

30 Nov 2010

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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

Referendum Watch

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Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

Highlights

UN excludes SSRC from printing of referendum cards – Khalil

Al-Ayyam 30/11/10 – SSRC Chairman Prof. Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil has said that the conduct of the upcoming referendum on 9th January is facing administrative and legal constraints. “Administrative and legal problems have emerged during this short period and they could have been resolved had it not been for the emergence of political problems between the two CPA parties,” Khalil said in an interview to the London-based *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* newspaper. He said the referendum would be held on time but “if ample time is allowed, the process will be organized in a proper manner and at the required standard”.

Khalil also revealed an argument between him and US Ambassador to the UN Susan Rice when he indicated the need to abide by the law. “Law is not important what is important are two points: registration and the conduct of the referendum on 9th January regardless of the provisions of the law,” Ambassador Rice reacted, according to Khalil.

Khalil also revealed differences between the SSRC and the UNDP which is running the Referendum Support Fund, saying the Agency manages the fund in isolation from the SSRC, appoints experts without consulting it, prints registration and polling cards without checking with it and also publishes advertisements in newspapers in the name of the Commission without its knowledge.

According to *Al-Akhabr* 30/11/10, Khalil said the SSRC sent memoranda to the agency and donors turning their attention to the need to take into consideration the credibility and transparency of the referendum process, adding that referendum and self-determination is a Sudanese process being carried out by Sudanese with the help of international organizations rather than a foreign process being carried out by foreign organizations on behalf of Sudanese.

“Safety and security of the referendum is the responsibility of the Governments in Khartoum and Juba,” he said, according to *Al-Wifaq*.

Mass resignation of oil engineers and workers

Al-Sudani 29/11/10 – Oil engineers and workers have tendered their resignations, fearing a backlash of the upcoming referendum on self-determination for the South. Oil fields administration, the central government and GoSS have been informed about the resignations.

Greater Nile Oil Company official Ahmed Yousuf Al-Jameel has confirmed that many northern and southern engineers and workers have submitted their resignations and many others have relocated due to security concerns as the upcoming referendum approaches.

Meanwhile, GoSS VP Riek Machar has directed the setting up of an operation room made up of forces from the company’s security, police, JIUs and SPLA to contain possible insecurity and to protect workers and oil fields in the South.

Jonglei state: 8 killed in Akobo county clashes

Sudan Tribune website 29/11/10 - At least 8 people have been killed and 8 others were wounded in Akobo county in South Sudan's Jonglei state following clashes between the southern army and civilians on Sunday, sources have told the Sudan Tribune.

Fighting broke out after the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) tried to disarm civilians at Dengjok in Akobo. Among those killed were five soldiers and three civilians. Seven soldiers were injured along with one injured.

Goi Jooyi Yol, the Akobo county Commissioner told Sudan Tribune by phone on Monday that last week's incident, involved clashes between the police and army against armed groups of youth.

The incident, the Commissioner said, started when one Kor Jikiny Malual, son of the area sub-chief, Mr. Jikiny Malual, allegedly killed someone in the neighboring community, in what he described as a "revenge mission" before reportedly retreating back to his village.

Following the killing incident, Yol said, a combined force of the SPLA and the area Police pursued the alleged killer but fell into an ambush laid by a group of armed youth who attacked the organized forces.

"The sub-chief, upon hearing that his son was to be arrested by these law enforcement officers decided to mobilize a group of mainly youth armed with guns that laid a deadly ambush on the SPLA and killed 3 of them," the Commissioner told Sudan Tribune by phone from Akobo.

Shortly afterwards, he added, another similar incident was reportedly laid at Wec Hoth village, where two more soldiers and three civilians were reportedly killed. Several casualties were reportedly rushed to a nearby health center for treatment.

"This is a very unfortunate incident especially at this time when people are actively involved in the ongoing registration for referendum process. It is [the clashes] likely to disrupt the otherwise peaceful exercise," said the Commissioner.

When contacted on Monday, Col. Phillip Aguer Panyang, the SPLA spokesman confirmed the Akobo incident but had a slightly different version of events.

"We have received information on what happened in Akobo. All we know is that it was a clash involving two communities fighting among themselves. But when the SPLA were called to intervene, they resisted and instead fought the army. Am yet to confirm the numbers of people killed or wounded in the clashes," he told Sudan Tribune.

Such incidences, he added, though not the first in the county are usually escalated by "groups of gangsters" in the area.

Presidency to discuss AUHIP proposal on Abyei on Thursday

Al-Akhbar 30/11/10 – GoSS Minister of Regional Cooperation (SPLM) Deng Alor said Head of AUHIP Thabo Mbeki submitted six proposals for resolving the dispute over Abyei territory, adding the SPLM is currently studying them but declined to elaborate about the proposals. Alor

said the Presidency would hold a meeting on Thursday for discussion on the proposals.

