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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

Sudan closes borders with Libya

Local dailies 29/6/10 – Sudan Government on Monday decided to close borders with Libya as from 1st July until further notice.

According to **Sudan Tribune website** 28/6/10, the Sudanese interior ministry, which made an abrupt announcement, said the closure is a measure to preserve the lives and property of citizens from both countries.

Ibrahim Mahmood Hamid, the Sudanese Minister of Interior issued decree 203 containing the directive that will go into force on 1st July.

A statement by the ministry said that the purpose of this decision is to allow for the restructuring and deployment of police units from various divisions including immigration, traffic, customs and border patrols.

Passage on a highway to the boundary "has become subjected to threats and attacks from rebels and outlaws who commit robberies, extortion and imposing unlawful fees and levies," the statement said.

It is not clear if the decision is linked to the growing tension with Libya over refusal to expel JEM leader who arrived there last month after Chad barred him from entering the country.

A Sudanese official suggested that Khartoum is concerned that JEM rebel chief may attempt to cross into Darfur to join his forces through the Libyan borders.

An unnamed source at the Libyan foreign ministry told official news agency (JANA) that his country "fully understands" Sudan's decision which he said was made "for obvious reasons particularly that the Darfur crisis is still raging".

Reuters 28/6/10 reported that the announcement comes a day after Sudan said it had called on Libya to expel JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim, accusing him of making statements undermining peace efforts in Darfur and threatening attacks on Khartoum.

If Libya agrees to Sudan's request, one possible exit route for Ibrahim and his followers would be an overland trek across Libya's border, straight into the northwestern tip of Sudan's Darfur region.

Chad, on Libya's southern border, has already refused to take the JEM leader and any offer of a new home in Egypt could spark a diplomatic rift between Khartoum and Cairo.

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Muawia Khaled told **Al-Sudani** that there is no crisis between the two countries, saying the closure of the borders is a precautionary

measure.

Government calls on Washington to deal with Sudan as one state

Al-Rai Al-Aam 29/6/10 – The Sudanese Government has criticized the US for intent to lift sanctions from the South and maintain them on the North. Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Muawia Khaled has called on Washington for unconditional lifting of sanctions imposed on Sudan, saying Washington should deal with Sudan as one state until the upcoming referendum is conducted.

Meanwhile, Khaled has praised China's support to Sudan's efforts to achieve stability and peace.

SPLA minister says South Sudan security situation is normal

Sudan Tribune website 28/6/10 - The minister for SPLA and veteran affairs in the regional government of southern Sudan, Nhial Deng Nhial, on Monday described the security situation in the South as normal, stressing that the region continues to enjoy peaceful co-existence with its neighboring countries.

In an interview with *Sudan Tribune*, minister Deng, however, said that the ongoing political unrest and underground rebels' activities in most parts of the region do not pose serious threats to the conduct of upcoming referendum scheduled to take place in 2011.

"Yes there are security concerns in some parts of the region but they are being taken care of by the security forces. SPLA has increased operations in Western Equatoria against elements operating in the name of LRA and are paying much attention to other areas where there are similar concerns," said minister Nhial.

Many say recent military engagements between the SPLA forces and forces loyal to General Athor have claimed lives of innocent people and denied concentration of the local population on farms.

The minister said the situation at Jonglei-Upper Nile states borders remains delicate but the army has reinforced security by strengthening patrol along suspected borderlines as well as escorting civilians crossing into either areas in Jonglei or Upper Nile who ask for help from SPLA forces in the area.

The ongoing operation involving over two divisions with additional mobile forces intended to facilitate efforts to combat attempts to create instability in the state, have negatively impacted farming activities in the southern Sudan. Such activities hinder developmental plans as the region continues to see the inflow of smuggle in small arms and light weapons.

Also illegal arms continue to be imported into the region by groups officials have described as "enemies of peace" and southern stability colluding with unscrupulous elements to carryout criminal activities especially in areas along the borders.

The minister, however, maintained that such incidents had declined compared to

previous years and that the army, in collaboration with other organs, was making a close follow up on security situation especially at the borderlines as the region heads towards conducting southern referendum in 2011 to ensure peaceful polls.

He further said that efforts to address elections differences are being exerted as best alternatives to settling all political grievances before referendum takes place. He praised his government to have done a lot in the transformation of the SPLA into a conventional army during the last five years.

"The government of southern Sudan has done a lot in the last five years and it will continue to do so in strengthening the army through training, modern equipment and tools as well as improvement of soldiers' remunerations," the minister stressed, adding more efforts would be taken during the 2010/2011 fiscal year.

However, views and voices from opposition camps in southern Sudan urged the government to introduce laws, policies, and regulations governing regional forces with a view to building a strong non-partisan army.

There are also calls to improve soldiers' working conditions.

