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Media Monitoring Report

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Post-Referendum Watch

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Highlights

Presidency to meet in Juba on Thursday

Al-Akhabar 5/4/11 – The Presidency is to meet for the first time in Juba on Thursday to discuss a range of outstanding issues between the two CPA parties particularly the controversy over the southern MPs who boycotted the National Assembly's session yesterday.

"The meeting will focus on Abyei, demarcation of the border, popular consultations in southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile states as well as other sticky issues" Presidency Affairs Minister Bakri Hassan Saleh said, according to *Al-Ahram Al-Youm* 5/4/11.

Meanwhile, NCP parliamentary bloc chair Ghazi Salahuedine said the House did not prevent southern MPs from attending yesterday's session, they have decided on their own to boycott, adding the NCP is ready to discuss the issue if it is raised by the SPLM at the Presidency meeting. Ghazi said his party supports the Speaker's decision that the southern MPs should not attend House's sessions.

According to *Al-Sahafa* 5/4/11, the National Assembly postponed sessions until next week, reportedly to allow time for resolution of the dispute over the southern MPs but Speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir said the sessions were postponed to allow time for the MPs to receive the Presidency letter with regard to their status.

Al-Bashir says meeting opposition's demands depend on participation in the government

Al-Sahafa 5/4/11 – President Al-Bashir said the participation of the political forces in a broad-based government is a prerequisite for implementing outcome of dialogue between them and his party, adding that bilateral dialogue between his party and key opposition bodies such as the National Umma Party (NUP) and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) achieved encouraging results.

President Al-Bashir, in his address to the inauguration of the National Assembly's new session yesterday which was convened amid boycott of southern MPs, said the CPA provisions would remain valid until 9th July, adding that separation of the South does not mean "total disassociation" because the relationship between the North and the South would be maintained.

"We reaffirm our determination to make our ties with the upcoming southern state one of the most special between two neighbours" he said, according to *Sudan TV* 4/4/11 and also pledged to resolve the pending issues and the Darfur situation.

He called on the two parties to work for the resolution of the outstanding issues particularly Abyei, borders, Popular Consultations and economic arrangements. He said the 9th July is the date on which the interim period will end and the CPA provisions cease to exist.

Meanwhile, *Al-Tayyar* 4/04/11 reports Al-Bashir as saying that current executive and legislative

institutions would continue to operate beyond July 2011 until their terms of office laid down in the constitution has expires. He said the current state of affairs requires broad-based dialogue with political forces in order to achieve national accord.

For the first time in the history of Sudanese parliaments, parliament returned from recess yesterday in a marked absence of southern Sudanese lawmakers. There was also no reciting of passages from the Bible at the opening as was the tradition in recent times.

Al-Bashir sent a word of farewell to southern Sudanese lawmakers and expressed hopes that they would be able to utilise the experience they gained during their tenure to the benefit of southern Sudan.

“Since our brothers in the south have chosen to create a new state, it is our conviction that this does not mean links between the two sides would be severed,” he said.

Al-Bashir also noted that focus on discussing post-referendum issues should not divert attention from other urgent issues such as the Darfur peace process and the quest for national accord through broad-based dialogue with the political forces and other stakeholders.

“Leave the North alone” Nafie tells SPLM

Al-Rai Al-Aam 5/4/11 – Presidential aide and NCP deputy chair Nafie Ali Nafie, addressing the launch of his party election campaign in southern Kordofan yesterday, called on the SPLM (southern Kordofan) to pave the way for a clean electoral contest in the state. “Leave the North alone. If you have necessary capacity, devote that to the South” he said. He said the people of southern Kordofan would not vote for empty slogans and described the new Sudan scheme as “racist”.

On Abyei, Nafie said “the area would not be compromised to please any quarter whether it is the SPLM or US” adding that the NCP is for a fair solution of the problem over the territory. He expressed confidence that NCP candidate Ahmed Haroun would win the contest.

“We will not relinquish Abyei whatever the cost even if we have to shed blood” he told the rally in Kadugli yesterday, according to *Al-Tayyar* 5/4/11. He said the Misseriya tribe has a fundamental right in the area and right of the Dinka tribe is also respected. “We will not accept any recommendation from US or the west with regard to Abyei,” he said.

Protesters demand regime change

Al-Akhbar 5/4/11 – Over 100 students of the University of Khartoum demonstrated yesterday demanding regime change. The protesters chanted anti-government slogans and a group of pro-NCP students intervened to disperse the protesters by force resulting in injuries of some students. Eyewitness said pro-NCP students attacked the protesters and police also intervened and used teargas to disperse them.

