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Media Monitoring Report

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Referendum Monitor

- SPLM slams NCP hint southerners may lose citizenship after secession (*Al-Ahdath*)
- World tell Sudan leaders they are responsible for resolving their own problems (*ST*)
- Ban meets senior official for talks ahead of critical referenda (*UN News*)
- CPA partners agree on agenda in NY (*Ajras Al-Hurriya*)
- Sudanese diplomats scuffle at Iranian NYC event (*AP*)
- Khartoum state governor does not rule out insecurity after referenda results (*Al-Akhbar*)
- Abyei deputy chief rejects threats to quit the area (*ST*)
- SPLA breakaway group calls for anti-secession marches (*Akhir Lahza*)
- Lakes state political parties agree to preach peaceful referendum (*ST*)
- Registration depends on completion of forms – Referendum Commission (*Akhir Lahza*)

Other Headlines

- GoSS plans to flush LRA out of southern Sudan (*Al-Ayyam*)
- \$3 billion East Africa-South Sudan railroad project to soon start (*The Citizen*)
- Sudanese war planes bomb South Darfur villages – rebels (*ST*)
- Sudan's labor union slams ICC conference to be held in Qatar (*ST*)

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Highlights

SPLM slams NCP hint southerners may lose citizenship after secession

Al-Ahdath 26/9/10 – GoSS has rejected the statements by the Sudanese Information Minister Kamal Obeid to the effect that Southern Sudanese would lose citizenship and job benefits should they vote for secession.

Miraya FM 25/9/10 reported that GoSS VP Riek Machar said the Four Freedoms Agreement could be implemented between the two sides, warning that GoSS has a host of undisclosed options to retaliate to Khartoum should it carry out its threats.

According to *Sudan Tribune website* 25/9/10, Kamal Obeid said, "They will not enjoy citizenship rights, jobs or benefits, they will not be allowed to buy or sell in Khartoum market and they will not be treated in hospitals". "We will not even give them a needle in the hospital," he added.

Deng Arop, the Abyei area administrator told Sudan Tribune in a phone interview from the oil-rich region that the Minister's statement was "very irresponsible" and contravenes provisions within the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

"I don't think the Information Minister in the federal government understands the whole referendum issue, let alone the meaning of the self-determination of the south. Such a statement is very unfortunate, especially from a Minister," Arop said.

Lokulenge Lole, the Chief Internal Coordinator for Countdown to Southern Sudan Referendum, an awareness campaign organized by The South Sudan Civic Education Organization pressure group, said remarks made by Obeid were likely to jeopardize the ongoing post-referendum discussions initiated by the South Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC)– the body responsible for organizing the task.

"The Information Minister in Khartoum is making a very big mistake. Such a statement is likely to jeopardize post-referendum arrangements and further undermine south Sudan's preparations for self-determination. We condemn it at all costs," Lokulenge told Sudan Tribune.

"Yes, unity has been given a priority" since the 2005 peace deal, he said, though it was no longer "an attractive option" for the people of southern Sudan.

The deputy speaker of Sudan's national assembly Atem Garang, who is also a leading figure at the SPLM, told Aljazeera.net website that the remarks by Obeid are "selfish" ignore the fact that there are six million Northerners shepherding twenty-five heads of livestock over 1,400 km across the North-South borders.

"The Government of Juba will not treat the North as was promised by the Government of Khartoum to the Southerners but will provide them with a lot of protection, security and a decent living," Garang said.

He pointed out that what has been announced by Obeid "[shows] evidence that the state of the North will be a failed one and a carrier of the philosophy of revenge, which proves the principle of hatred that we have been fighting against".

Garang also noted that throughout the civil war years, the SPLM has not received any of its POW captured by the Sudanese army.

Mohamed Musa Hareka, a Sudanese political analyst, told Al-Jazeera that the NCP's new position demonstrates its thinking and ruled out it being a reaction to secessionist calls by Southerners.

Hareka described what was said as the "most horrific political speech currently there is" adding that it will kill any pro-union ideology. He expressed fear that it will lead to a counter effect of deepening hatred.

