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# Media Monitoring Report

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## Referendum Monitor

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# Highlights

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## **Secession is unjustifiable; Kiir's statement is "unacceptable"**

*Local dailies* (Khartoum) 5/10/10 – VP Ali Osman Taha, at press conference yesterday, reiterated the Sudanese Government's commitment to the conduct of the upcoming referendum on time, but stressed the need that the process should meet the conditions contained in the agreement so that it is free, fair, open and transparent. Taha appeared confident that the hurdle of the referendum process would be successfully surmounted.

VP Taha also said that the Government would accept the referendum results provided the process is conducted in a free and fair atmosphere.

On FVP and GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit's statement that he would vote for separation, he said the statement came in the context of Kiir's right as a citizen not as GoSS President. "Although his statement is unacceptable but it does not subject him to a political accountability". Taha called for investigation to know the reasons why GoSS President has changed his position. He considered such statements as attempts to influence the choice of the southern Sudanese on referendum. He also accused an unnamed quarters of an attempt to hijack the will of the southern Sudanese.

On Abyei, Taha said the conduct of referendum in the area depends on an agreement between the two partners that is acceptable to both the Misseriya and the Dinka communities.

According to *Al-Rai Al-Aam* 5/10/10, Taha has welcomed the visit of the Security Council's delegation, saying it comes within the framework of Sudan's open-door policy. "We have nothing to hide," he said, considering the visit an opportunity for the Council to familiarize itself with the facts on the ground.

*Sudan Tribune website* 4/10/10 reported that Taha warned that the referendum in the oil rich region of Abyei would not take place unless pending issues are resolved between the NCP and the SPLM.

VP Taha appeared to downplay the possibility of securing a deal during the talks in Addis Ababa sponsored by the U.S.

"If there is no agreement there will be no room for a referendum in Abyei. The challenge is to reach an agreement that will allow the referendum to take place as scheduled," Taha told a news conference in Khartoum on Monday.

The Sudanese official further stressed that the referendum will only go ahead after acceptance of both the Misseriya and the Dinka Ngok tribes. He also suggested that the NCP will reject a U.S. proposal being discussed in Addis Ababa, saying it contradicts the Abyei protocol in the CPA.

Abyei's chief administrator Deng Arop Kuol, a member of the SPLM told Reuters he did not want to comment on Taha's statement.

"But while there are talks ongoing, the vice president should have withheld this statement," Kuol told Reuters.

U.S. State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said the Addis Ababa talks would last for several days and that the discussions were both direct and intense.

"We're satisfied that they've come prepared to engage. These are, I understand, very direct and spirited discussions under way and we hope that through these discussions in the coming days we can reach an agreement that allows the referendum in Abyei to go forward," Crowley told a news briefing.

He declined to give an explicit reaction to Taha's warning that the Abyei referendum could not take place if no agreement was reached.

In contrast to his statements on Abyei, Taha said that a separate referendum for the entire South Sudan can be conducted despite logistical and political challenges but emphasized they must be credible and transparent to be recognized by the NCP.

The Sudanese Vice president underscored the need to tackle post-referendum arrangements with the SPLM or else "it would open the door for recurrence of conflict".

He said that the government in its desire to avoid war calls on the SPLM and international community to help speed up demarcation of North-South borders and resolve other outstanding items such as national debt, citizenship and wealth sharing.

Furthermore, Taha said that the likely option of the South's secession will not be an obstacle to regain unity later and strengthen ties between the two states. He described the separation of the South as "swimming against the current of history and does not serve the interests of the South and politically unjustified".

He refused to direct criticism at SPLM chairman Salva Kiir for declaring his intention this week to vote for separation saying he was doing so as a Southern Sudan citizen not in his capacity as South Sudan president else he would have to be held "politically accountable".

But the NCP deputy chairman accused some circles at the SPLM who seek to turn the South into "personal property".

Analysts have warned there is a risk that conflict could reignite if the referendum — highly prized by southerners who are expected to vote for secession — is disrupted or delayed.

