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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

## Referendum Monitor

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# Highlights

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## **US presses Sudan ahead of talks on fate of Abyei**

**Reuters** 1/10/10 - Teams from north and south Sudan will meet in Ethiopia on Sunday in a bid to reach a deal on the oil-rich region of Abyei, a key hurdle ahead of January referendums on the future of Africa's largest country, the U.S. State Department said on Friday.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke to Sudan's Vice President Ali Osman Taha and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zanawi ahead of Sunday's talks, which seek to determine how to run a January plebiscite in which residents of Abyei can decide whether to join the north or the south, said State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley.

Clinton urged Khartoum "to come to Addis Ababa on Sunday prepared to negotiate and to make sure that the negotiating team will have specific authority to reach agreement on Abyei," Crowley said.

The Obama administration's special envoy for Sudan, Scott Gration, and Ambassador Princeton Lyman, a veteran US diplomat recently drafted to help mediate the talks, will also participate in the Addis Ababa discussions, Crowley said.

Meles, who will host the talks, pledged to Clinton that he would do "everything he could to encourage the parties to reach an agreement on Abyei," Crowley said.

"We are very conscious of the fact that we have just about 100 days remaining (before the referendum), and Abyei is one of the central issues that has to be resolved before we can hope for a successful referendum early in 2011," he said.

US officials said negotiators for both sides met in New York last month and reached a preliminary agreement on the framework for the vote in Abyei, a key oil-producing region that both sides claim.

The two sides have been deadlocked over membership in the region's referendum commission, while borders have also not been demarcated following threats by the nomadic Arab Misseriya in the north.

## **Foreign Minister calls on international community to meet their pledges**

**Al-Rai Al-Aam** (Khartoum) 3/10/10 – Foreign Minister Ali Ahmed Karti has called on the international community to honour their pledges towards the CPA and expressed Sudan Government's readiness to conduct the referendum on schedule.

Minister Karti also said that the Sudanese Government would accept the result of the upcoming referendum provided the process meets the conditions of integrity and reflects the free will of the southern Sudanese.

Karti made the remarks at a meeting with visiting Undersecretary of the German Ministry of

## **NCP calls on Kiir to withdraw his support for South Sudan separation**

*Sudan Tribune website* 2/10/10 - The National Congress Party today called on the chairman of Sudan People's Liberation Movement and head of the Southern Sudan government (SPLM) to withdraw his statements in favor of the independence of the semi-autonomous region.

Speaking following his return from the USA where he attended a high level meeting on the referendum implementation, Kiir who is also the First Vice President of the Sudan said personally he would opt for Southern Sudan separation if he has to choose between unity or independence.

Rabie Abdelati, NCP senior official, in statements to *Reuters*, rejected Kiir's remarks supporting separation of southern Sudan saying it is "totally unacceptable". "He has gone against the CPA which said the parties should work together for unity," Abdelati emphasized.

The senior NCP official who participated in the negotiations of the peace agreement called on Kiir to withdraw the comments and repeated earlier threats from NCP ministers that the party might not recognize the referendum if the SPLM tried to force a separation vote.

Abdelati accused the SPLM chairman of trying to influence the vote of southerners in the upcoming referendum.

Kiir's support for Southern Sudan separation come weeks before a meeting of the SPLM leadership where the party has to decide on the way forward and determine its stance on the referendum which should take place in January 2011.

According to *Reuters* 2/10/10, South Sudan president Salva Kiir gave his strongest hint yet he would vote to declare independence from the north in a looming referendum, stoking tensions 100 days ahead of the sensitive plebiscite.

Kiir told thousands of supporters in the southern capital Juba he would not vote for unity as nothing had been done to make unity attractive, increasing pressure on already deeply troubled relations with northern leaders who are campaigning for the two halves of the country to stay together.

"I have my own assessment, and I can say what I have observed by myself ... I can say if I was to vote alone for unity or the secession or independence of southern Sudan, I would not vote for unity because I have not seen what attracted me to unity," Kiir said in Arabic on Friday, in a recording of his speech heard by *Reuters*.

Senior Kiir aide Joseph Klato said the president had not meant to discuss his own voting intentions, but merely to point out that southerners had so far not been given any compelling reasons to support continued union with the north.

## **Misseriya launches initiative for dialogue**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* (Khartoum) 3/10/10 – All-Misseriya chief Mukhtar Babo Nimir has called on Dinka Ngok to engage in negotiations. Nimir told *Miraya FM* that there is a possibility of the two tribes reaching an understanding away from politics.

Meanwhile, Dinka Ngok chief Kuol Deng Majok stressed the need for the conduct of the upcoming referendum in the area simultaneously with the southern Sudan referendum, saying the Dinka would participate in the coming conference on Abyei in Addis Ababa as part of SPLM delegation.

## **SSRC resumes consultation with UN and donors on referendum**

*Al-Akhbar* 3/10/10 – As part of efforts to make the forthcoming referendum process a success, the South Sudan Referendum Commission's General Secretariat held a lengthy meeting yesterday with representatives of the donors and the UN. The meeting also discussed the different stages of the process and the timetables set for the implementation of these various phases.

## **“Popular consultation can lead to self-determination” – SPLM**

*Al-Sahafa* 3/10/10 – The SPLM (Southern Kordofan) has warned of a renewed war in the region, saying heavy weapons were moved into the state over the past two weeks including tanks, rockets and vehicles.

SPLM leading figure, Ammar Daldoom, at press conference yesterday, stressed the need for the conduct of a popular consultation simultaneously with the Southern Sudan referendum. He said the SPLM does not agree with the NCP in its interpretation and understanding of the concept of popular consultation which it (NCP) describes as mere demands, indicating that in some territories popular consultation led to self-determination, citing East Timor.

