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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

SRSG praises role of NEC

The Citizen reports that SRSG Ashraf Qazi has praised the efforts of the NEC and its ability to surpass most of the challenges and obstacles that confronted it in holding elections.

This came when NEC Chairman Abel Alier received Qazi on the occasion of the expiry of his tenure in Sudan, in the presence of the Commission's SG Prof. Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah.

Mr. Qazi appreciated the level of the relations that he established at the official and private levels.

Meanwhile, Abel Alier praised the role played by Mr. Qazi and his cooperation with the NEC.

Al-Watan reports Mr. Alier has appreciated Mr. Qazi's fruitful role and cooperation as well as his constructive suggestions which resulted in the establishment of several electoral committees especially the committee on policies to mobilize donors' logistical and financial support. NEC Deputy Chairman Mr. Abdallah also commended the SRSG's fruitful cooperation with NEC, saying the electoral process is in need for more cooperation and coordination between the NEC and UNMIS to ensure democratic transformation.

According to **Al-Ahdath**, Mr. Qazi is sad that he is leaving Sudan at the end of his tenure before witnessing the kickoff of elections and the democratic transformation.

UN role limited to CPA and popular consultation – SPLM

SPLM said the UN role is confined to monitoring the implementation of the CPA and creation of conducive atmosphere for popular consultation for the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile, **Rai Al-Shaab** reports.

SPLM Northerner Sector spokesperson Keji told the newspaper yesterday that the UN role in Darfur is not like in the South, saying the CPA provides for specific roles to be played by the UN within the framework of monitoring the implementation of the CPA but there is no provision in the CPA for direct intervention by the UN.

SPLA preparing to attack Misseriya

Al-Wifaq reports unnamed SPLA leading figure and GoSS minister as saying that the SPLA is preparing to attack Misseriya area northwest border of the Unity State. The minister said the SPLA has the capacity to silence the Misseriya and accused the NCP of supporting the tribe.

Al-Sudani reports SPLA spokesperson Kuol Deim Kuol has said that the attack was "preplanned and the Misseriya are backed by some force".

According to **Rai Al-Shaab**, the Misseriya have destroyed the SPLA's "Girintia" camp in Abyei in retaliation to their repeated attacks on the tribe in Debab. Misseriya leader and MP Mohamed Abdullah Adam said the fighting is prove of a total absence of the Government in the area, adding the NCP has failed to administer the area and has also compromised the Misseriya rights.

Sudan Tribune website 5/2/10 reported that some 18 people have been killed in Unity state during clashes between the southern Sudan army and Misseriya cattle herders from South Kordofan in northern Sudan.

Southern Sudan Government in order to curb tribal violence has disarmed local population in

Unity state and also requires the Misseriya pastoralists to deliver their arms before to graze their herds in southern states.

"It was a surprise attack. They managed to kill seven — six soldiers and one civilian," said the SPLA spokesperson Kuol Diem Kuol in a statement to Reuters about the latest attack occurred on Wednesday.

Kuol further said that eight bodies from the Misseriya were found in the Unity state. An earlier attack killed three from both sides.

In another development, the SPLA spokesperson said that fighting between the southern Sudanese Toposa tribe and neighboring Kenyan Turkana tribe also erupted on Wednesday, killing eight people.

Cross border cattle rustling and attacks carried by the Sudanese Toposa angered Kenyan authorities and pushed Nairobi in the past to protest formally requesting the return of the stolen cattle.

Africa warns international court over Sudan decision

AFP 6/210 — The AU on Friday said the ICC's decision to consider adding genocide charges to an arrest warrant for President Omar Al-Bashir harms Sudan's peace process.

"The AU reiterates that the search for justice should be pursued in a manner not detrimental to the search for peace. The latest decision by the ICC runs in the opposite direction," the pan-African body said in a statement.

An appeals chamber of the ICC on Wednesday ordered a review of Bashir's arrest warrant for alleged atrocities in the western Sudanese province of Darfur.

It directed judges to reconsider their decision omitting genocide from the warrant issued in March last year, saying they had made "an error in law".

The African Union said the ICC's decision comes at a sensitive time for Sudan -- with elections due to be held in April and a referendum on self-determination for Southern Sudan set for January 2011.

"For the African continent, the successful completion of these processes and, more generally, the implementation of the CPA are of utmost importance," it added.

The AU had asked the UN Security Council to defer proceedings against Bashir, but it has yet to do so.

On Tuesday, the 53-member bloc sought an amendment to the Rome Statute that established the ICC to enable the UN General Assembly to defer cases when the Security Council fails to decide on them.

Arab League slams ICC decision to review Sudan's genocide charges

Sudan Tribune website 6/2/10 — The Arab League slammed on Saturday the ICC decision to reconsider genocide charge against Sudanese President Omer Al-Bashir terming it as "unacceptable."

"This action hampers the ongoing African and Arab efforts to promote peace process in Sudan," said Cairo-based Arab organization. The statement also called to provide an opportunity for the implementation of the recommendations of the High-level African Union led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki about peace and reconciliation, justice and accountability.