Meanwhile, *VoAnews.com* 4/10/10 reported SPLM spokesperson has dismissed as a mere publicity stunt remarks by Sudan's Second Vice President Ali Osman Taha that the oil-rich Abyei referendum can only be held if his National Congress Party (NCP) reaches a political agreement with the SPLM.

Yien Matthew Chol said Mr. Taha's statement underscores the unwillingness of the NCP leadership to commit to the full implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement

(CPA).

“Saying that the referendum of Abyei can never be held unless an agreement is reached as regards to the borders is not found anywhere in the agreement (CPA). We believe in the SPLM that we are just partners directed by the CPA and unless there is something that is stated and supports what Taha is saying otherwise, we wouldn’t find any reason why we should listen to such a statement.”

“This is the nature of the NCP generally. They sometimes make statements when people are negotiating for tactical reasons and for other political purposes that might be better understood to them. But, the SPLM is very clear that we can never allow a reopening of the agreement. Therefore, we will not even allow the discussion to reopen that.”

### **Exclusion of Misseriya means transferring war to North – Defence Minister**

*Al-Akhbar* 5/10/10 – Defence Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein has pledged that the rights of the Misseriya would not be compromised, citing the tribe’s contribution to the war effort in defence of the motherland. He said the quarters which are calling for the exclusion of the Misseriya from the referendum in the area are trying to transfer the war to the North. “It is like seeking to ensure the South’s stability at the expense of the North,” he said.

### **Misseriya rights will never be compromised – Presidential adviser**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* 5/10/10 – talks between the NCP and the SPLM on Abyei kicked off yesterday in presence of US envoy to Sudan Scott Gration.

While head of the Sudan government delegation Gen. Salah Abdullah Gosh who is also a presidential adviser said they came to the talks with an open mind to resolve the problem to bring an end to conflicts, GoSS Minister of Peace Pagan Amum said they seek to reach a solution before the upcoming referendum is due.

Meanwhile, Presidential Adviser Mustafa Osman Ismail said at a symposium in the town of Al-Damir yesterday that the rights of the Misseriya would never be compromised and they would vote as residents of the area.

### **SPLM cautions southerners in Khartoum about NCP war statements**

*The Citizen* 5/10/10 – the SPLM has warned its people early to prepare all ways and means of going back to the South to avoid possible mistreatment of the southerners in the North as partition of the country is expected in January 2011.

Speaking to Rumbek and Wulu communities at Hayusif village in Khartoum during the welcoming ceremony of the Rumbek-Wulu new intake students of 2009-2010, the member of the National Parliament on SPLM ticket Susan Mamuor Leeth said the statements pain all the people of southern Sudan and have intensified the desire to vote for separation.

### **SPLA collects 41,000 pieces of arms from civilians**

*Al-Sahafa* 5/10/10 –SPLA spokesperson Kuol Diem Kuol has announced that 41,000 pieces of different heavy and light arms have been collected from civilians in seven southern states.

The SPLA also revealed reconciliation between the movement and armed groups belonging to the SPLM-DC which used to threaten movement of river barges. SPLM chairman Salva Kiir is reportedly expected to decree general amnesty in favour of these groups any time.

### **UN Security Council visits Sudan on Wednesday**

*Sudan Tribune website* 4/10/10 - The envoys of the states members of the UN Security Council are expected in Sudan on Wednesday three months before key referendum on self-determination in southern Sudan.

The delegation plans to discuss the outstanding issues in the implementation of the referenda in Juba and Khartoum but also will visit El-Fasher, capital of North Darfur state to tackle the ongoing efforts to settle the seven-year conflict.

In a news conference held in New York, the Ugandan ambassador Ruhakana Rugunda who hold the Council rotating presidency told reporters that envoys from Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, plus envoys from the 10 other nations on the 15-member Council.

The visit intends "to support efforts for the promotion of peace on the areas that we will visit," Ruhakana said. He further said more details regarding the visit, which will begin with a stop in Kampala, Uganda, will follow later.

The delegation will not meet the ICC indicted President Omer Al-Bashir. "The council has not requested a meeting with the president, and the president has not offered to meet the council. The council will be meeting other senior officials," the Ugandan ambassador said.

