

6 Dec 2009

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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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# Highlights

## **Voter registration in Sudan reaches 68%**

**Sudan Tribune** reports that according to the National Elections Commission (NEC), the rate of the voters' registration in all states of the Sudan has reached 68% or 13,294,060 voters till Saturday, 5 December. The electoral board didn't provide further details on the voter registration operation as it will conclude on Monday December 7.

**Ajras al-Hurriya** daily reports the platform of Sudanese civil society organizations released a preliminary observations report on voter registration. The report noted a low turnout of citizens to registration centers compared to the number of people entitled to vote. The report held the NEC, the political parties, civil society organizations and the media responsible for the shortcoming of voter education. This fact, according to the report, had significantly contributed to the promotion of non-confidence in the electoral process and therefore a sense of futility of registration.

According to local media, the NEC further warned that some election monitors have ulterior motives during the upcoming 2010 elections other than simply watching out for the integrity of the process. The secretary general of the electoral board Galal Mohamed Al-Amin stated in Al-Obaid, Northern Kordofan State, that some monitors coming from countries "with hostile attitude" towards Sudan may attempt to fuel ethnic tensions similar to Zimbabwe and Kenya. Al-Amin pointed out that the law does not allow monitors to interfere in the technical work of the commission or make statements in the press adding that some political parties "made a hobby" out of complaining "to foreigners" on the unfairness of the elections.

Regarding the elections budget, the NEC chairman Abil Alier while on tour in Darfur stated to **SUNA** that the budget of the commission until December 2009 has reached USD 315 million, 57% of which were provided by the government of Sudan and 43% were provided by UN agencies, organizations and donors. Meanwhile, the Wali (governor) of South Darfur State, Ali Mahmoud, affirmed that no security problems and impediments are facing the election process in his state. He called for increase of the election committees and employees.

## **Sudan opposition to stage mass protest amid government warning**

(**Sudan Tribune**) December 5, Washington – The NCP blasted opposition parties for planning a march in front of the Sudanese national assembly on Monday to protest delay in passing crucial laws including the national security and referendum bill. The demonstration is expected to also include independent Sudanese figures and several NGOs. The bulk of the parties which signed up to take part in the rally include those which took part in the Juba conference last September hosted by SPLM.

A senior official at the NCP said on Friday that political forces "are entitled to engage in any manifestation that is in accordance with the laws to express their opinion".

However, Ibrahim Ghandour the NCP Secretary for Political Mobilization, stressed that "anyone who takes the initiative for any expression must take precautions in advance against any results that might affect the daily life of the citizens and against any other negative effects that might imperil their lives or properties"

He denounced calls by some parties for a march to the parliament and for boycotting it at the same time in reference to the SPLM bloc.

"We stress that some people who call for staging marches to parliament to pressure it into adopting some laws should remember that they are the same party that left its seats in parliament vacant rather than approve amendments to these laws," he said. "It is regrettable that some try to be in the government while at the same time undertaking the role of opposition. It is clear that we have a long way ahead of us before we can reach rational political practices

that protect Sudan's security and stability".

The SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum said that Monday will be a "historical day for the start of mass popular movement for freedom".

The Popular Congress Party (PCP) Secretary General Kamal Omer said that all preparations were made and that they have notified authorities on their plans but emphasized the "peaceful" nature of the demonstration.

**Al Khartoum** paper states that the parties coalition affirmed yesterday in a conference at the SPLM HQ in Khartoum that staging a mass rally is a right granted by the constitution and called on the authorities to respect that right. The parties rejected all forms of provocation and confirmed they would not engage into confrontation with the regular forces. The political forces held the NCP responsible for the current political stalemate, the paper adds. On his part, a member of the "Sudanese" Congress Party revealed that another rally would take place in front the National Security premises complaining against the National Security Act.

**Al-Ahdath** paper reports that Mariam Al-Sadiq Al-Mahdi confirmed participation of Umma National Party and said that there is still a chance for the NCP to join the Juba Forces Coalition.

## **Gunmen kill 5 peacekeepers in Darfur attacks**

**The Associated Press** reported that gunmen killed five Rwandan soldiers in a series of attacks on the international peacekeeping force in Darfur, a spokesman for the mission said, marking a swift upsurge in violence in the western Sudanese region.

