy Chairperson of the commission, told Sudan Tribune from Juba that internal discussions to appointment secretary general have failed to reach any consensus.

Though the SPLM Politburo has agreed this week that NCP will nominate a person to fill the post, the right person from the NCP candidates is yet to be agreed and appointed.

While internal attempts to appoint Secretary General for the Commission have met resisting voices by commission's members from the south, two candidates from the north were proposed for the post and no candidate from south was officially proposed.

"Internal attempts in the commission to appoint Secretary General have failed, so it is left to the Presidency to decide," said Madut who is also the head of the Juba- based Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau.

He however added that other activities, which he mentioned as coordination between Juba and Khartoum as well as with southern states continues to be carried out despite the disagreement.

"Routine activities are progressing well. We are in daily contacts and communicating with state high committees," he said.

SPLM threatens to go ahead with Abyei referendum

Al-Ayyam 22/8/10 – The SPLM has threatened to conduct referendum in Abyei through the Area Administration should the two partners fail to form the commission.

However, SPLM SG Pagan Amum pointed out that the recent SPLM politburo meeting directed SPLM leaders to show flexibility on referendum matters to block plans by elements seeking to derail the referendum process, accusing the NCP of seeking to delay the referenda.

"If the NCP refused SPLM's nominees for the Abyei Commission and continue to block the process, we will assist the Area Administration to organize it," he said. "If the NCP fail to implement the PCA Award on Abyei border, we will refer the matter to the UN".

In a related development, **Sudan Tribune website** 18/8/10 reported that a pressure group "Abyei Referendum Forum" from the oil rich region of Abyei on Wednesday called for international intervention to break deadlock over formation of the disputed referendum commission.

Talks over the formation of the commission to supervise the conduct of the upcoming referendum in the oil producing region of Abyei are stalled.

Chol Deng Alaak, a senior member of the SPLM who comes from the area, told Sudan Tribune, talks between NCP and SPLM over formation of Abyei referendum have not reached any understanding.

"Talks remain as they started. No compromise even over suggestion by the SPLM to allow UN run Abyei referendum has been opposed. No discussions anymore and so there is no progress."

"They are dead", Alaak said.

He said not aware of any internal arrangement which the two partners can reach without involving an independent third party to help them negotiate.

He said that the NCP and SPLM did not sit alone when they wrote the CPA.

"They used third party to intervene in resolving their differences in form of agreement. If they are facing difficulties in implementation process, they should resume the same ways and mechanisms used to bring this agreement," said Alaak.

The official, who previously served as a state minister in the ministry of foreign affairs, recommended that a third party intervene to help solve the issue surrounding Abyei's referendum.

"If they cannot resume and insist to resolve their differences alone, I tell you it will take time and [the] Abyei issue cannot be solved by two of them without involving any third

party," he said.

"If the two parties are really committed to full implementation of the Abyei protocol as per ruling of the permanent court of arbitration, they need to consider international intervention," he adds.

South Sudan to launch diplomatic campaign on independence

Sudan Tribune website 21/8/10 - The cabinet of the semi-autonomous Government of Southern Sudan has resolved to carry out a preparatory diplomatic campaign in Africa and around the world for recognition of independence of the region in case the people of southern Sudan vote for secession in the next five months.

The decision was reached in the cabinet meeting on Friday during a presentation by the Minister of Peace and CPA Implementation, Pagan Amum Okech, on his delegation's recent participation in the African Union summit in Uganda.

Amum criticized the attitude of the NCP negotiators whom he accused of resorting to delaying tactics on some occasions, avoiding meetings with the SPLM team in Khartoum. He said while the NCP was the one avoiding meetings, it then turned around to blame it on the SPLM, saying the SPLM team was not to be found in Khartoum...

Southerners will not vote for old unity – Atem Garang

Al-Sudani 22/8/10 – National Assembly Deputy Speaker Atem Garang said the people of the South would not vote for what he called "old unity", saying secession is presently the dominant choice in the South. He warned against politicization of the Referendum Commission, pointing out that the NCP has failed to make unity attractive in its new concept.

Atem has described the obstacles and non-cooperation encountered by the unity-support committee in southern Sudan as normal, given the 50-year-old bitterness.

NCP-allied parties call for expediting unity initiative

Sudan Tribune website 21/8/10 -The committee of political forces and organizations, which comprises a host of fringe political organizations mostly controlled by the NCP, has called for expediting the formation of the National Initiative for Supporting Sudan's Unity.

The formation of the initiative was agreed upon in the consultative meeting of Thursday, August 19, on the referendum.

The meeting was called for by president Al-Bashir but it was boycotted by mainstream opposition parties, namely the Juba Alliance, who accused the NCP of trying to involve them in the referendum on south Sudan's independence while ignoring their demands for the meeting's agenda to be extended to include the Darfur conflict and political freedoms.