Sudanese Vice President Ali Osman Taha said today the visit will give the UN Security Council the opportunity to better understand the situation in the country.

"We welcomed the visit of the Council to continue the dialogue and because its members will witness the facts that support the government's position, especially as all the Security Council member are not against us," Taha said.

Taha was alluding to the Russian and Chinese support for his government and to unconfirmed reports from New York saying France and UK have accepted to freeze the ICC jurisdiction for one year but Washington rejected such move to pressurize Bashir to conduct timely referendum process in South Sudan and Abyei.

The Senior Sudanese official asked in a press conference held Monday in Khartoum to cancel the ICC charges against President Omer Al-Bashir, to lift the economic sanction and to exempt Sudan's debts.

Taha praised the support of European countries to the Sudan saying some of them wish to engage in political and economic relations, regardless of the outcome of the referendum. He pointed to the existence of some evil forces threatening to put more pressure on Sudan.

### **UNSC heads to Sudan amid fears new war looms**

*Reuters* 4/10/10 - Envoys from the U.N. Security Council depart for Sudan on Monday to press Africa's largest country to avert a new civil war by ensuring there is no delay on a January

referendum on independence for its oil-producing south.

U.S. President Barack Obama, at a high-level U.N. meeting last month, said what happens in Sudan is important to the region and world and that country could either "move forward toward peace or slip backwards into bloodshed."

Analysts have warned there is a risk that conflict could reignite if the referendum - highly prized by southerners who are expected to vote for secession - is disrupted or delayed.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice, a member of Obama's Cabinet and the National Security Council, will join her British counterpart Mark Lyall Grant and other senior envoys from the 15 U.N. Security Council members for the trip.

The week-long visit will begin in Uganda where envoys are expected to meet with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni before heading to Juba, the capital of southern Sudan. The delegation then will head to Sudan's conflict-torn western Darfur region before departing for Khartoum.

John Prendergast, a former U.S. State Department official and co-founder of the Enough Project, an anti-genocide group, said he hoped the council's visit will "signify an international community united around one path toward peace."

"The visit is late but by no means too late to influence calculations toward the necessary compromises for peace," he told Reuters.

Sudanese officials, diplomats said, had wanted the council to meet with President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, who has been indicted by the International Criminal Court for genocide and other war crimes in Darfur in the past seven years.

Sudan's Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha said on Monday that the Abyei referendum would not go ahead unless outstanding issues are settled first in talks, the first hint from Sudan's leadership that the politically sensitive vote in the central region might not take place.

Some analysts fear that Abyei could become "Africa's Kashmir," a reference to a disputed territory that Pakistan and India have fought two wars over.

### **SPLM describes Al-Bashir's statement on southerners in the north as "diplomatic"**

*Al-Tayar* 5/10/10 - Atim Garang, SPLM leading figure, has described recent statement made by President Al-Bashir on preserving all rights and freedoms of southerners in the north even if the south secedes as "diplomatic". He further mentioned that the statements made by Kamal Obeid, Minister of Information, on depriving southerners living in the north of the right of citizenship reflect the real intent of the NCP.

### **FVP Kiir calls for unobstructed north-south linkages**

*Ajras Al-Hurriya* 5/10/10 - FVP, President of GSS, Salva Kiir Mayardit has declared, in a meeting with the Governor of Khartoum State, his unlimited support to the twin-ship and cooperation agreement signed between Khartoum State in the north and Central Equatoria State

of the South. Kiir stated that, regardless of the outcome of the referendum, he counts on north-south ties where people from both sides are able to move freely without need for visas.

Khartoum State Governor, from his side, stated that the question of unity or secession would be determined in accordance with the CPA, but the issue of cooperation between the two states will continue whether the referendum result is unity or secession. The Governor of Khartoum State further stated that southerners living in Khartoum, whether they call for unity or secession will be protected and they are free to remain or leave Khartoum after the referendum.

## Other Highlights

### **South Sudan's Interior Minister condemns killing of foreign nationals**

*Sudan Tribune website* 4/10/10 - The GoSS has strongly condemned a shooting that killed two foreign nationals living in the semi-autonomous region's capital Juba last week.