Meanwhile, hundreds of jobless graduates in the town of Al-Fula in west Kordofan state staged a peaceful demonstration to protest lack of jobs in their state. Police intervened and the protesters were dispersed.

South Sudan ruling party must be more open - ICG

AFP 4/4/11 - Sudan's ruling party must make room for other political forces and reform its top-down military structure to avoid recreating the authoritarian state it is set to break from, a think tank said Monday.

"Now that south Sudan's self-determination has been realised, long-suppressed grievances and simmering disputes have re-surfaced, threatening instability on the eve of independence," the Brussels-based International Crisis Group said in a report.

"Unless there is an opening of political space and a participatory transition, the soon to be independent government risks recreating the kind of centralised, authoritarian and ultimately unstable state it finally managed to escape," the group added.

The ICG report said armed insurgencies, recent militia activity, and army defections highlight the dangerous internal fault lines and suppressed grievances within south Sudan's security sector.

This was starkly illustrated by the wave of clashes since January, between the army and southern rebel militias, that have left hundreds dead, many of them civilians.

The report praised the ruling party, and southern president Salva Kiir, for forging an important, though fragile consensus among the southern political factions prior to the referendum.

But it said the SPLM's domineering approach jeopardised the goodwill created by the conference.

This culminated in March with a group of opposition parties walking out of a technical committee formed to review the nation-in-waiting's interim constitution, citing undemocratic procedures and the SPLM's lack of interest in genuine opposition participation.

The ICG report criticises the movement's pervasive military culture, which it says still tends to rely more on force than consent, and its lingering sense of entitlement that also dates back to the years of conflict.

"A politics of exclusion threatens further polarisation of ethnic communities and their political leaders," said ICG's Sudan analyst Zach Vertin.

"The nascent state can ill-afford further antagonism," he added.

South Sudan minister allays fears over constitutional review

Sudan Tribune website 4/4/11 - As various groups continue to debate on the status of the interim constitution of south Sudan, authorities have assured the people that interests and views of South Sudanese would be taken into consideration when writing a new constitution.

"There should be no fear. The technical committee is composed of highly learned and experienced professionals from various fields and is working together with selected experts from neighboring countries to ensure all legal matters are thoroughly discussed and unanimously endorsed by the committee," John Luk Jok, Minister of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Development in the government of South Sudan, said in an interview with Sudan Tribune on

Monday April 4, 2011.

Jok was responding to some of the public concerns and arguments that little have been done to solve problems in the committee that transpired after the other political parties announced pulling out from the committee in February, 2011. The opposition forces accused the SPLM of “dominance over all decisions” and its prevention of “meaningful participation from opposition members”.

But Jok denied the accusations describing them as inaccurate and allegations. He accused the opposition of demanding a lot, saying they were asking for 50% power sharing in parliament as well as in the cabinet and in the state governments.

"The interests of people of South Sudan would be safeguarded at the time of writing a new constitution," said Jok on Monday in statements with Sudan Tribune.

The minister said the committee has identified multiple challenges with the power sharing becoming one of the topical issues, and suggestion for more discussion on responsibilities of the parliament which include making sure that all government services are accessible to the ordinary people.

Joseph Lagu, a former President of High Executive Council for South Sudan and now a Special Advisor to president of the ruling SPLM, Salva Kiir Mayardit, said that cabinet members should not be part of the parliament if the doctrine of separation of powers should have much sense.

"I would advice that powers are separated so that it allows proper check and monitoring of performances of the cabinet. This will not compromise independent of the legislature from the executive," said Lagu, in a televised statement seen on South Sudan Television last week.

He has further said for a new Act to re-check the current constitutional powers vested in two-thirds of all Members of the Parliament to approve changes in the constitution.

The adviser was participating in a public debate on the Constitutional Review due to be tabled in the Parliament in the next coming weeks.

Lagu also called on the committee to include the public outcry which urges immediate settlement of differences between political parties and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement over power sharing and composition of the constitutional review committee.

"We also want the constitution to limit the size of the cabinet to be in line with other countries where their constitution stipulates on the number of Cabinet members. Our new constitution should not remain silent on that," he said.

Meanwhile, the stakeholders who attended the Conference expressed their dismay over the government's silent to say when it will complete the work on the Constitutional Review.

Speaking to Sudan Tribune in a separate interview on Monday , various speakers including university students, academicians, politicians, lawyers, activists and the general public said the committee was prepared contrary to the people's recommendations, therefore it has to be re-drafted and thoroughly discussed by the majority of members of the public.