Meanwhile, *Ajras Al-Hurriya* 30/11/10, quoting Sudanese sources, revealed that Mbeki proposed annexing Abyei to the South by presidential decree in exchange for giving the Misseriya one-third of the territory.

The source indicated the likelihood of the NCP accepting the proposal and the SPLM rejecting it.

The Citizen 30/11/10 reports SPLM SG Pagan Amum has called on the NCP to follow its suit in dealing with the militias in the South by holding a north-north dialogue conference to settle differences with the opposition and the armed movements and find a roadmap to achieve security and stability in preparation for a stable stage in case the South secedes.

Addressing a press conference yesterday in Khartoum, Amum urged the NCP not to shatter its achievement embodied in availing the southerners the right of self-determination, which he described as “a brave decision” and asked it to hold the referendum in free and honest atmosphere. “We notice the NCP is backtracking in completing the mission” by imposing hindrances and pressure on the SPLM on issues of Abyei, the border demarcation and threat not to recognize the referendum,” he said.

Al-Sudani 30/11/10 reports Amum said the NCP is to blame for low turnout of southerners in the North for registration because of the irresponsible statements by its leaders, forcing them to return to the South.

He said the NCP is putting the entire peace process in jeopardy by accusing the SPLM of backing Darfur rebels in order to drag it into a war. He denied presence of Darfur movements in Juba or the South, saying the NCP has no evidence of SPLM backing them.

Post-secession south Sudan may break into three – David de Chand

Al-Raed 30/11/10 – The head of the South Sudan Democratic Front (SSDF) expects southern Sudan to fragment into three states should the 2011 referendum result confirmed secession. David de Chand told a rally organised by the Southern Sudanese Parties’ Youths and Students in Khartoum yesterday that the region might break into three as a result of the SPLM’s policies of nepotism. He said it would be difficult to create a southern Sudanese state due to the “SPLM’s dictatorship”.

Experts say north-south conflict likely

Al-Intibaha 30/11/10 – A number of politicians and researchers expect a renewed violent conflict between north and south of Sudan whether or not the south secedes. They pointed out that all indications on the ground show that the unfolding events may lead to war.

“War is inevitable whether the referendum is held on schedule or not and regardless of its outcome,” says Dr. Khaled Hussein, the head of the Sudan Studies and Research Centre.

Dr. Omar Abdulaziz, another researcher, pointed out that Khartoum would not engage in such conflict unless it is forced to do so while southern Sudan might be more inclined to wage war on Khartoum in the first half of 2011 to cover up the negative repercussions of secession.

Parliamentary tour of registration centres uncovers violations

Al-Rai Al-Aam 30/11/10 – Tours by parliamentarians of a number of referendum registration centres have unveiled “fundamental violations” and wrong misinterpretations of the Referendum act that may legally bring down the whole registration process and affect acceptance of the outcome. Among the complaints they received were that registration staff in some stations were refusing to register some people either on the grounds they were Muslims or had Arabic names. One centre reportedly turned away some 28 people from the Nuer tribe. The staff manning the centre denied these charges and complained that the local committees were sending people who hail from Darfur to the registration centres.

Meanwhile in Malakal, an observer noted that some people who inter-married with northerners were having problems registering.

Al-Fateh Ezzaldin who headed the parliamentary delegation warned during a tour of the centres in Omdurman that irregularities would render results questionable and the outcome of the referendum might not be recognized.

Home Sudan Citizenship issue still unresolved, says Arman

Miraya FM 30/11/10 - The SPLM deputy Secretary general for the northern sector, Yasir Arman, revealed that the two partners have so far failed to reach an agreement on post-referendum citizenship arrangements. Speaking at a political forum in Khartoum on Sunday, Arman said that the National Congress Party still insists to deprive the southern Sudanese of the rights to citizenship in the north, if the south opts to secede, warning of preparations of violence against southerners in the north.

In similar developments, the post-referendum conference organized by Sudanese Organization for political science recommended that southerners should not be granted dual citizenship in case of separation.

After the closing session on Monday the organization's deputy chairman, Dr.Hassan Suleiman, told radio Miraya that the southerners' vote for separation means relinquishing their citizenship rights, pointing out that the conference also stressed on the importance of solving the security issues to prevent a return to war.

South Sudanese flee border area fearing air raids

Reuters 29/11/10 - South Sudanese are abandoning north-south border villages fearing aerial attacks from the northern army, with at least 1,500 fleeing after recent attacks, U.N. and southern officials said on Monday.

"We have verified a first group of 1,500 people who left the border area (in Northern Bahr al-Ghazal) from 16 to 22 November," said Giovanni Bosco, head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Southern Sudan.

"People are leaving their villages because of the military tensions in the area," said Bosco, who added that there was no formal camp set up to receive the new arrivals, but the United Nations was helping the local community feed them.