Darfur talks in Doha enter critical stage as mediation receive responses

Sudan Tribune website 6/2/10 – The Darfur mediation team will determine within the coming weeks the fate of the stalled negotiations between Khartoum and the rebel groups gathered in the Arab Gulf state of Qatar amid growing impatience by the host.

The parties to the talks were given a set of questions by the mediation and were required to answer and respond by Saturday after which it will be reviewed and a decision will be taken on whether full blown negotiations can go ahead.

Among the rebel groups present are the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), Sudan Liberation Movement SLM-Revolutionary forces as well as Addis Ababa groups which is comprised of those Darfur rebels whose representatives met last year in the Ethiopian capital under American auspices.

One of the major issues facing the mediation is uniting these groups to form one position when negotiating with the Sudanese government.

The Doha-based Al-Arab newspaper however, said that JEM is insisting on uniting all other groups under its umbrella while other rebels want equal representation in one negotiating team.

Darfur rebel infighting drives 10,000 from their homes

Reuters 5/2/10 - Infighting in one of Darfur's rebel groups has driven at least 10,000 people from their homes in the restive Jabel Marra area, deepening the humanitarian crisis in Sudan's west, officials said.

Darfur's rebels have fractured into dozens of groups since their rebellion began in early 2003, hindering peace efforts and increasing insecurity in Sudan's west, where the United Nations estimates a humanitarian crisis has claimed 300,000 lives.

"There has been internal fighting in the SLA (Sudan Liberation Army)," Abu el-Gasim, the Governor of West Darfur state told Reuters on Thursday.

SLA commanders told Reuters from Jabel Marra that they had disagreed with the group's founder and leader, Abdel Wahed Mohamed el-Nur, because they wanted to unify rebel ranks and take part in peace talks with the government to end seven years of conflict.

"Abdel Wahed rejects this totally and we cannot understand why," Adam Idriss, a senior SLA figure, told Reuters by telephone. "Then they began to assassinate our leaders."

Nur, who lives in Paris, denied any dissent in his movement and said those fighting them were government agents.

"I am blaming the government for this," Nur loyalist Ibrahim el-Helu said from Paris.

U.N.-African Union (UNAMID) peacekeepers confirmed the reports of factional fighting over the last 10 days.

"From our contact with humanitarian agencies we understand there are about 10,000 people who have been displaced," UNAMID spokesman Kemal Saiki said.

Khartoum to lead joint Sudan-Chad border force

AFP 5/2/10 — Sudan will be the first to lead a joint Chadian-Sudanese border force, delegations told AFP on Friday following talks in Khartoum.

"The two parties have agreed that for the first six months, the Sudanese side will lead the joint force," according to a document signed by Chadian secretary of state for Defence Mahamat Bashir Okoromi and General Mohammed Atta al-Moula, Sudan's head of intelligence.

"The general staff of the joint force, which will be led by a Sudanese and deputized by a Chadian for the first six months, will have its headquarters in El-Geneina," capital of West Darfur, some 20 kilometres (12 miles) from the Chad border, a Chadian official told AFP.

"On February 18, the commanders of the joint force of the two countries will meet in El-Geneina" to "get acquainted with observation posts and determine the practicalities of the deployment of the force until February 25," the document said.

An agreement was signed last month to normalize relations between both countries.

Under the deal, a joint force will be deployed on their border, which effectively means that Chad would have to stop supporting Darfur rebels and Sudan would cease backing Chadian rebels.

A meeting is scheduled between legal teams from both countries on February 8 in N'djamena to carve out the joint force's rules of engagement.

"We have already prepared our troops and our equipment. We have named our officials and are waiting for word of deployment from the top," a Sudanese diplomat told AFP.

The force should be made up of 3,000 men, with Sudan and Chad each providing 1,500, the diplomat said.

According to verbal agreements at the talks, "in case of need the joint border force can solicit the intervention of troops and security forces of the country where it is deployed."

"We have decided to finish with the so-called Sudan-Chad conflict," said Okoromi, adding that "upon our return, we will put everything in place to implement the agreement."

Chadian President Idriss Deby Itno said last week that he will travel to Khartoum on Monday for talks with President Omar al-Bashir.

A large Chadian delegation arrived in the Sudanese capital on Friday to prepare for Deby's arrival, an AFP reporter said.

President of Chad Idriss Deby due in Khartoum tomorrow

Local dailies report that Chad's President Idriss Deby is due in Khartoum tomorrow on 2-day official visit for talks with President Al-Bashir.

French aid worker released after three months in captivity

Sudan Tribune website 6/2/10 – A French aid worker who is part of the Red Cross arrived in the Sudanese capital almost three months after being taken at gunpoint in Eastern Chad area close to the borders with Sudan.

A group calling itself Freedom Eagles of Africa claimed responsibility for kidnapping Laurent Maurice saying it is doing this to punish France for not changing its policies in the region.

On Saturday the group said they freed Maurice because of France's "positive role" in repairing ties between Chad and Sudan.