The attacks on Friday and Saturday targeted peacekeepers from the United Nations-African Union force, which deployed nearly two years ago to protect civilians and improve security in Darfur. That violence has largely subsided, but the two attacks on peacekeepers demonstrate how vulnerable the under-funded and ill-equipped UNAMID force remains, as banditry and kidnappings of foreign aid workers continue to plague efforts to stabilize the vast desert region. In Saturday's attack, assailants approached the gate of a camp for people displaced by the conflict and shot at peacekeepers distributing water, said UNAMID spokesman Kemal Saiki. That attack took place about 40 miles (65 kilometers) south of el-Fasher, the capital of northern Darfur.

In the other attack, which took place Friday near a market and a government checkpoint, gunmen fired on a convoy of Rwandan peacekeepers escorting a water tanker near the northern town of Saraf Umra. The force fired back, wounding an assailant, but the attackers escaped, Saiki said.

The attackers' motives are unclear, but they might have been trying to steal the troops' vehicles, he said. "We are urging the authorities to spare no effort to conduct an inquiry and bring those (responsible) to justice," Saiki said.

The attacks bring to 22 the number of peacekeepers killed since the joint force deployed in January 2008.

**Reuters** reports that Sudan on Sunday said it had arrested a number of men suspected of killing three Rwandan peacekeepers in an ambush in Darfur, the first of two deadly attacks on the mission. The governor of north Darfur Osman Kebir told Sudan's state *Suna news agency* a number of men had been arrested and would be charged with the first attack. Kebir condemned the shooting, saying bandits had started to target UNAMID convoys to try and steal their vehicles. He said the men had been taken to north Darfur's capital El Fasher where they would "be presented before a court to receive punishment for their heinous act". UNAMID told *Reuters* it was investigating both attacks and said it was too early to say whether they were linked.

The Rwandan **New Times website** carried a report where the Rwandan government accused the Khartoum government of being behind the ambush in which three RDF peacekeepers were killed and two injured at Saraf Umra in Darfur on Friday.

The RDF spokesman Maj Jill Rutaremara told *The Sunday Times* that there is no known presence of rebel activity in the area where the ambush took place.

"The proximity of the ambush to the checkpoint manned by the government forces raises some

questions. The only logical conclusion the RDF can make is that the RDF Peacekeepers were killed and injured by the government forces," said Rutaremara.

He revealed that the second attack in which two soldiers died yesterday were carried out by gunmen dressed in civilian clothes in Shagilitobay where they were supplying water to Internally Displaced Persons, the army spokesman said. "There is nothing that immediately points an accusing finger to the government forces in the Shangilitobay case apart from the coincidence of timing." "More investigations are needed in this second case to establish the identity of the perpetrators," he added.

Rutaremarara, however, said that the RDF is hopeful that a diplomatic solution will be found. "Meanwhile the RDF peacekeepers are observing maximum vigilance ready to defend themselves and where necessary pursue the attackers as they did. There are always some lessons learnt in any operation. The RDF will constantly review the way they conduct their operations in light of these developments."

Rwanda has over 3,500 troops serving under the UN-AU hybrid force, UNAMID as well as UNMIS.

### **ICC prosecutor 'made a fool of himself' Sudan says**

**(Sudan Tribune)** December 5, Khartoum – The Sudanese government said that the briefing made by the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo exposed the latter as someone who "tailors" laws to use against its officials.

Kamal Obeid the state minister for information told *Sudanese Media Center* (SMC) that Ocampo's report made him a "mockery" in the eyes of international law and a "laughing stock" on his lack of knowledge of the basics and mechanisms of international justice.

He accused the ICC prosecutor of seeking to sabotage the April 2010 elections and the Doha talks between Khartoum and Darfur Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).

Ocampo submitted his semi-annual briefing to the UN Security Council (UNSC) on Friday hailing state cooperation in isolating Sudanese president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir wanted by the court for his alleged role in Darfur war crimes.

He expressed confidence that Bashir will eventually face justice adding that his status as president does not grant him immunity.

The ICC official asked for the UNSC support to ensure that the attention remains on the need to arrest the indicted suspects and to end crimes in Darfur.

The ICC prosecutor also revealed that his office is analyzing whether or not other Sudanese officials could be tried if they are deemed to be denying and covering up the crimes allegedly committed by Khartoum in Darfur.

Most countries on the UNSC including US, UK, France, Croatia, Austria, Japan and Mexico called on Sudan to cooperate with the ICC and adhere to resolution 1593.

However, Russia, China and Burkina Faso urged a balance of peace and justice pursuit so as not to derail post-conflict healing process.

The Libyan delegation lashed out at the ICC and UNSC accusing the latter of hypocrisy on actions taken with regard to Goldstone report on Israeli attack on Gaza strip and reluctance by council members for forcing the Jewish state to investigate the alleged war crimes.