People flee Bor to Lakes State for fear of attacks

Miraya FM 28/6/10 - The Secretary of Relief and Rehabilitation Commission in Awerial County of Lakes State, John Pareece said that over 12,000 people from Bor have moved and settled in the County for fear of attacks from the neighboring Counties and General Athor's group.

Pareece said the number of IDPS have increased to over twenty thousand including eleven thousand, displaced last year due to tribal clashes. He said humanitarian intervention is urgently required as IDPs lack food and medical facilities.

Pareece said that the recent floods caused by heavy rainfalls have destroyed the cultivated crops, adding that local authorities expect shortage of food as well as spread of unknown diseases in the area.

Hundreds of traditional leaders discuss insecurity in Lakes state

Sudan Tribune website 28/6/10 - Over one hundred traditional leaders from four counties of Lakes state are holding a meeting on how to contain cattle raiding and internal conflicts among their respective communities as well as with their neighboring states.

Traditional leaders comprising of paramount chiefs, sub-chiefs and Gelweng youth leaders from the Counties of Rumbek Central, Rumbek East, Cueibet and Rumbek North will hold 3-day closed-door meeting.

Rumbek Central County commissioner, Dut Makoi Kuok, who is also an organizer of the meeting, told Sudan Tribune that "the meeting is discussing three items including cattle raiding, cold blood killings and neighboring states hostility toward Lakes state".

However, Dut Makoi acknowledged that internal robbery has increased in Lakes state with people looted on roads. He said that this meeting would iron out all expectations to be given solutions to ending all atrocities committed through crimes.

SPLM requests increase of oil revenue share in Southern Kordofan

Miraya FM 28/6/10 -The SPLM in Southern Kordofan has called for an increase of its share of oil revenues, currently at 2 per cent and allocated to the State, as part of popular consultation arrangement. SPLM Secretary General in Southern Kordofan, Arnold Lodi said that the state must get nothing less than 50 per cent of oil revenues.

Lodi said that the current percentage would not be acceptable in future, warning that there has been neglect of what he described as the "demands" of the people of the state.

Meanwhile, the National Congress Party (NCP) in Southern Kordofan state rejected such demands saying that it is a breach of the provisions of the CPA.

The NCP's Deputy Chairperson in Southern Kordofan Muhai Al-Din Al-Tom said that it was not possible to redistribute shares of oil revenues as part of the popular consultations arrangement, without endorsement by Khartoum.

He added that such demands can be deliberated in the upcoming State parliament sessions.

NCP and SLM fail to agree on participation in government

Ajras Al-Hurriya 29/6/10 – The NCP and the SLM (Minni Minnawi) yesterday failed to reach an agreement with regard to the latter's participation in the central government and in the three Darfur state governments in accordance with the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). The SLM/MM has called on the NCP to make its position clear on the DPA.

However, other newspapers report that SLM/MM participation in the government will be announced within two days.

Sudan counts on Arab support for humanitarian assistance in Darfur

Xinhua 29/6/10 - Sudan government counts on the growing Arab humanitarian support to cover the basic humanitarian needs and provide humanitarian assistance for the people affected by the conflict in Sudan's Darfur region.

As part of the Arab League (AL) development and rehabilitation projects at the voluntary return areas in Darfur, an agreement was signed in Khartoum on Monday between the Omani Charitable Organization and the Sudanese Humanitarian Aid Commission to establish a new model village in South Darfur State at a cost of 1 million U.S. dollars.

"The Arab assistance for Darfur achieves many gains and greatly helps in making a success the voluntary return of internally displaced persons (IDPs)," said Sudanese Humanitarian Aid Commissioner Suleiman Abdel-Rahman Suleiman when addressing the signing ceremony here Monday.

"We appreciate the wide Arab response to provide the humanitarian needs in Darfur, we hope this Arab role will continue, particularly under stability of the humanitarian indicators and improvement of the security situation in the region," he added.

Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman in Khartoum Abdullah Bin Rashid Al Midailwi, on his part, affirmed that his country would continue provision of all humanitarian needs for the Darfurians.

Arab countries and charitable societies and organizations fund establishment of around 100 model villages in the three Darfur States (North, South and West Darfur States) to accommodate the returnees from the IDP camps in the region and from the refugees' camps inside neighboring Chad.

Pre-referendum Watch

Sudanese parliament endorses members of referendum body

Sudan Tribune website 28/6/10/local dailies 29/6/10 – the Sudanese National Assembly endorsed the appointment of the Referendum Commission members, two weeks after an objection raised by the SPLM against one of its members.

The two Houses, in a setting chaired by the deputy speaker of the assembly Adam Ahmed Mousa, Monday approved the appointment of the chairperson and the members of the Referendum Commission.

The 9-member commission will be chaired by Mohammed Ibrahim Khalil, former foreign minister, and his deputy is Chan Rek Madut, Deputy Attorney General in the Government of Southern Sudan.

The other members are Paulino Wanawilla, Tariq Osman, Deng Awur, Suad Ibrahim Eisa Juwal Shuwang, Setti Abyei and Kamal Ali Mohamed Saleh.