The chairman of the initiative, Abood Gabir, was quoted by Sudan's official news agency SUNA yesterday as calling for expediting preparations to hold a gathering of southern Sudanese citizens in the Green Square in Khartoum to mark the beginning of

the referendum campaign.

This is one of a series of recent efforts by the NCP to promote the unity of Sudan.

Al-Mahdi says referendum should be run by an international body under UN

Local dailies 22/8/10 – National Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi has said that administration of the referendum should be entrusted on an international body from a neutral country under the observation of the UN instead of the Referendum Commission which he said is incapable of conducting the process, and warned that differences over referendum result might reignite the war. Al-Mahdi made the remarks at a farewell party for Egyptian Ambassador Afifi Abdul Wahab.

China must recognize referendum result to retain oil assets - minister

Sudan Tribune website 20/8/10 -The only way for China to retain its millions-worth of oil assets in Sudan is to cultivate a “strong” relationship with the semi-autonomous region of south Sudan and recognize the outcome of a referendum due in January 2011 on the region’s possible independence, south Sudan official said in statements to Bloomberg.

Anne Itto, south Sudan’s minister of agriculture, told reporters yesterday in the region’s capital Juba upon returning from China that the Chinese government fears that its assets in Sudan’s oil would be “a waster” if the south opts for secession.

“A lot of wild rumors have been getting to them, that if the south separates, there will be insecurity, and if there is insecurity, their assets worth billions of dollars in the form of pipelines and so on will have been a waste,” she said.

Itto, who is also the deputy secretary-general of the SPLM, the ruling party in south Sudan, said that she had told Chinese officials that “if they want to protect their assets, the only way is to develop a very strong relationship with the government of Southern Sudan, respect the outcome of the referendum, and then we will be doing business.”

The minister said that China was interested in expanding oil exploration to more blocks. She further announced that a senior delegation from the Chinese Communist Party would visit the region in early October to try to “bridge the gap.”

Expressing admiration for China’s model of providing development for growing economies, Itto said “whether anybody likes it or not, China is providing leadership in the development of developing countries,” adding that the Chinese are “stepping up. They are funding, particularly in the area of agriculture and exploration of natural resources.”

Toby Maduot derails NCP unity train

The Citizen 22/8/10 – The Chairman of the Sudan African National Union (SANU) Party Toby Maduot Parek has made a U-turn from a delusive unity trail to a reality-prone secession, shockingly denying the National Congress Party its claimed unionists’ voices in the South.

In a press statement accessed yesterday, SANU has resolved to pursue votes from separation of southern Sudan in 2010 but with bitter concerns that the NCP deliberately backtracked in implementing key provisions of the 2005 peace deal, in what may take the country back to war.

"SANU leadership and its rank and file have resolved to vote for the separation of southern Sudan in the coming referendum because of lack of seriousness in implementing CPA in full by the NCP and its continued strategy to marginalize the people of the underdeveloped regions of the Sudan," Toby wrote in a press statement. "This is seen by all southern political forces including SANU as insincerity on the part of the NCP and a dangerous recipe that will return our country to war".

The statement noted that the NCP was not trustworthy for delaying demarcation of North-South borders, Abyei and southern Kordofan borders as well as failure to start registration, referenda campaigning and failure to start voters' education...

South Sudan would face humanitarian crisis after referendum - minister

Sudan Tribune website 19/8/10 - International community has to prepare to provide massive humanitarian assistance to southern Sudan due to the expected violence in the region after the referendum on self-determination scheduled for January 2011, a minister said on Thursday.

"We have to be ready, we have to have plans," said Southern Sudan government Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management James Kok Ruea before UN officials and aid groups in a meeting held in Juba today.

"The needs will be enormous, so we will need your support," he added.

The minister said Tuesday that there are three possible scenarios that might emerge in the region but all imply massive humanitarian demands, reported AFP and AP.

If southerners vote for independence, there is a need to be ready to receive some 1.5 million of southerners living currently in northern Sudan who would probably return to the south, Ruea said. He also mentioned the return of refugees who are still in neighboring countries.

The U.N. Deputy Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Southern Sudan, Lise Grande, said donors have been very generous with Southern Sudan but said many people in the south still suffer.

Other Highlights

Central Government dishonors agreement to transfer oil revenues - Alor

Al-Sahafa 22/8/10 – GoSS has protested the transfer of its share of oil revenues in local currency, saying it has sent a delegation to Khartoum to discuss the matter with the central government and to convey its objection to the transaction.

GoSS Minister of Regional Cooperation Deng Alor said the delegation would try to find out from Khartoum why the money is sent in local currency, and criticized the Government for dishonouring the agreement to transfer the share in hard currency, citing GoSS' regional and international commitments.