Another concern raised by the interviewees was on the time-frame given by the government to discuss the review. They said that the time was not enough for most citizens to contribute with their views conveniently on the drafting of the new constitution.

Deng Mawien Kuc, a secondary school teacher in Wau suggested publishing the outcome of the committee through the media outlets for a public debate instead of rushing it to Parliament.

"The government has to respect people's basic rights of expressing their views, freely and fairly. I propose that all people be given enough time to contribute towards the new constitution because this one has been so abrupt and confusing," he said.

Angelo Deng, who identified himself as practising private advocate in Wau Town, said the four following things must be accomplished before to finalize the new constitution: a free constitution commission, a constituency assembly, a referendum and the National Assembly.

A representative of the ruling SPLM, Atem Biar said his party has agreed to have the constitution reviewed.

"SPLM has agreed to accommodate public views on the agenda but has insisted that all stakeholders including politicians have the rights to participate — not only specialists as proposed here. We also want a specific time-frame for the agenda to reach to an end," he said.

South Sudan's Athor says committed to peaceful settlement of dispute

Juba Post 4/4/11WAU - The rebel George Athor Deng Dut has said Friday that he is committed to any peaceful settlement of the conflict that claimed over 300 lives and displaced several after he rebelled against the government of southern Sudan (GoSS) on 30th of April 2010. Speaking to The Juba Post from undisclosed location in Jonglei through a satellite phone, Athor denied that he was in Khartoum and reiterated that he is committed to a peaceful settlement of the conflict with the government of southern Sudan. "Our position to negotiate how to settle our reservations and issues which concern our people has always been our desire and demand. We have never changed this position. We have never rejected any attempt for peaceful settlement. Our people need peace and so do we. We are ready for any peaceful settlement if the other party is ready to negotiate with us," said Athor.

"I am not in Khartoum and have not gone to Khartoum. I am speaking to you from my base in southern Sudan. Who said I am in Khartoum or I have gone to Khartoum". When did they say we met or saw me in Khartoum," asked Athor. Officials from the government of southern Sudan including the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Secretary General Pagan Amum last month accused Khartoum of supporting the rebellion in the south through proxy militias and that Athor flew to Khartoum after being dislodged from his base. "I have never gone to Khartoum and I do not have any intention to go there." Athor told this reporter on Friday. However attempts by The Juba Post to get comments from the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) spokesperson failed.

But Atem Biar, a member of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) said in Juba that Athor request for peaceful settlement is another trick to regroup his forces for other atrocities. "Claims that he is committed to peaceful settlement are mere media tricks. He just wants to buy time to regroup his forces for other atrocities. No way. The government will not buy these

claims. If he needs peace, he has to lay down arms and surrender without making any condition," said Biar.

Southern Sudan governor calls for deployment of special force in Juba

Juba Post 4/4/11 - The Governor of Central Equatoria State Clement Wani Konga has urged the regional government to provide maximum security to Juba ahead of the declaration of independence. Konga told the *Juba Post* on Thursday [31 March] that there is need to protect civilians and their properties. He added that the newly recruited police force should be immediately handed to the state governments to boost security in the entire region.

Governor Konga warned that the land in Central Equatoria State should be distributed according to the laid laws. He pointed out that people who have lost their land to grabbers will regain it back.

In the past few months gangs have broken into shops and houses and made away with properties of considerable value. Other thugs have waylaid people on their way home and robbed them of their belongings. Late February the South Sudan Police Spokesperson Maj-Gen Biar Mading Biar issued an alert that there is an upsurge of crime in Juba and that some criminals are posing as policemen to accomplish their mission quickly.

He urged civilians to cooperate with the police so as to apprehend the groups that are shooting people at night.

On her part, the undersecretary of the Ministry of Health in the government of south Sudan Dr Olivia Lomoro said that south Sudanese culture of encouraging women to produce dozens of children is hampering family planning programmes. In a statement to the press, Dr Lomoro said south Sudanese women are subjected to culture that requires them to produce uncountable children because failure to meet this demand might lead to a forced divorce. According to her, giving birth to too many children without proper planning is the main factor for poverty in families. "People should change their attitude and plan to have manageable children, failing to provide a basic need to the family is also a crime."

