

28 Nov 2010

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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

Referendum Watch

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Highlights

Two SPLA soldiers killed in a third air raid in Kiir Adem

Al-Sahafa 28/11/10 – SPLA announced that two SPLA soldiers were killed in a third air attack launched by SAF aircraft on its position in Kiir Adem area north of Bahr el Ghazal.

“On 19 November an Antenov aircraft attack our base in the area. Another helicopter launched a second attack on the following day and two aircraft (Antenov and helicopter) launched a third air attack yesterday killing two SPLA soldiers,” SPLA spokespersons Maj. Gen. Philip Aqueir revealed to the New Media Nile.

Meanwhile, *Sudan Tribune website* 26/11/10 reported that Senior officials from the south Sudan’s governing party the SPLM, on Friday, commended the decision by General Salva Kiir Mayardit; President of the semi autonomous regional government to not retaliate against an air attack the south says was carried out by the northern army on Wednesday.

The southern army - the SPLA – says that six people were injured in Kiir Adem, a village in South Sudan, approximately 45 km north of Gokmachar, administrative headquarters for Aweil North County in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State.

On Thursday, Kiir, who is the commander in chief of the SPLA forces rejected calls for a reprisal attack asking the southern military command council not to be driven by emotions. He said that SPLM – south Sudan’s ruling party – was committed not be responsible for returning the country back to war.

But the spokesperson of the Sudan Armed Forces, Al-Sawarmi Khaled denied the attack took place and renewed accusations that the SPLA are supporting Darfur rebel group the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). He further said that harboring Darfur rebels is a clear violation to the security arrangements agreed in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

According to a senior official who did not want to be named Kiir made the statement in an emergence security meeting of the southern army’s military command council involving SPLA chief of General Staff, General James Hoth Mai and minister of SPLA affairs, Nhial Deng Nhial and other top military personnel at his residence in Juba on Thursday.

On Friday Dhieu Mathok Diing Wol, a senior member of the SPLM told Sudan Tribune from the regional capital of Juba, that he backed Kiir’s position.

Mathok said the current situation in the Sudan with the south approaching a referendum in January on possible independence required people to be focused on efforts encouraging peace initiatives.

There are just over seven weeks until the vote, which will likely see the south secede. Mathok said that holding a credible referendum was essential for peace.

"The remaining days should be properly made use of in settling the outstanding issues peacefully and avoid adopting reprisal attempts which would not be in the interest of our people. Our people have suffered a lot in similar manner and are tired of war. They need peace. This is what we should support not war," said Mathok.

The official asked those interested in war to use ballots describing it as one of the best and cheapest ways to fight the war with an enemy. "I know [the] majority of our people do not like attacks without retaliations. Majority would support voices calling for retaliations but I do not think it would do us anything good than simply accepting becoming part of the plans and programs of those who created these situations. The best thing we should do is to retaliate through ballot papers come the 9th January 2011 and avoid behaving like them now," said Mathok.

He said supported position taken by the president Salva Kiir Mayardit describing it as the best way to handle what he described as a "complex situation".

"I agree with the president because this situation needs such position. It does not need emotions. It needs our people to control their tempers and follow all steps being taken by the SPLM leaderships under our president General Salva Kiir Mayardit. He knows what we are after, the everlasting peace," he said.

Bol Makueng, head of the SPLM secretariat for information, culture and communications in the southern sector, also told Sudan Tribune that his party has taken clear position.

"The position of the SPLM leadership under General Salva Kiir Mayardit is clear and we have never minced our words again nor we intend do any either. We have not changed. Our position remains commitment to peaceful implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement without resorting to any other violence means which would lead to conflict because we do not want to be the first to take the country back to war. We have said this time and again in number of occasions," said Makueng.

Makueng also claimed that their partner, the National Congress Party is looking for ways to abrogate the CPA.

"If you have been following current political developments in Khartoum you will definitely find that our partner, the National Congress Party is looking for means to abrogate comprehensive peace agreement like they have done to the other agreements such as the Fashoda and Khartoum peace agreements which they signed with some southern political leaders in the past. The reason being that they know they are going to lose greatly when South leaves. So, it's not wise following them," he said.

He said that those advocating a military response may not know what war is like.