The commission has to start voter registration and prepare electoral lists ahead of the landmark vote in January 2010 that could see the southerners decide to create a new state in Africa.

CPA partners fail to agree on Abyei referendum commission

Al-Sahafa 29/6/10 – The NCP and the SPLM will hold a broad-based meeting tomorrow in Juba to be chaired by GoNU VP Ali Osman Taha and GoSS VP Riek Machar for debate on post-referendum issues.

Reliable sources said Taha would fly to Juba Wednesday leading a high-level GoNU delegation comprising over 25 members including Dr. Ghazi Salahu-eldin, Salah Gosh, Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie, Idriss Abdul Gadir, Mutrif Siddiq and Mohamed Mukhtar for two-day talks with the SPLM officials on issues of referendum, border demarcation and other pending CPA benchmarks. Reportedly, Juba is making preparations to host such a broad meeting.

Meanwhile, a committee set up by the two partners has failed to endorse membership of the Abyei referendum commission due to the NCP's rejection of a member nominated by the SPLM. SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum told reporters in Juba yesterday that the two partners reached a deadlock on the formation of Abyei referendum commission, saying the SPLM has suggested that the UN should run the Abyei referendum. He revealed that the two partners agreed to request UN support to the conduct of the referendum in accordance with its mandate, adding the SPLM also proposed that Abyei oil revenues be deposited in special account with the UN. Amum said the joint committee would resume meetings on Abyei referendum commission next Monday. However, *Ajras Al-Hurriya* reports Amum as saying that the SPLM proposed that Abyei Area be administered by UN until the two partners reach an agreement.

According to *Al-Rai Al-Aam*, the NCP and the SPLM decided to hold a meeting with UN next Monday to request its support to the conduct of southern Sudan referendum.

South's referendum should not create panic - Machar tells US official

Sudan tribune website 27/6/10 – GoSS VP Dr. Riek Machar Teny, said the upcoming referendum on the future of the region should not create panic in the minds of people in both North and South, despite being a decisive moment and concern among the Sudanese people.

He said even if the referendum would result in independence of the South, as popular opinion of the people of Southern Sudan currently indicates, the two parties and their populations in their respective regions should instead focus on building confidence and good relations based on common interests and mutual cooperation.

Machar made the remarks during his meeting with the visiting US Assistant Secretary of States for African Affairs, Johnny Carson. The meeting discussed, inter alia, the ongoing preparations for the conduct of the referendum in Southern Sudan and Abyei and the forthcoming US government support toward the exercises.

He briefed the American top White House diplomat in charge of African Affairs on the work of the Southern Sudan Referendum Taskforce under his chairmanship. The Taskforce, he said, is organized into three sub-committees. These are on the conduct of the referendum, the post-referendum arrangements and the post-2011 governance in Southern Sudan.

Machar added that the issue of the referendum and North-South borders should not create panic, or a situation like that of Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998, saying the two parties should instead positively use such political events and post-referendum arrangement as a common means to build future good relations.

He added that trade, social interactions and movement of people across the borders will continue, given their common resources "like the flow of the Nile."

He stressed that the two parties should not see the borders as barriers, saying it is important that the two regions maintain soft borders. Machar argued that using the

borders as barriers can easily cause panic, given the fact that there are southerners in the North as well as northerners in the South who may want to continue to live in their respective places of residence or move across the borders even in the event of secession.

"We don't want to create panic with immediate split between the North and the South. That is why it is important that we also discuss the issue of citizenship," he said.

During a lecture organized last week at the University of Juba, Machar pointed out that if referendum resulted into secession, Southern Sudanese living in the North would lose their citizenship unless an agreement was reached between the two parties to allow them to maintain their citizenship right. He further added that this would, however, be different from a secession which would result into the dissolution of the current Sudanese state and formation of new independent states.

He appealed to the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs for the need to provide logistical and financial support including expertise to train Southern Sudan police to ensure success in the conduct of a free and fair referendum as well as assist in civic education.

The US diplomat, Carson, expressed his country's readiness to work with the two parties and the international community and ensure the conduct of a free and fair referendum in which the people of Southern Sudan will decide their destiny, adding that his government is going to upgrade the mandate of its Consulate in the Southern Sudan capital, Juba, and coordinate the US efforts, as he introduced the new Consul General, Berry Walkley.

NCP calls for fair, transparent and internationally-monitored referendum

Al-Tayar 29/6/10 – NCP leading figure Ibrahim Ghandour did not rule out the upcoming referendum encountering obstacles. "Anything could happen but we are looking forward to the conduct of a fair, transparent and internationally-monitored referendum". Reacting to SPLM Pagan Amum's statement to the effect that the North should prepare to accept a neighbouring state, Ghandour said, "it is a normal statement because the right to self-determination is guaranteed in the constitution but the separatists should also accept unity if the referendum result confirms it".