His peer Tag Al-Sir Mekki echoed Hareka's views saying that the NCP makes a big mistake by adopting this "internationally unacceptable position".

In another development, *Al-Sahafa* 26/9/10 reports National Assembly Speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir has called on southerners to preserve unity of the country so that they remain "owners of the whole country". He warned that separation would render southerners in the North and northerners in the South as second class citizens and they would also lose their citizenship. "Separation will mean they will need entry visa and permit for work, residence and ownership," he said.

World tell Sudan leaders they are responsible for resolving own problems

Sudantribune.com Washington, 24/09/10 - A high profile meeting on Sudan sponsored by the United Nations today stressed the need to hold the January 2011 referendum in the South as planned and in a fair and transparent manner.

First Vice-President Salva Kiir and Vice President Ali Osman Taha attended the conference along with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, U.S. president Barack Obama and leaders from Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Uganda as well as officials from UK, France, China and Germany.

Obama's participation sought to assure skeptical Sudan advocacy groups at home and countries abroad that the U.S. at its highest levels is engaged in efforts to maintain peace and stability in Africa's largest country.

"[S]ince I took office, my administration has worked for peace in Sudan. In my meetings with world leaders, I've urged my counterparts to fully support and contribute to the international effort that is required. [U.S.] Ambassador [to the UN] Susan Rice has worked tirelessly to build a strong and active coalition committed to moving forward. My special envoy, General Gration, has worked directly with the parties in his 20 visits to the region," Obama said.

"At this moment, the fate of millions of people hangs in the balance. What happens in Sudan in the days ahead may decide whether people who have endured too much war, move towards peace or slip backwards to bloodshed. And what happens in Sudan matters to all of sub-Saharan Africa, and it matters to the world," he added.

Obama stressed that the U.S. brokered 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between North and South Sudan must be “full implemented” and particularly the provisions related to the referendum which he said “must take place, peacefully and on time”.

The *New York Times* (NYT) reported that the Sudanese had sought a closed meeting, but ultimately it was open leaving Taha, and Kiir to sketch their differences in diplomatic terms.

Taha assured the gathering that the referendum would be held on time, but he criticized the international community for supporting peace on one hand while continuing the “demonization” of the north on the other.

However, Obama hinted that Bashir who stand accused of genocide in Darfur must eventually face justice.

"There can be no lasting peace in Darfur—and no normalization of relations between Sudan and the United States—without accountability for crimes that have been committed. Genocide is not acceptable" he said.

Kiir on the other hand said that the Jan. 9 referendum date was sacred and that any technical delays had to be overcome. “Any delays risk the return to instability and violence,” he said.

"Yes, unity has been given a priority" since the 2005 peace deal, he said, though it was no longer "an attractive option" for the people of southern Sudan.

The UN chief laid out what's expected out of Sudan in the coming few months.

“Sudanese, North and South, must negotiate agreements that reflect the reality of a shared history and shared resources – agreements on border management, citizenship, migration, security, debts and assets. These issues do not all need to be resolved ahead of the referenda, but it is crucial that a mutually beneficial framework for managing North-South relations is put in place quickly,” Ban said.

“We expect the referenda to be peaceful, carried out in an environment free of intimidation or other infringements of rights,” he added.

Obama and other leaders at the conference such as Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi reiterated the message that the leaders of Sudan are ultimately the ones who need to figure a way to resolve their problems.

“But no one can impose progress and peace on another nation. Ultimately, only Sudanese leaders can ensure that the referenda go forward and that Sudan finds peace.... two paths lay ahead: one path taken by those who flout their responsibilities and for whom there must be consequences — more pressure and deeper isolation.

The communiqué issued at the conclusion of the meeting said that the participants “voiced strong support to both CPA parties and confirmed their commitment to respect the outcome of credible referenda and to assist the Sudanese achieve sustainable peace throughout Sudan in the post-referenda period”.

“They noted the delays in the preparations for the referenda and called for the urgent establishment of the Abyei Referendum Commission and for the acceleration of the work of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission,” it added.