"We know advantage and disadvantage of war. This is why we appear reluctant because we put interest of our people as first priority because we know the 9th of January about few weeks away. So we must all put collective efforts to seeing this day becomes and answer to what our people need. Therefore, he said, we must try to avoid anything that would trigger return to war because it is obvious that national congress party and those who would wish the south to constantly remain in the northern bondage wants a retaliatory attack to light the flames of

another prolonged war", Makueng said.

However, Awach Anei Wal, an intellectual from Northern Bahr el Ghazal blamed the south Sudan government for not releasing a statement on the incident.

"The fact that government of south [Sudan] did not release a statement or anything official condemning this incident is quite alarming. It seems that the leadership does not even care about its people, the people of Mading Aweil," Wal said.

Sudan's NCP says it is prepared for "Plan B" against the South

Sudan Tribune.com 26/11/10 - The leading member of north Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP), Salah Gosh, who is also the presidential adviser for security affairs, warned the semi-autonomous South of repercussions if it violates the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

Gosh fulminated against the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in south Sudan, accusing it of being an organization which receives its orders from Washington.

According to a report published on Thursday by the pro-government daily *Akhir-Lahza*, Gosh was addressing a public rally at Karima town in the Northern state when he accused the SPLM of refusing to sign agreements relating to post-referendum arrangements under the influence of the U.S.

The presidential adviser also claimed that the U.S. had asked the SPLM not to cede the central contested area of Abyei, saying that the Washington has "hijacked" the ex-Southern rebel group.

Gosh warned that Abyei would remain part of the north whether through a bilateral agreement, the referendum or through war and peace.

The NCP figure said that the SPLM was now executing "plan B" which aimed at establishing a state in the north and then besieging it with the crises of Darfur, Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan. He said that "plan A", which failed, was to topple the NCP through the April elections.

Gosh said that the NCP was ready for its own "plan B" should the SPLM violate the CPA cautioning that the "battle smoke would cover the south and not the north."

Salah Gosh even made an apathetic statement about south Sudan secession, saying that separation would not be evil and if it did happen, "we would turn to building the south and in that case, God will have removed the burden of developing and creating infrastructure in the south."

Sudanese official accuses Juba of planning to topple Khartoum government

Sudan Tribune.com 27/11/10 - A Sudanese presidential adviser accused on Thursday the southern Sudan ruling Party, Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) of planning to topple the government of President Omer Al-Bashir.

Abdallah Massar, told a meeting with local political leaderships held in Nyala, capital of South

Darfur state that the SPLM plans to undertake a military action aiming to topple the Islamic regime in Khartoum.

According to the official SUNA, the Presidential adviser who leads a splinter faction of Party Umma said this hostile operation would start next March and with attacks from southern Blue Nile, Abyei and Nuba Mountains in southern Kordofan.

Gahzi Salah Eddin, who is in charge of Darfur file urged the southern Sudan ruling party "to left her hand from Darfur conflict" saying that the role of the SPLM in Darfur was always negative since the start of the conflict.

Also the spokesperson of the Sudan Armed Forces said that the SPLM is harboring JEM troops. He added that such support violate the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the security arrangements in particular.

Massar called on the NCP and the other political forces in the north to prepare to confront the military aggression planned by the SPLM.

President Al-Bashir, VP Taha to tour southern states

Al-Ahdath 28/11/10 – Mandour Al-Mahdi, a leading figure in the National Unity Support Council, said the Council plans to intensify activities to preserve unity of the country.

He also revealed that President Al-Bashir and Vice-President Ali Osman Taha intend to tour all southern states toward that end.

Percentage of registration is 7% in the North, 22% in the South – NCP

Al-Sahafa 28/11/10 – NCP official Mohamed Mandour Al-Mahdi has said that the percentage of registration in the North stands at 7% and in the South is 22%. He said his party welcomes the extension of the voter registration period by one week.

However, *Al-Rai Al-Aam* 28/11/10 reports SSRC Spokesperson George Makuer as saying that 48,000 out of a target of 27162 voters have so far been registered in the North, about 17.5%. In the South, he said the number of registered voters exceeds a million which is about 35%.

Meanwhile, SPLM SG Pagan Amum has accused the NCP of tampering with the voter registration books, saying the NCP is forcing southerners in the North to register against their will.