The undersecretary asserted that family is good for people with low income. She revealed that in a recent research commissioned by the Ministry of Health it was found that only five per cent of the population uses family planning method. The Ministry of Health is looking forward to see to it that the family planning program benefit all the citizens especially the young school going age who are largely victims of early pregnancy. Despite facing strong opposition from the politicians that family planning program should not formed part of health service in a medical facility in south Sudan, Dr Lomoro asserted that her the ministry will established in every health center the family planning programme to encourage people to engage in child spacing for better management of their future.

She said that many children in rural areas of south Sudan are malnourished to big family and unplanned birth. According to the official some of her colleagues discourage the ministry from embarking on family planning alleging South Sudan has few people and must produce as many as the tradition demands.

Other Highlights

More than 30 people perish in UN plane crash in DR Congo

UN News Centre 4/4/11 - Only one person out of 33 passengers and crew members has survived a United Nations plane crash today at the main airport in the capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The plane, which had been travelling from the north-eastern city of Kisangani, was attempting to land in heavy rain at N'Djili airport in Kinshasa when it crashed about 1.30 p.m. local time after missing the runway.

Alain Le Roy, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, told journalists that initial indications were that bad weather was a key factor in the accident.

The UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) reported that the plane was carrying 29 passengers and four crew members. All but five of the passengers worked for the UN, with the others working for international organizations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Most of the UN staff on board worked for MONUSCO but some were serving with UN agencies.

Ambassador Rafael Osorio of Colombia, which holds the rotating presidency of the Security Council this month, said the Council's 15 members expressed their "profound sorrow." He offered his deepest condolences to the families of the victims.

MONUSCO has set up a task force in the wake of the crash to lead the investigation and determine what follow-up actions are needed. Counsellors are being provided for affected staff and a hotline is also being established for the families and friends of the crash victims.

The mission said the names of the victims will be released after their bodies have been positively identified and the next of kin informed.

Mbeki arrives in Khartoum on board UN flight

Al-Rai Al-Aam 5/04/11 – A high ranking government official says AUIHP head Thabo Mbeki is expected in Khartoum from Addis Ababa today. The source says Mbeki would arrive on board a UN flight because his country (South Africa) has refused to shoulder his flight bills due to the high costs incurred for his travel.

Sudan denies smuggling chemical weapons from Libya to Palestinian Hamas

SUNA 4/4/11 - Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Rahamtallah Muhammad Osman has denied reports published by some websites alleging Khartoum was trafficking chemical weapons from Libya to Palestinian movement Hamas and Lebanese movement Hezbollah via the Sudan.

Ambassador Osman described the allegations as unfounded, renewing Sudan's commitment to the agreement banning spread of chemical weapons.

He said Sudan would take the necessary measures to preserve its right in this connection, adding

that the allegations [were] aimed at undermining the efforts being exerted to lift Sudan's name from the list of the countries sponsoring terrorism.

Gunmen rob bank in Unity State

Sudan Tribune website 4/4/11 -A group of burglars on Sunday broke into Ivory Bank's branch in the Unity State's capital Bentiu and stole more than a million Sudanese pounds, in the second case of bank robbery in south Sudan this week.

Guards at Ivory Bank told investigators on Monday that the 15-member gang members surrounded the bank around 2:00 am local time and strapped them to an electricity pole before blindfolding them at gun point.

An investigation carried out the next day by the state security legal department had concluded that the stolen amount stands at 1.12 million Sudanese pounds (428.953.06 US dollars).

The burglars are said to have exchanged heavy gunfire with a group of security men who spotted them on the road of Bentiu secondary school and opposite to the assembly office of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, the ruling party in south Sudan.

Gideon Gatpan Thaor, the official Spokesman of the Unity State government, suggested that suspicion is revolving around "army groups", adding that those involved in this criminal act would be brought to justice. However, he noted that there was yet no official report from security forces on the origin of the gang.

Security officials promised to hunt down the burglars and reach their hideouts, saying that a satisfactory report would be submitted soon as possible.

Sources told Sudan Tribune that three policemen hired by the bank to protect the bank are now under arrest on suspicion of being involved in the robbery. One of the relatives of the arrested policemen, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Sudan Tribune that security authorities had ignored earlier reports on active armed groups and were now trying to put the blame on innocent policemen.

A day before on Saturday a group of burglars broke into the premises of the Sudanese Agricultural Bank in Juba and stole 1,628,450 Sudanese pounds in addition to 1,300 US dollars, as reported by South Sudan radio.

South Sudan has been hit by a wave of insecurity and army defections since it voted to secede from the north in a referendum held in January. The region is due to declare official independence when the peace deal it signed with the north to end more than two decades of civil wars expires in July.