Obeid said that Sudan will continue a diplomatic campaign to counter the "false allegations" by the ICC prosecutor in all the world's capitals.

### **Press Council summons Ajrass Al-Hurriya and Ray Al-Shaab dailies**

**Ajras al-Hurriya** reports that the National Press Council summoned *Ajras Al-Hurriya* and *Ray Al-Shaab* dailies to question them about articles published on the papers. The article published on *Ajras al-Hurriya* was titled "Presidential plane: inaccessible landing strips", whereas the one published in *Ray Al-Shaab* was on the situation in Darfur.

## **NCP agent arrested in Rumbek East County**

**(Sudan Vision)** December 6 - The NCP Lakes Chairman Thomas Bai Malek told *Gurtong* today that his party agent Monyror Athuai Makueping was arrested on 21 November 2009 at Aduol headquarters of Rumbek East County as he monitored the voter registration exercise on the allegation of misleading voters by asking them not to register for the forthcoming elections. "Makueping was locked up in jail where he received 130 lashes", said NCP member Mayen Malou. Another NCP agent Makur Mabor Kau, who was working alongside Makueping narrowly escaped arrest and fled to the state capital Rumbek on the same day. A Rumbek East SPLM County official confirmed that indeed Makueping was found discouraging voters from registering as well as buying voter registration slips. The Lakes State NCP Chairman Malek said he will follow up the case and called for intensive investigations.

## **Four northern customs officials arrested in Yei**

**Al-Intibaha** reports that SPLM authorities in Yei arrested six high ranking customs officials, four of whom came from Khartoum on a training mission. Informed sources told *Al-Intibaha* that the arrest took place on the second day of Eid. The two other officials came from Juba, according to the paper.

## **Constitutional Court summons GoSS leaders on a case filed by Lam Akol**

**Akhir Lahza** reports that the Constitutional Court started looking into the case filed by the Chairman of SPLM - Democratic Change, Lam Akol, on the ban imposed by SPLM against his party in southern Sudan. Reliable sources revealed to the paper that the Court had already summoned some of GoSS officials and would inquire them on the coming two days. Meanwhile, SPLM-DC member Anoti Adigu confirmed that more than eight members of his party were still under arrest in Western Bahr Al-Ghazal, Western Equatoria and Lakes States. Anoti denied the information that said the former Governor of Upper Nile State Galual Deng had joined the party.

## **SPLM's Lino calls for withdrawal of national police in Abyei's oil fields**

**(Sudan Tribune)** December 5, Khartoum - Edward Lino, the Abyei SPLM chairman, has called for immediate withdrawal of the national police from areas around oil fields in the region. Addressing members of the Liberation council on Friday, he said that presence of the national police inside Abyei territory even after the ruling shows clear violation of the Abyei road map and protocol that clearly states that security of the region will be strictly controlled by Joint integrated units and Joint integrated police.

"In the light of this clear provision, I call upon the central government to immediately consider withdrawal of the national police still in Abyei territory so that security of the oil companies, their personnel and assets remains under the control of the JIUS and JIPUS," he said.

He also called on the government to equally instruct elements belonging to Sudan Armed Forces to halt from repressive attitudes hindering free movement of civil population returning to the area from northern states.

There have been several reports that public transports carrying innocent civilians mostly returnees with no military weapons are regularly detained for two to three days on both roads coming from Muglad and Nyamba from Heglig, he said. "Civilians say elements alleged to be part of SAF brigade 31 detain targeted busses under the pretext of armed search operation in the area," he adds.

## **Unity state nominates its governorship candidate for 2010 elections**

**(Sudan Tribune)** December 4 – The SPLM Secretariat in Unity state nominated the Government of Southern Sudan's minister of Health, Dr. Joseph Manytuil Wejang, as the candidate for the position of governor. The meeting in the state's capital of Bentiu was officially

opened by the Government of Southern Sudan's Vice President and SPLM Deputy Chairperson, Dr. Riek Machar Teny. The State governor Brig. Gen. Taban Deng Gai, members of the National Assembly, Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly and Unity State Legislative Assembly attended the opening session for the nomination.

### **WHO confirms first case of swine influenza in South Sudan**

**(Sudan Tribune)** December 4, Juba – The World Health Organization (WHO) reported the first confirmed case of Influenza H1N1 infection in the capital of southern Sudan region, Juba. In a health situation report released on November 30, WHO said the patient who showed flu symptoms had travelled in Europe. It further added that a test done in a laboratory in Nairobi confirmed he is suffering from H1N1 virus. Last July Sudanese authorities in Khartoum confirmed the first two cases of H1N1 flu virus when two Sudanese returning from London tested positive for the virus.