Ban meets senior official for talks ahead of critical referenda

UN News Centre 25/9/10 - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon held talks today with a top Sudanese

official as part of his ongoing efforts to try to ensure that two key referenda on self-determination in the African country are staged peacefully and on schedule next January.

Mr. Ban had a cordial and candid exchange with Sudanese Vice-President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha during their meeting today on the margins of the General Assembly at United Nations Headquarters in New York, according to information released by Mr. Ban's spokesperson.

The two officials focused their discussions on the key challenges facing Sudan as it implements the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the 2005 pact that ended the long-running civil war between north and south.

Mr. Ban and Mr. Taha agreed on the need for a fair and credible poll, to be held on the due date and free from intimidation and violence.

Yesterday the two men were among numerous high-level figures who took part in an international meeting at UN Headquarters on the situation in Sudan.

Participants issued a communiqué after the meeting in which they committed to supporting the Sudanese to achieve "sustainable peace... in the post-referenda period" and renewed the commitments of the CPA signatories to quickly resolving key post-referenda arrangements, such as border management, security, citizenship, migration issues and debt.

In their talks today Mr. Ban and Mr. Taha also discussed the ongoing conflict in the western Sudanese region of Darfur, and the prospect of the Doha talks yielding a lasting peace agreement.

CPA partners agree on agenda in NY

Ajras Al-Hurriya 26/9/10 – A source close to the CPA partners' negotiations in NY revealed that the NCP and the SPLM have agreed on an agenda for addressing post-referendum issues.

"If we reach tangible results, Kiir and Taha will return to Khartoum and some leading figures will stay behind in NY to discuss details of a final agreement," the source said.

Meanwhile, *Al-Akhbar* 26/9/10 reports that the US informed FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit that based on its assessment the referendum vote would be in favour of secession. According to SPLM SG Pagan Amum, the US Secretary of State Clinton who met with Kiir said that her country would guarantee to the South non-resumption of war and recognition of the nascent state. Amum said the meeting between Clinton and Kiir was transparent.

Amum also revealed that Kiir has informed SG Ban Ki-moon the obstruction caused by the NCP to the implementation of the PCA Award on Abyei area and urged him to intervene to assist in the formation of the Abyei Referendum Commission. He said the SG told Kiir he would mobilize the International Community to support the implementation of the agreement.

Sudanese diplomats scuffle at Iranian NYC event

AP New York, 24/09/10 - Sudanese diplomats scuffled with security workers at the hotel where the Iran delegation is staying during the U.N. General Assembly's annual meeting, police said Friday.

Iran hosted an event Thursday evening at the Hilton Manhattan East Hotel near the United Nations. Members of the Sudanese delegation wanted to speak to Iran officials, and about 30 went to the hotel. Some balked at going through the metal detector and started pushing and shoving each other, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said. It's not clear who started pushing or whether Iranian officials were involved in the scuffle.

They eventually started to pass through the detectors, but the area got too crowded and police got involved to clear people from the area, Kelly said. Two Sudanese men being ushered out tumbled down some steps with U.S. Secret Service agents and were arrested on charges of obstructing governmental administration.

They were released when it was determined they had diplomatic status, Kelly said. Under international law, diplomats generally have immunity from lawsuits or prosecution when visiting foreign countries. The arrested diplomats' names were not released.

An NYPD detective injured his thumb, but no other injuries or problems were reported. It's not clear why the Sudanese delegation wanted to meet with the Iranians.

Khartoum governor does not rule out insecurity after referendum results

Al-Akhbar 26/9/10 – in a briefing to the media yesterday, governor of Khartoum state, Abdul-Rahman Al-Khedir who is also the head of Khartoum state Security Coordination Committee, said all the areas where arms are suspected be cached have been put under observation. He did not rule out incidents of insecurity when results of the upcoming referendum are released but said security organs stand ready to provide protection to all civilians.

Abyei deputy chief rejects threats to quit the area

Sudan tribune website 25/9/10 - The Deputy Chief of Abyei Administration rejected a three-day ultimatum to leave the oil rich area launched by some civil society groups from Abyei this week.

