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Referendum Monitor

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Highlights

SSRC awaiting Presidency decision on proposed referendum schedule

Al-Rai Al-Aam 7/10/10 – Spokesperson of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC) Jamal Mohamed Ibrahim said the Commission has proposed 14 November as the date for the kick-off of registration for referendum, adding it would be submitted to the Presidency today for approval. In press statements yesterday, Mr. Jamal expected the registration materials to arrive within two weeks. In the South, he said, the formation of the referendum registration committees have been completed by 90% but efforts are still continuing to complete the same in the North.

However, *Al-Ahram* 7/10/10 reports that the proposed schedules were submitted to the Presidency yesterday and the SSRC is awaiting the approval.

In a related development, *Sudan Tribune website* 6/10/10 reported that the commission that is tasked with overseeing the South Sudan self-determination referendum signed a memorandum of understanding with the European Union (EU) allowing the latter to monitor the key vote and setting the ground rules for the work of their observers.

The commission spokesman Jamal Mohammed Ibrahim was quoted by Sudan state agency (SUNA) as saying that the MoU includes clauses on the rights and obligations of the EU monitors who will be deployed in several states. Ibrahim said that 80-85 EU observers were expected to monitor the vote.

Carlo De Filippi, the head of the EU delegation in Khartoum, told AFP that the European body “remains committed to support the referendum in Sudan”.

"The European Observation Mission is an independent body who will cover both the registration and polling periods," he added.

“An acceptable agreement or the vote will fail” – Misseriya tell Gration

Al-Rai Al-Aam 7/10/10 – The indirect talks between the NCP and the SPLM on Abyei continued in Addis Ababa yesterday and reportedly there is a wide optimism that the talks would break the deadlock over the issue after leaked information indicated a breakthrough on the issue of rights of citizenship and a rapprochement on the question of voter eligibility.

Head of the Misseriya delegation to the talks, Rahama Abdul Rahman Al-Nur, at meeting with US envoy Scott Gration, warned that all efforts to resolve the problem including the upcoming vote would fail unless there is an agreement acceptable to the parties.

Meanwhile, *Al-Ahdath* 7/10/10, reports NCP leading figure Qutbi Al-Mahdi has pledged that his party would continue the dialogue with the SPLM despite its disappointment. Al-Mahdi has supported the Misseriya in their rejection of the US incentives.

According to *Sudan Tribune website* 6/10/10, Gration met on Wednesday with delegations of

the Misseriya and Dinka Ngok tribes separately on the sidelines of talks taking place in Addis Ababa between the National Congress Party (NCP) and Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) that is focused on Abyei, according to state media.

The U.S. sponsored talks appeared to have ran into major difficulties particularly on the issue of whether the Arab Misseriya tribe members should be allowed to take part in the referendum.

The NCP wants to ensure that the cattle-herding Misseriya tribe will have the right to vote in the referendum. The SPLM however, says that according to the 2008 ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) which redefined the Abyei borders, the Misseriya have no right to vote in areas assigned to the Dinka Ngok by the tribunal.

Sudan official news agency (SUNA) quoted informed sources as saying that the Dinka Ngok and the SPLM rejected a U.S. proposal stating that the Misseriya are to be given a portion of the oil produced in Abyei and be allowed to use pastures south of the January 1 1956 borders, in the event that the South Sudan referendum results in the creation of a new state.

The Misseriya vowed last week not to allow the vote to take place even if they have to resort to force unless they are allowed to participate.

The sources speaking to SUNA said that the Misseriya insisted on their full rights in Abyei, including the right to vote in the referendum, as well as power and wealth sharing.

Sudan's defense minister discusses referendum with Algerian president

Sudan Tribune website 6/10/10 - Sudan's defense minister arrived yesterday in Algeria to discuss the referendum on south Sudan self-determination with the President Abdelaziz Bouteflika.

"We came to Algeria in the framework of continuous consultation with President Bouteflika," said the Sudanese minister in statements reported by the official news agency in Alger.

"We intend to brief him on the situation in Sudan and about recent development there and consult him on these issues particularly Sudan will witness in three months the referendum on self determination," he said.

"President Bouteflika, is an Arabic figure that has a weight and also have extensive relationships at the international level," Abdelrahim said following his arrival there.

Kiir denounces reverse repatriation, calls for dialogue

The Citizen 7/10/10 – GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit is angered by the successive bungled repatriation schemes for the IDPs living in the North but has called for south-south dialogue to iron differences where they exist among southerners so as to collectively focus on the impending independence vote.

He said although the Government has committed an amount of \$30 million on repatriating the IDPs in the North to the South, the repatriates use the same means to return to the North turning the steps into viscously failing efforts.