### **Salva Kiir: People need to prepare for outcome of 2011 referendum**

**(Miraya FM)** December 5 – GoSS President Salva Kiir, emphasized the need for people to prepare for outcome of the referendum in 2011 and develop mechanism for its smooth implementation. Speaking at Symposium on Post Referendum, President Kiir said that addressing post-referendum issues are critical to full implementation of the CPA and future of the country. Kiir urged the African neighbors and the international community to abide by the choice of the people and support implementation of the outcome of 2011 referendum.

### **Ex- U.N. investigator scolds U.S. on Darfur**

**(The Washington Post)**, December 4 - A former top U.N. investigator on Thursday accused the Obama administration of failing to enforce a five-year-old arms embargo in Darfur, Sudan, and said weapons continue to flow into the region.

Enrico Carisch, a Swiss national who until October led a U.N. panel investigating violations of the arms embargo, contrasted the administration's efforts with those of President George W. Bush, noting the previous administration's strong advocacy of sanctions against Sudan.

"In contrast to that leadership of 2004 and 2005, the United States appears to have now joined the group of influential states who sit by quietly and do nothing to ensure that sanctions work to protect Darfurians," Carisch said in written testimony for an appearance before the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Africa.

Carisch said key architects of the U.N. arms embargo -- the United States, France and Britain -- have lessened their commitment to enforcing sanctions as U.S.-led efforts to revive peace talks in Sudan have gained traction. "Increasingly it looks like poorly understood and under-enforced U.N. sanctions are being sold out in favor of mediation whose success is far from ensured," he said.

The U.N. Security Council, he noted, has dismissed nearly 100 recommendations in recent years aimed at strengthening the sanctions, including proposals to extend them to all of Sudan. He also said U.S., French and British officials have done little to press for an official debate on the arms embargo in the Security Council.

Obama administration officials challenged Carisch's characterization, saying that Susan E. Rice, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, has been a passionate proponent of tough sanctions and recently implored the world body to provide a more candid account of the Sudanese government's misbehavior in Darfur.

"The Obama Administration is actively engaged in ensuring enforcement of all UN sanctions regimes. Given the priority that this Administration attaches to Sudan -- and Ambassador Rice's well-known hard-line views on the issue, it is not credible to say that U.S. efforts have been anything less than vigorous," Rice's spokesman, Mark Kornblau, said in an e-mail. "The United States is the most active member of the Security Council in pushing for better enforcement of

sanctions and action to protect civilians in Darfur even in the face of a divided Security Council." Carisch alleged that large amounts of foreign ammunition and weapons, principally from China and Chad, have illegally made their way into Darfur in recent years, fueling a conflict that has left more than 300,000 dead and driven more than 2.7 million from their homes.

Also at the hearing, the top U.S. envoy for Sudan, retired Air Force Maj. Gen. J. Scott Gration, provided his first briefing to Congress since the Obama administration announced its strategy for achieving peace in Sudan.

Gration said that top U.S. officials would meet next month to assess Sudan's support for U.S. goals there and to determine whether to reward Khartoum or impose more sanctions. The goals include political settlements in Darfur and southern Sudan and assurances that Sudan will not provide a haven to terrorists.

### **Ethnic violence in south Sudan troubling-US envoy**

**(Reuters)** December 3, Washington - The U.S. special envoy to Sudan voiced concern on Thursday about rising ethnic violence in its southern region and said Washington would step up efforts to help curb fighting ahead of nationwide elections next year.

"We are deeply concerned about the increase of inter-ethnic violence in the south and its effects on local populations," special envoy Scott Gration, a retired Air Force general, told a U.S. House of Representatives sub-committee on Africa and global health.

"As the elections and referenda approach, we will increase our efforts to help mitigate these threats and foster reconciliation efforts," he said in the written text of his remarks, obtained by Reuters.

Gration said U.S. officials were working closely with international and non-governmental organizations to provide emergency relief to people displaced by the recent violence.

The United States and its partners are also ready "to respond quickly if conflict breaks out in the months leading up to the April 2010 elections and the January 2011 referenda."

Gration cited unofficial reports that nearly 12 million Sudanese have registered to vote, though he added that there have been "uneven registration rates across constituencies."

"Voter registration will conclude next week, and while not without problems, we believe it is a positive step forward for the elections," he said.