Officials in the area say they have received "hundreds" of additional arrivals in just the last few

days, and some reports put the number of overall displaced much higher.

"The report we received says 2,500 have been displaced in the area," said southern army (SPLA) spokesman Philip Aguer.

Northern government officials were unavailable for comment on the reports. The SPLA says northern forces are still flying fighter planes along the border to scare southern villagers.

"Khartoum's newly-acquired Chinese planes are flying in the ... area," Aguer told Reuters. "They are trying to cause terror and disrupt the referendum."

Other Highlights

NCP describes AU as a “frail” organization after Bashir’s exclusion from summit

Sudan Tribune website 29/11/10 - The ruling National Congress Party (NCP) in Sudan lambasted the African Union (AU) on Monday for not taking a firmer position regarding the row over the attendance of president Omer Al-Bashir at the 3rd Africa-European Union (EU) summit that is currently underway in the Libyan capital.

The empty chair of Sudanese President Omar al-Beshir is seen during the opening session of the 3rd Africa-EU summit in the Libyan capital Tripoli on November 29, 2010 (AFP).

The EU has made it clear to the Libyan government over the last few weeks through diplomatic channels that Bashir’s participation will impact their level of representation at the summit. The event in itself highlights Tripoli’s success in returning to the international arena after decades of sanctions and isolation.

The Libyan foreign minister Moussa Koussa on Sunday told the Associated Press (AP) that they have asked Bashir to cancel his appearance at the summit to avoid ruining efforts by Tripoli to put the meeting together.

The media top official at the NCP Fathi Sheila was quoted by party’s newspaper Al-Raed as saying that Bashir’s exclusion was "precooked and detailed".

Sheila also fired shots at the AU describing it as a "frail" body that implements what the West asks it to do adding that Sudan circumvented an EU plot to bring it to the summit and force it to accept the resolutions. The NCP official stressed that his country is well aware of the EU colonization schemes...

The Sudanese Vice President Ali Osman Taha addressing a rally in Sennar state on Monday also blasted the EU saying that they will not succeed in breaking Bashir as he is a "symbol to his people and homeland".

"We will not be broken nor will we surrender, they [EU] will not be able to silence his voice or break his sword, and will remain a symbol of liberation," Taha said.

Meanwhile, The African Union (AU) on Monday rejected a request made by the Sudanese government to delay the meeting for the Peace and Security Council (PSC) that was to take place tomorrow in the Libyan capital.

Earlier today, Sudanese foreign ministry spokesperson Muawiya Khalid was quoted by state media as saying that the government asked the AU for a postponement to a later date. Khalid said that the Sudanese foreign minister Ali Karti is expected to depart Libya and fly to Kuwait for an official visit to discuss bilateral relations and preparations for the East Sudan donors' conference.

"The meeting will take place as scheduled" on Tuesday in Tripoli, the AU Peace and Security Commissioner Ramadan Lamamra told Agence France Presse (AFP).

"The positions of the Sudanese parties are not on the agenda," he added.

Lamamra said former South African president Thabo Mbeki, who chairs an AU panel on Sudan, would present a report on the situation and that the meeting would also discuss events in the Ivory Coast and Guinea as well as other trouble spots on the continent...

Sudan to reject decisions from AU-EU Summit

VOA.com 29/11/10 - A leading member of Sudan's governing National Congress Party (NCP) told VOA President Omar al-Bashir's government will not recognize any resolution or proclamation agreed upon at the two-day African Union-European Union summit in Libya scheduled to end Tuesday.

Rabie Abdelati Obeid also called on the entire African continent to resist, in his words, the dictatorial tendencies of the European Union.

Sudan is boycotting this week's summit after the EU threatened to walk out if Mr. Bashir, under international indictment, took part.

"Our government will not recognize what will be concluded and all the resolutions that form this summit, which is being held in Libya. The withdrawal of Sudan from contributing to this summit was due to pressure (from) the European countries on Libya," said Obeid.

Dr. Rabie Abdelati Obeid is a prominent member of Sudan's dominant National Congress Party (NCP)

"Therefore, we are not concerned about what happened at this summit and we are not also concerned about the resolution. I think such summits are just (aimed at) exchanging views and opinions, (but) not to decide something to be implemented in the African countries."

Obeid warned, if not stopped, the European Union's actions could plunge the continent into what he described as perpetual subjugation.

"It is a sign also for the African countries taking part in this summit that, if they allow this

pressure to continue, this will definitely, and ultimately, (undermine) the sovereignty and independence of African countries. And, this will be a very dangerous situation (that) will transform the summit from cooperation between Europe and Africa to be only a summit for issuing instructions to African countries,” said Obeid.

“(This) will create a lot of hazard for the will of the people and will also lead to another era of terrorism,” he added.

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