Rahmah Abd-al-Rahman Al-Nur, disclosed yesterday he had received the threat in a letter delivered by a group of youth in Khartoum to his secretariat during his presence in the capital, Khartoum.

The letter indicated the need to end the representation of Messeriya tribe in all the executive and legislative organs in the area of Abyei.

"Such threats do not scare us, and we do not pay any attention to it," Rahamah said in statements to the government-sponsored SMC. He further accused the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) of instigating the move.

"There are no so-called civil society organizations in the area, but these entities are affiliated to the Sudan People's Liberation Movement," he said.

SPLA breakaway group calls for anti-secession marches

Akhir Lahza 26/9/10 – SPLA breakaway group which has joined the renegade general George Athor has warned of consequences of secession, calling on southern tribes to stage anti-secession demonstrations.

Group spokesperson Jibril Tab said secession without the consent of all southerners would mean resumption of war, warning of a Somali-like situation in the region. The group also called on the Misseriya not to relinquish their right to Abyei area.

Lakes state political parties agree to preach peaceful referendum

Sudan Tribune website 25/9/10 - The Governor of Lakes state, Chol Tong Mayay, has initiated forum of Southern Sudan political parties in the state to brainstorm on the way forward to achieve referendum in January 2011.

All nine Southern Sudan political parties operating in Lakes state on Wednesday merged together at Southern Sudan Logistic (SSL) to brainstorm on how referendum could be achieved in Lakes state without obstacle. The political forum was held under the theme “If not we, who? If not now, when?”

Speaking in (Lakes State Political Parties’ Referendum Forum), Governor Chol said that referendum is left with few days, and more effort is needed to backup Southern Sudan interest in achieving peaceful referendum in January 2011. The forums also agree to share state media for dissemination of information about referendum as well facilitation to be handled by the ruling parties, the SPLM.

He called upon other political parties to initiate other issues and should not only rely on the SPLM. Governor Chol said "we shall honor the spirit of those who scarified their lives for the sake of freedom by making sure that we bring Southerners freedom." He welcomed the ideas and contribution from others political parties that can lead to the building of a prosperous Lakes state.

He appealed to all nine political parties in Lakes state to omit the politics differences which divide the state and he ensured them to work for common demand of people of Southern Sudan to achieve new country in 2011.

Gabriel Kuc Abyei, leader of Sudan African National Congress party in Lakes state told forum that “South Sudan war has been so long in history – let us keep away from our local politics differences and let discourage united Sudan not to happen once again. We have suffered under [it].”

The Governor clarified that the meeting was an initiative of the government of Lakes State to invited political parties to brainstorm solution to help Southern Sudan in oppression. He also added that the nine political parties represented were to deliberate their role in the forthcoming Sudan referendum, and especially the stages involved, that is, registration, actual voting, and post referendum reality.

The members of the nine political parties resolved to form a body called “Lakes State political parties Referendum Coordination Forum.” The forum is tasked to carryout awareness of

referendum and to coordinate with civil society organizations.

Marko Chol Maciec, Lakes State Advisor for Political Affairs, stated that the body will “represent Southern political parties and civil society organizations on referendum awareness and preparation”.

Maciec affirmed that this body will “engage the Southern Sudan referendum commission on issues connected with the referendum,” besides educating Lakes State inhabitants regarding the referendum through rallies and the media, cooperating with law enforcement agencies to maintain security in the State, and preparing the people to choose either unity or separation at the referendum.

Peter Machar Agok, a member of Sudan ruling party, the National Congress Party (NCP) Political Bureau, said that the Southern Sudanese who are members of NCP are advocating for separation although they are overwhelmed by Khartoum power, adding that Northern Sudanese in SPLM are advocating for unity.

The political parties represented at the meeting included SPLM, NCP, ANC, NJM, USAP1 and USAP2, UDSF, UDSF Main stream and SANU.