"We have indeed released Laurent Maurice. We did not act for money but because we wanted France to change its policies in the region," Abu Mohammed al-Rizeigi, spokesman for the group, told Agence France Presse (AFP) by telephone.

"We appreciate the positive role that France has played in the latest negotiations between Chad and Sudan," Rizeigi said.

Maurice told reporters that he was not beaten or threatened by his kidnappers who took him to Sudan's restive region of Darfur.

VP Taha to visit Cairo today

Local dailies report VP Ali Osman Taha will travel to Cairo today on 3-day official visit for consultations with President Mubarak and senior Egyptian officials on a range of issues including bilateral relations.

Motives of NCP MP assassination personal – police

Local dailies report informed sources as saying that the motives for the assassination of the NCP MP and electoral nominee Mohamed Saliheen was personal not political. According to **Al-Rai Al-Aam**, four suspects have been apprehended including the son of the deceased for investigation.

Sudan Tribune website 6/2/10 reported that the Sudanese Government today denied that the killing of the NCP nominee in the parliamentary elections next April was politically-motivated.

On Friday Colonel Mohamed Salhain who is running in the legislative assembly for new Halfa constituency was found dead inside his car outside his home in the Sudanese capital after suffering knife stab wounds.

However, the NCP spokesperson Fathi Sheila gave a different version of what happened saying Salhain was killed at his doorstep contrary to police and local media reports and suggesting it was an act of armed robbery.

"Men stabbed him on his doorstep and fled, taking with them his mobile phone. He was wounded and was rushed to hospital but he died of his injuries" Sheila said.

"I don't think it is a political act," he added.

Salhain was buried with the presence of defense and interior ministers as well as the speaker of the parliament.

Elections Special:

Independent candidates pledges to remain members of the SPLM

Sudan Tribune website 6/2/10 — Independent candidates contesting in the upcoming general elections scheduled to take place next April have pledged to remain members of the SPLM in

the event they are elected.

"We do not have intention to leave this party, though our decision to run independently is being politicized for political support by our rivals in some areas, said MP Arthur Akuien Chol who stands for parliamentary seat in Juba as his name were left out by Northern Bahr el Ghazal State Electoral College.

We would not have taken this decision if Electoral College results were fair and meaningful, I would not have accepted run independently if it was fair exercise, he adds.

Similarly General Dau Aturjong reiterated that he and his groups with their supporters have no intention to leaving the party he said has served for far too long, "we remain committed members of the SPLM even if we are elected as independent candidates."

General Dau Aturjong contests for gubernatorial post in Northern Bahr el Ghazal against incumbent governor Paul Malong Awan being SPLM official nominee.

The gubernatorial aspirant who traveled to Juba from Aweil on Friday 5, to attend a meeting called by the SPLM political bureau with all independent candidates, said he remain committed member of the SPLM and will make no mistake to work against his own party even if he wins the upcoming elections without political support from the SPLM leadership.

"I have reason to break away from SPLM because of a mistake made by Electoral College, it has to be challenged and solution found for it while still member of the SPLM," he stressed.

He made these statement just hours prior to attending Political Bureau whose aims are to dissuade independents candidates from contesting the upcoming elections in order to maintain peace and unity within the party.

General Dau Aturjong Nyuol was among the first senior Sudan People's Liberation Movement members to declare their intentions of running against official nominees.

Angelina Teny, state minister for energy at the government of National Unity, Alfred Lado Gore, a presidential advisor for diplomatic affairs in the government of South Sudan, Sarah Nyannath, Upper Nile State minister of Social Welfare and development, Col. Joseph Bakosoro who works at the SPLM southern secretariat in Juba among others were also reported to have declared intentions to run independently in their states.

This prompted SPLM leadership to call emergency meeting which ended with approval to run independently.

SPLM Secretary General, Pagan Amum, also confirmed that independent candidates are still members of the SPLM adding several members tried to quit the party after choosing to run as independent candidates but were told not to and asked to remain with the SPLM.

Their interest to run independently has been discussed and a compromise was reached last week, he said. This is why a meeting had been called by leadership with members running independently.

Asked what this meeting would address, he said, "As SPLM, our first interest is unity amongst members and acceptance of responsibility to sway no interest of Sudanese people embodied in

the SPLM vision and mission," he said.

However, if they insist to run independently, we have to listen to their voices and see possibilities of maintaining them as members after elections, he added.

Court to decide on appeals against Al-Bashir, Kiir and other candidates

Al-Sahafa reports that the Supreme Court will pronounce its ruling tomorrow on the appeals filed against candidatures of Omer Al-Bashir, Salva Kiir Mayardit and other electoral candidates. NEC said the Court's ruling would be final and binding on all parties.

Political parties (Juba coalition) threatens to boycott elections

The political parties (Juba Coalition) have threatened to boycott the forthcoming elections if the NEC refuses to extend deadline for withdrawal of nomination, **Al-Ayyam** reports. The coalition will reportedly submit a petition of protest to the NEC today to demand respect to the elections law.