### **China mulls larger UN peace role**

**(Al Jazeera webpage)** November 6 - China's military is considered to be one of the world's most secretive, but from Haiti to Sudan, more than 2,000 Chinese military and police personnel are now serving as United Nations peacekeepers. About three-quarters of Chinese personnel working for the UN peacekeeping mission are deployed in Africa, with most of them working on infrastructure projects. Al Jazeera's Melissa Chan reports from Beijing that the government has signalled its willingness to deploy more soldiers in the future - including combat troops.

### **ERITREA-SUDAN: A forgotten refugee problem**

**(IRIN)** December 3, Kassala - Eastern Sudan hosts more than 66,000 registered Eritrean refugees, the first of whom arrived in 1968 during the early years of Eritrea's war of independence against Ethiopia. These days, Eritrea's policy of indefinite military conscription, coupled with drought and poor economic opportunities, prompt some 1,800 people to cross into Sudan every month, according to the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR.

"Refugees have been here for the past 30-40 years, which is two to three generations, and that is quite unique," said Peter de Clercq, the UNHCR representative in Sudan.

"It is as far as we know the longest-standing refugee situation in Africa that is still protracted. That is mostly because of the political situation inside Eritrea," he said.

As they planned for their big escape to Europe or Israel, asylum-seekers dreamed of a better life in Sudan. But instead, thousands woke up to the realities of the grim camp conditions, lacking food security or proper healthcare, and sharing scarce resources with Sudanese

nationals. On arrival at the reception centre at Shagarab camp in Kassala state, near the Eritrean border, they are not immediately provided with proper shelter. Only when their refugee status is confirmed, which can take four to six weeks, are they able to move into tents or huts, which they often have to build themselves. "Living here is difficult. Hearing about it from afar, the camp sounded comfortable, but if you come here it seems like [an Eritrean] national service camp, because you can't have any money," said a 22-year-old Eritrean refugee.

Shagarab, with the worst conditions among the three biggest camps in eastern Sudan, houses more than 21,000 mostly Eritrean refugees, in addition to some Ethiopians and Somalis. The 1,800 monthly arrivals also include young men who flee forced conscription in the Eritrean army. The UN World Food Programme supplies the camps with food aid but refugees say it is not enough. Education opportunities for children are also inadequate. Out of 15,000 children in the 12 camps in the east, 6,000 do not get the chance for a primary education because schools lack the capacity to absorb them, UNHCR Africa Director George Okoth-Obbo said later in Khartoum.

In 2002, the refugee status enjoyed by those who had fled the independence war, or subsequent conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, was revoked, on the grounds that the circumstances that led to their exodus no longer pertained. Although thousands of refugees returned to Eritrea, some refused to do so. Some of the refugees move to other cities in Sudan looking for employment. The government says there are about 40,000 refugees living in urban centres, sharing services and job opportunities with Sudanese nationals. Although UNHCR says the government has not rejected any Eritrean asylum-seekers, it does try to reduce the pull of the refugee camps to potential ones.

With no clear end in sight, UNHCR says the refugee problem could be exacerbated as agencies expect a bigger influx of Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees to cross into Sudan in the next few months because of a drought and food shortages.

### **UNHCR shuts down refugee camps**

**(Juba Post)** December 3 - Six refugee camps have been closed down, the director for regional bureau of Africa Mr George Okoth Obbo has revealed to journalists in Juba. Camps were shut down in Uganda, Ethiopia, DRC and in Central African Republic. He further pointed out at some community based projects that the UNHCR has initiated as in Magwi County, Eastern Equatorial State.

### **International Volunteer Day celebration**

**(SUNA)** December 5, Khartoum - The Sudanese Environment Conservation Society celebrated in collaboration with the United Nations Volunteers the International Volunteer Day, December 5, by organizing a day for tree planting at Wawisi village in the northern rural area of Khartoum North Locality. Hundreds of volunteers participated planting some 1000 trees by the main road in the village, houses, schools, mosques and the health centre. The celebration of the International Volunteer Day comes this year under the motto "Volunteering for our Planet."

### **UNMIS Organizes Workshop on UNSC 1820, 1888 Resolutions**

**(Sudan Vision)** December 6, Khartoum - A workshop on raising awareness about the United Nations Security Council's Resolutions 1820 and 1888 regarding Elimination of Violence against Women during conflict and post conflict stages will take place today in Khartoum organized by UNMIS in collaboration with Sudan's Ministry of Justice. The workshop comes within the framework of a 16-day campaign on combating violence against women annually marked on December 25 by the Ministry of Justice unit concerned with violence against women. Rashida al-Mufti, Legal Advisor at Ministry of Justice affirmed that the Ministry had finalized making all laws consistent with the Interim Constitution 2005.