Gier Chuang Aluong, the Internal Affairs Minister told journalists on Monday in an impromptu press conference that the killings had been directed by South Sudan's "enemies".

Five people including two Ugandans were killed and 6 others seriously injured, after an unknown gunman opened fire at Customs market, located about 7 km west of South Sudan's provincial capital, Juba on Friday 1 October.

Gier, who was flanked by the Telecommunications and Postal Services counterpart, Madut Biar, denied accusations that the killer belonged to the southern army – the SPLA - insisting that the incident should be blamed on those he described as "enemies" of peace in the region.

"We are reliably informed that there are people who are planning to disrupt forthcoming referendum through such killing of innocent people. The Government of Southern Sudan strongly condemns these acts of violence," the Interior Minister said.

Investigations into the killings are ongoing and that the culprit will face the justice and the rule of law, if found guilty the minister said. He could not elaborate further on the identity of the killer.

The GoSS President, Salva Kiir Mayardit also expressed condolences to the families, friends and relatives of the bereaved, according to a carefully-worded message delivered by the Interior Minister on Monday.

Asked to comment on the incident, Habib Migadde, the Head of Chancery at the Juba-based Uganda Consulate told Sudan Tribune yesterday that the shooting was carried out by an "errant person".

Migadde, who is due to meet the Internal Affairs Minister on Tuesday, urged the Ugandan community to remain calm as investigation takes its course. He appealed to the government of South Sudan to speed up the process and ensure the killer is apprehended.

Sudan Tribune has learnt that a peaceful demonstration, which had been planned by the business

community in Juba, was abandoned as after it coincided with the return of President Kiir from Nairobi. Other protest marches were also due to take place in Uganda's capital, Kampala.

### **GoSS releases white helicopter, Russian crew**

*The Citizen* 5/10/10 – Southern Sudan Government has unveiled plans to release the Russian crew who were on board when a white helicopter that allegedly delivered ammunitions and arms to rebel George Athor and was impounded at Falouj last month.

So far the helicopter has not been claimed by any private institution or government but it is the Russian Embassy in Khartoum that has asked for freeing the two Russian crews captured on board.

“They will be freed for sometime and they will be coming back,” Madut Biar, Minister for Telecommunications and Postal Services, also the Acting Minister for Information said. “Although there is no person claiming it {helicopter}, we know the hidden agenda. We will wait for somebody who is going to come up and if there is no body we will see what we will do,” he added.

### **Kiir's purchase of a house in Khartoum stirs up controversy**

*Al-Ahram* 5/10/10 – GoSS Spokesperson B. M. Benjamin has lambasted report circulated by websites on Monday to the effect that SPLM Chairman Salva Kiir Mayardit has bought a house in Khartoum despite his recent statements that he would vote for secession.

“GoSS President has not bought a house in Khartoum. He, as FVP, has been accommodated by the Presidency in a house near the Army HQs in Khartoum. However, Benjamin pointed out that Kiir has the right to buy a house anywhere in the Sudan.

On referendum, Benjamin said GoSS would create a conducive atmosphere for both advocates of unity and secession to campaign freely in the South, adding his Government would also allow satellite channels, broadcastings, news agencies and newspapers to monitor the upcoming process and would also provide protection to all journalists and media persons who visit the region to cover the referendum.

### **SAF refutes SPLM allegations on potential war in Kordofan**

*Khartoum Monitor* 5/10/10 - In a press conference held in SPLM General Secretariat in Khartoum last Saturday, SPLM official from Southern Kordofan and MP, Ahmed Abdulrahman Saeed, stated that SAF is sending heavy arms including tanks and other military vehicles to Southern Kordofan. He also stated than SAF is arming civilians in the Nuba Mountains in order to prepare them for a war in the aftermath of the Southern Sudan Referendum next year.

Responding to these allegations, SAF official Spokesperson, Lieutenant Colonel Alswarmi Khalid Sa'ad, said that these allegations are baseless and are meant to mobilize NGOs and foreigners to intervene in the state. SAF Spokesperson further stated that no SPLA troops shall be present in Southern Kordofan as per the CPA. He said SAF is not arming any civilians in Southern Kordofan State.