NCP accuses SPLA of detaining its leaders in Equatoria state

Al-Ayyam 28/11/10 – The NCP has accused the SPLA of launching a wide campaign of detentions against its leaders in the South. It said the SPLA detained NCP youth secretary in Maridi in West Equatoria state John Samuel on Friday just hours after the detention of another NCP official in West Equatoria Christina William. NCP member of the youth secretariat in the area Salah Al-Tahir was also detained.

An NCP official said the campaign of detentions against NCP leaders in the South is intended to prevent them from campaigning for unity.

Meanwhile, *Al-Intibaha* 28/11/10 reports the NCP has accused both the SSRC and the SPLM of

hampering ongoing voter registration, citing revocation by the SSRC of a circular issued for removing obstacles hindering registration besides SPLM intimidation of southerners to prevent them from registering.

Sudan extends referendum voter registration by a week

AFP 26/11/10 - The SSRC said on Friday it has extended voter registration by one week, but that the date of the plebiscite remains the same.

"Southern Sudanese people now have until the 8th of December to register," commission member Achier Deng told reporters in the southern capital Juba.

"The time frame has been revised but it will not compromise the date of January 9," Deng added of polling day.

"The time frame is tight, but there are days here and there that can be saved," he said, explaining that the registration period had been extended for "technical reasons." ...

Radio Miraya website 26/11/10 reports spokesperson of the SSRC, George Makir Benjamin, as saying that the decision has nothing to do with the requests of some political parties, including the National Congress Party.

Meanwhile, the SPLM maintained that the extension may affect the voting dateline on the 9th of January. SPLM member Agok Makur said that any changes in the schedules would require consent by the CPA partners and should be blessed by the Presidency.

The Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) has granted employees in the public sector five days off with effect from last Friday to enable them to register for the 2011 Referendum.

GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit appealed on Thursday to all government employees and all citizens to register and participate in the upcoming referendum.

Sudan's Bashir to attend Africa-EU summit - Mbeki

AFP 28/11/10 - Sudan's president, under an international arrest warrant over genocide and war crimes in Darfur, will be at the Africa-EU summit in Libya, South Africa's former president Thabo Mbeki said Saturday.

"President [Omar al-]Bashir has to go there for that summit which will be followed immediately by the summit meeting of the peace and security council of the African Union," Mbeki said after talks with Bashir...

Leaders of Europe and Africa jet in to Libya for the meeting Monday and Tuesday, to discuss economic development but the problem of illegal immigration from Europe to Africa also likely to be discussed.

Presidency discuss Abyei problem

Sudan Radio 28/11/10 – The Presidency Establishment discussed yesterday progress of the CPA implementation and the pending issues with a focus on Abyei. The meeting was attended by President Al-Bashir, FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit, VP Ali Osman Taha and AUHIP Chair Thabo

Mbeki who presented a proposal to the Presidency for resolving the problem over the territory.

Mbeki told reporters following the meeting that the two CPA parties would study the proposal and respond next week but declined to elaborate about the proposal.

Misseriya preparing for war

Al-Intibaha 28/11/10 – The Misseriya tribe is reportedly mobilizing its fighters to battle the SPLA which is expected to enter the Abyei territory. Head of the Misseriya Union Mohamed Khatir Jumma said the tribe was closely monitoring SPLA movements. He sent a strong message to the CPA parties, saying “the tribe will not accept deals that compromise their rights” adding that “war would be their option to preserve their rights to their birthplace”.

Deputy Head of Border Demarcation says committee under pressure

Al-Akhbar 28/11/10 – Deputy Head of the border demarcation committee Reec Digoule, in an interview to the newspaper, has painted a grim picture of the situation within the committee, saying external quarters are hampering the work of the committee. He said the head of the committee once told him that he was under pressure and had it not been for his resistance of those pressures, the committee would not have existed in its present form. He pointed out lack of harmony within the committee, adding that administrative differences have turned into technical differences. He said “the NCP is saying only 20% of issues are still contentious but we insist that 75% of issues are still controversial”.

GoSS launches air, land & river transport for returnees

Radio Miraya website 26/11/10 - The South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission has launched a repatriation program by air, land and river transportation for returnees from the North.

Upon the arrival of 80 returnees at Juba airport on Thursday, the commission's chairman, William Chan Achuil, said they target 2,000 IDP's to be transported by air from Khartoum.