SPLA imports 11 aircraft for military purposes

Local dailies 22/8/10 – The SPLA has received 11 aircraft manufactured by “Kazan” company to be used for military purposes and the commission involving the deal has reportedly reached \$7 million.

Informed sources told *SMC* that the aircraft would be delivered by the end of August and their pilots have been trained in Uganda and America. The aircraft are expected to be inducted by the end of this year.

However, *Al-Ayyam* reports SPLM acting spokesperson Brig. Malak Ayen Ajok has dismissed the reports about the aircraft deal, describing them as unfounded, adding the claims are intended to cover up the incident of the chopper impounded by GoSS authorities at Fulluj airfield in the Upper Nile early this month.

IAEA delegation to visit Sudan to assess plans to import nuclear reactor

Sudan Tribune website 21/8/10 - A delegation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is due to visit Sudan this week to advise on the country's plan to import a “peaceful nuclear reactor”, state media reported.

The Sudanese government has long disclosed its intention to establish a nuclear programme to produce electrical power and has publicly backed Iran's right to pursue a peaceful nuclear programme.

According to SUNA, the country's official news agency, the IAEA's delegation will be in Khartoum from August 23 to 26 to discuss with competent authorities Sudan's progress in implementing a feasibility study on the possibility of importing a nuclear reactor for “research purposes.”

SUNA stated that Sudan established its nuclear programme in early 2010 “in line with the state's pursuance of a peaceful nuclear programme.”

The director-general of the Sudanese Corporation for Nuclear Power, Mohamed Ahmad Hassan Altayyib, said the IAEA experts would advise local staff on preparing a feasibility study on how to make the most of the nuclear reactor in terms of training human resources and producing radioactive isotopes for medical and industrial purposes.

Altayyib further disclosed that Sudan had entered the practical phases of producing nuclear electrical power as part of a long term plan, devised by the National Electricity Corporation, to fulfill increasing demand for electrical power by 2030, adding that Sudan expects to build its first nuclear power station in 2020.

South Darfur state to relocate Kalma residents in two camps

Sudan Tribune website 21/8/10 - South Darfur state unveiled today plans to relocate the residents of the troubled Kalma camps into two areas near the state capital Nyala.

Abdel Karim Mousa Abdel Karim, Deputy Wali of South Darfur, told the government funded (smc) that the residents of Kalma would be relocated in two camps with a capacity of 25 to 30 thousand people, equipped with all basic services.

The space per house will be between 150 to 200 meters, he added.

The new camps will be located in southern Nyala, the capital of South Darfur in an area called Bileel.

He also said machineries for construction and wells drilling were dispatched to the sites to start works. He added the relocation will be implemented after completion of the construction of new camps.

Kalma, home of around 100,000 people, witnessed in August 2009 one of the most dramatic clashes between the residents and the Sudanese security forces where some 30 people had been killed and many others wounded.

GoSS earmarks SDG 30 million for IDP return

Al-Sahafa 21/8/10 – GoSS Cabinet yesterday approved a budget of SDG 30 million for return of IDPs to their original areas.

Cabinet spokesperson Benjamin Barnaba told reporters yesterday that the Cabinet also listened to reports on discussion on post-referendum arrangement between the NCP and the SPLM, saying the two partners reached agreement on some contentious issues while others are still being discussed.

Lakes State gangs abduct 7 children, loot cattle in Unity State

Khartoum Monitor 22/08/10 – Criminal gangs suspected to be from neighbouring Lakes State have raided nine villages around Payinjiar County in Unity State. The raiders abducted seven children and took over 3,000 heads of cattle leaving cattle-keepers seriously injured in an incident that occurred last Thursday.

The County Commissioner for Payinjiar, Peter Gai Joak, said that the incident occurred in parallel with the SPLA launch of an operation to repossess illegal arms from the population. He suspects that the criminal gangs took advantage of the fact the civilians were unarmed to wage their raid.

Lagu's appointment as Presidential Advisor welcomed by SPLM

Sudan Tribune website 19/08/10 - The appointment of the former president of the regional high executive council, Joseph Lagu, as Special Advisor to President of the GoSS has been welcomed by a representative from the northern branch of the party that governs the region. The regions President and Chairman of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Salva Kiir Mayardit announced his new advisors in August

18.

“The appointment of General Lagu means a lot to us and our enemies. It is one of the best and wise decisions our president has ever taken”, said Aleu Deng Jok, a member of the SPLM-North.

“I am happy about his appointment because I believe he has details of what led to the abrogation of Addis Ababa agreement which can help SPLM and the government of southern Sudan in dealing with current holdups,” in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the SPLM and the ruling National Congress Party, he said.

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