## **Other Highlights**

### **Al-Intibaha newspaper back to circulation as from next Wednesday**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 2/10/10 – In response to a request by the Union of the Sudanese Journalists, NISS Director Gen. Mohamed Atta has lifted the ban on *Al-Intibaha* newspaper.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the newspaper Al-Tayeb Mustafa told reporters that the newspaper would resume publication as from next Wednesday.

According to *Sudan Tribune website* (Khartoum) 2/10/01, Sudan has terminated a ban on the publication of the northern separatist daily, *Al-Intibaha*, which was suspended nearly three months ago as the government moved to quell media outlets advocating the secession of south Sudan region in a vote slated for January 2011.

Official media agencies reported on Saturday that the director-general of Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS), Mohamed Atta, issued a decision lifting the ban on *Al-Intibaha*.

According to the official SUNA, the NISS's decision was made at the behest of president Al-Bashir on the condition that the paper would adhere to the pledges it made before the state's leadership to observe the code of journalistic honor and respect the constitution.

*Al-Intibaha*, which in Arabic translates to The Alert, was founded in mid-2007 by the former director of Sudan National TV, Al-Tayeb Mustafa, who is an uncle to President Omer Al-Bashir.

The paper is the mouthpiece of the Just Peace Forum, a political party founded by Mustafa to advocate the secession of south Sudan on the pretext that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) gave too many concessions to southerners at the expense of northerners.

### **UN rights expert's mandate in Sudan extended despite objections**

*Sudan Tribune website* 1/10/10 - The UN-appointed expert on human rights Mohamed Chande Othman will maintain his mandate in monitoring Sudan for another year despite intense lobbying by Arab and African countries at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

The UNHRC approved the extension by a margin of 7 votes owing in part to several African countries including Uganda, Zambia, and Gabon which dissented from the position taken by the their peers in the continent.

Speaking before the Council, Uganda's representative stated, "At this critical time in Sudan... This Council cannot disengage... if ever there were an appropriate time to stay engaged now is the time... we will vote for the extension of the mandate as a matter of principle."

Overall, twenty-five countries including Western nations voted for the resolution that was amended to "renew for a period of one year" the mandate of rights investigator. On the other hand nineteen countries, including China, Cuba, Nigeria and Russia, voted against while Kyrgyzstan, Thailand and Mauritius abstained...

### **Darfur rebels say Sudan army raids kill 27**

*Reuters* 1/10/10 - Darfur rebels on Friday accused Sudan's army of killing 27 people in a week-long campaign of air and ground assaults on their positions, as peace efforts in the arid region continued to flounder.

Sudan's army told *Reuters* its troops killed 17 rebels in South Darfur state in clashes that lasted from Wednesday to Friday, but dismissed reports of air attacks.

The army had earlier denied any fighting took place at all but its spokesman phoned back to say he had received a late report on the clashes near the villages of Deribat and Jawa.

The rebel Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) told *Reuters* government troops, bombers and helicopters launched a series of attacks on their positions around the village of Jawa near the remote Jabel Marra region from Sunday onwards.

"This week there has been very big fighting. All this time the government air forces are bombarding the areas all the day and today this morning ... four villages were burned ... They killed 27 civilians. It is their campaign of ethnic cleansing," said SLA spokesman Ibrahim al-Helwu by phone from Paris.

UNAMID peacekeeping mission told *Reuters* it had no information to back up the reports.

One U.N. source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the mission had received reports from a reliable source of clashes between the army and SLA on Monday around the villages of Jawa and Suni but could not confirm them independently.

Humanitarian workers said the government had imposed a near blanket travel ban on parts of South Darfur, including land around the mountainous Jabel Marra region, following a surge of fighting early this year. U.N. and government aid agencies managed to stage their first mission to parts of the area in six months early in September.

Sudan's army spokesman said government troops clashed with SLA rebels on roads in the area and defeated them.

"The army cleared them from the roads at Jawa and Deribat. They (the army) defeated them and took many cars and lots of ammunition," said the spokesman. "Only four army soldiers were wounded."

Both the SLA, led by Paris-based Abdel Wahed Mohamed al-Nur, and the insurgent Justice and Equality Movement are boycotting peace talks with Sudan's government in the Qatari capital Doha.

The separate Liberation and Justice Movement - an umbrella group of smaller rebel factions - said it was hoping to resume the protracted negotiations in Qatar on Saturday or Sunday.

### **Musa Hilal reported missing**

*The Citizen* (Khartoum) 3/10/10 – Sources revealed that National Assembly member from the Mahameed tribe, Musa Hilal, has disappeared from view since last May amid conflicting news of his resort to his rural area or departure for another country. Musa, who is also widely believed to be a leader of the Janjaweed militias, missed the swearing-in ceremony for MPs earlier in the year and other sources reported that he had expressed his unhappiness over some restriction to his movement imposed by Khartoum. Information Minister and NCP member Rabie Abdul-Ati said no restrictions were placed on Hilal's movements.

### **14 security units providing protection to Ahmed Harun**

*Ajras Al-Hurriya* 3/10/10 – a group of leaders who had defected from the NCP have revealed that Southern Kordofan Government Ahmed Harun, who is wanted by the ICC, is guarded by 14 security units.

Former NCP youth leader Bilal Musa revealed at a press conference yesterday the presence of 14 security units in the state to provide protection to Ahmed Harun.

Also, Joda Al-Siddiq, former NCP leader, revealed that the NCP continue to arm Arab tribes in the area.