More than 39 families returned in Wau from Northern Darfur town of Al-Fashir voluntarily last week. The representative of the Returnees Garang Awar Achuil, told Radio Miraya that the return was the initiative of the returnees and the government Western Bahr-el-Ghazal State.

Chief Achuil urged the international community, organizations and local governments to repatriate Southern Sudanese who would like to return from the North.

Other Highlights

Darfur mediation meets SRSG Menkerios

Al-Khartoum 28/11/10 – Qatari state minister for foreign affairs Ahmed Ben Abdulah and UN-AU mediator Jibril Bassole, who arrived in Khartoum as part of efforts to resolve the Darfur issue, began their meetings in Khartoum with SRSG Haile Menkerios to review ongoing efforts to reach a just, comprehensive and last solution for Darfur. The mediation will hold similar meetings in Khartoum before proceeding to Darfur states and Chad.

According to *Sudan Tribune.com* 27/11/10, the Joint Chief Mediator Djibril Bassole and the

Qatari state minister for foreign affairs Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud held today a series of meetings in Khartoum before to commence a three day tour in Darfur.

However, the mediation intends to carry out a large consultation with the different parties including the civil society in Darfur, and the different Sudanese political forces. It also seeks to bring to the negotiating table the two main rebel groups who are not part of the talks.

Today, minister Al-Mahmoud and chief mediator Bassole held a long meeting with President Omer Ahmed Al-Bashir attended by the head of the government delegation to the peace talks Amin Hassan Omer.

The mediators discussed with Bashir their ideas about the expected peace deal as they seek to get some concessions from the government on the power sharing issue. Khartoum refuses to establish one region in Darfur. It also says would not encourage regions to claim positions at the presidency while the rebels ask a vice-president position for Darfur.

The mediation spoke about its vision and ideas about how to approach the final stage of the negotiation process and the efforts exerted to bring to the negotiating table the rebel movements that reject the peace process, Amin told reporters after the meeting.

For his part, Al-Mahmoud stated "We asked (Al-Bashir) to help us to reach the desired just peace for the people of Darfur". He further added they explained their point of view on the peace process describing the meeting as "positive and productive".

He also stressed they are "assured of the government's seriousness to reach peace in Darfur" without elaborating on the details of their discussions with the Sudanese president.

The visiting delegation also met with the leaders of political forces including the former prime minister, Sadiq Al-Mahdi, who suggested holding a national conference on Darfur.

They also met with Hassan Al-Turabi the leader of the opposition Popular Congress Party and Mubarak Al-Mahdi leader of Umma Reform and Renewal party.

They met with the head of the hybrid peacekeeping mission UNAMID Ibrahim Gambari who discussed the peace process with the two mediators.

In El-Fasher, The joint mediation will discuss the peace process with the state government, the state legislature, representatives of the civil society and displaced people and the leadership of the UNAMID.

SPLA relocates 75 JEM wounded soldiers in presence of Khalil

Al-Intibaha 28/11/10 – The SPLA relocated yesterday 75 JEM wounded soldiers to a new hospital in “Kedeibo” area situated 20 km east of Kapoeta in presence of JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim and his aides.

Meanwhile, the Sudanese Government has strongly warned the SPLM against harbouring leaders of Darfur rebel movements who oppose the peace process.

Presidential Adviser Amin Hassan Omer stressed the need for prudence and forethought on the part of the SPLM, saying the Government is determined to raise the issue at meetings of the six-member committee and the joint chief of staff.

Detained SPLM-DC members released in Malakal

Radio Miraya website 26/11/10 - Authorities in Malakal, Upper Nile State, have released five members of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement - Democratic Change (SPLM-DC), who were in detention since April.

SPLM-DC spokesperson, Peter Adok, says the move is in accordance with the proceedings of the recent South-South dialogue in Juba. He added that the released members are in good health.

Russian made cargo plane bound for Sudan crashes in Karachi

The Nation on the web 28/11/10 - A Russian-made cargo plane crashed soon after take off from Karachi airport in the small hours of Sunday, an official of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said. He said that IL-78 Russian-made aircraft of Sunways Airline of Russia with a crew of eight had taken off from Karachi airport for Khartoum, Sudan when it came down immediately after take off. He said the Control Tower informed that soon after take off the cargo plane caught fire. The CAA official further stated that the plane fell on an under-construction building in Dalmia area near the airport.

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