Registration depends on completion of forms – Referendum Commission

Akhir Lahza 26/9/10 – Head of the Referendum Commission Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil said the Commission is holding a series of meetings to work out timetables for the referendum processes. He indicated that start of registration depends on completion of printing of the registration forms, a process he said might take five weeks, adding the forms might arrive by the end of October. He said 10500 personnel are needed to be recruited and trained for the registration process in the North and the South.

Meanwhile, Khalil said the Ministry of Finance might approve the referendum budget today or tomorrow after which it would be submitted to the Presidency for enforcement.

Other Highlights

GoSS plans to flush LRA out of southern Sudan

Al-Ayyam Juba, 26/09/10 –South Sudan Legislative Assembly Speaker James Wani Igga said that the GoSS has laid down plans to flush out the LRA from the region. Addressing a peace and reconciliation conference in Western Equatoria State, the Speaker said that the GoSS intends to bring an end to the problem in Western Equatoria. He called on the people of Western Equatoria to cooperate with authorities to help curb the LRA threat.

\$3 billion East Africa-South Sudan railroad project to soon start

The Citizen Juba, 26/09/10 – A 725km railroad project linking Juba with Gulu in northern Uganda and Tororo in the south-east of the country will soon start, according to the New Sudan Foundation that coordinates the project.

The project, estimated at \$3 billion is expected to open the region to the east African market and

would have the potential to link the Sudan side of the railroad to Wau and connect the region to the other neighbouring countries of Kenya and Ethiopia.

Sudanese war planes bomb South Darfur villages - rebels

Sudan Tribune website 23/9/10 - Sudanese military warplanes bombed during the last two days villages in southern and eastern Jebel Marra killing 18 people, the rebel Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) said on Thursday.

Nimir Abdel Rahman, spokesperson of the SLA led by Abdel Wahid Al-Nur said military Antonov bombarded several areas in Jebel Marra and burned Harika village northern Draibat in South Darfur state.

The bombing, which started on Wednesday and resumed today, killed 18 people including three children, four women and eight old men, he further said.

The Sudanese army bombs regularly the positions of the rebel group which is not part of the Doha peace talks.

The government also for the first time since six months allowed UNICEF and World Health Organization and aid groups as the French MDM to reach Jebel Marra as part of this new policy aiming to build confidence and to have a new approach with the civilians.

However, Nimir said the army forces in Draibat prevented UNICEF and MDM from supplying areas under rebels' control with school material and medication.

"They stopped a convey heading from Nyala to Fina in Kadmir," Nimir said.

The rebel military official said the humanitarian situation in the region is very critical. He further urged the international community on the eve of a special meeting on Sudan in New York to put pressure on the Sudanese government to allow the distribution of food and medicine in the region.

He also said the international community has to press Khartoum to withdraw Ugandan rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) from the region. The SLA spokesperson said the LRA fighters are in Kanja and Radoom.

Nimir declared they are willing to cooperate with Uganda, Southern Sudan, Central African Republic, and Congo to face the danger coming from the LRA rebels in the region.

Sudan's labor union slams ICC conference to be held in Qatar

Sudan Tribune website 23/9/10 - The Sudanese labor Union issued a strongly worded statement criticizing the hosting of a conference on the International Criminal Court (ICC) by the Arab Gulf state of Qatar.

Last month the Qatari Attorney General Ali Bin Fetais Al-Marri met with the ICC's registrar Silvana Arbia in The Hague where they discussed the conference originally scheduled for early October that is co-sponsored by the Arab League.

However, Sudan along with other countries has pressed Qatar to cancel the conference during the Arab League ministerial meeting held in Cairo this month. Qatar refused to call off the conference but agreed to postpone it as a compromise.

Sudan's labor union called the ICC conference an attempt to infiltrate the ranks of the "honest people who refused the ICC as a tool of Zionism imperialist arrogance...what the ICC is doing today contradicts the principle of the sovereignty and independence of States and also contrary to international law, and seeks to make presidents, emirs and rulers a tool in the hands of International imperialism".

The pro-government body described the conference as an attempt to segregate the supportive positions of the African nations from that of the Arab League. It called on the Qatari Emir to reconsider the hosting of the conference and also urged Arab organizations to take a similar stance.

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