In the 2010 annual budget, the regional parliament approved SDG 11 million for repatriation of southerners living in the North.

SPLA troops build up near the White Nile State borders

Al-Intibaha 7/10/10 - SAF confirmed spotting SPLA troops at Joda area on the border between the White Nile State and Upper Nile State. SAF spokesperson Lt. Col. Alsawarmi Khalid Sa'ad has described such movements by the SPLA as clear infringement of the 1.1.1956 borderline. He added that such violations may negatively affect the post-referendum security arrangements between the two parties. However, he stated that the situation was under control.

According to *Al-Sahafa* 7/10/10, the White Nile State governor and the state security committee including commander of the 18th Brigade and the directors of state police and security inspected the area. Ashorog TV reported that the Commissioner of Jabalain Locality had contacted SPLM leaders at neighboring Renk County who affirmed their ability to address the problem. The commissioner further stated that they had close coordination with their counterparts at Renk aiming at fostering stability and enhancing the deep rooted social and economic relations between the different groups on both sides.

However, SPLA spokesperson Kuol Diem Kuol has rejected allegations of an SPLM military buildup, saying such claims were meant to cover SAF troops build up in the area to attack the SPLA. He further stated that the SPLA has only 120 troop strength in Joda since 2007 with its command office at 4 km to the south of Joda.

Kuol challenged SAF to allow UN to conduct field investigations. "There are huge and heavily-armed SAF military buildups at the border to attack us," he said. Kuol also directed harsh criticism at UNMIS, calling on it to wake up from its deep sleep to investigate the buildup.

Other Highlights

Sudanese opposition intends to meet visiting UNSC delegation

Al-Akhbar 7/10/10 – A source from the national consensus forces (Sudanese opposition), speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Sudanese political forces intend to meet with members of the visiting UNSC delegation for discussion on the status quo including the referenda, Darfur crisis, freedoms and the hard living conditions.

According to *Al-Ahram* 7/10/10, the SC delegation will meet with leaders of the Sudanese opposition namely Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi, DUP leader Mohamed Osman Al-Mirghani, PCP leader Hassan Al-Turabi and Communist Party leader Mohamed Ibrahim Nugud.

GoSS describes meeting with UNSC delegation as successful

Al-Ahram 7/10/10, GoSS Cabinet Affairs minister "Chirino Ithanq" has described the visiting UNSC delegation's meeting with GoSS officials as successful. The delegation is scheduled to visit Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly and Al-Rajaf centre for training referendum police. The delegation will also visit Wau.

SLM rebels urge Security Council delegation to visit Darfur

Sudan Tribune website 6/10/10 - Darfur rebel Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) urged today the UN Security Council delegation to visit central Darfur mountainous area of Jebel Marra to inspect the situation of civilians affected by the bombing of government warplanes.

A UN Security Council delegation is expected to arrive Thursday to El-Fasher to discuss ongoing effort to end Darfur conflict and hold talks with the UNAMID officials on the security situation there.

The delegation, which was warmly welcomed by crowds in Juba streets, held today talks with the first vice-president and head of southern Sudan government Salva Kiir Mayadrit on the referendum on independence of the semi-autonomous region.

"We welcome the visit of the UN Security Council to Darfur and hope they will take a strong stance against the daily bombing of civilians in Jebel Marra," said Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) General Commander Abdel Gadir Abdel Rahman Ibrahim (Gadora) who was speaking to Sudan Tribune from Darfur.

"We also wish to extend an invitation for the delegation to visit the areas attacked recently by the army warplanes where thousands of civilians fled their home and now without shelter," he stressed pledging to do anything they can to facilitate the visit.

The SLM/A refuses to join the peace process in Doha asking the Sudanese government to stop violence against civilians in Darfur. However, Paris-based SLM leader holds regular consultations with the peace mediator and French officials over the peace process.

The leading rebel commander said the SLM/A is ready to hold peace talks, "but we want a genuine peace addressing the root causes of the problem".

SLM/A rebels say the Sudanese military planes bombard Jebel Marra regularly. Last week according to the rebels, the army bombed and burned four villages in the area. The attack killed 45 school children and 55 civilians in Jawa and displaced some 7000 civilians.

Today Gadora said the army bombed Soun located at 13 km from Deraibat in South Darfur. He added tens of civilians are killed and hundreds fled the area.

UN envoys put spotlight on Sudan conflict fears

AFP 6/10/10 - Chanting crowds greeted UN Security Council envoys on Wednesday in south Sudan which wants to become the world's newest nation while international leaders highlighted the risk of renewed conflict.

A UN Security Council delegation arrived in the south Sudan regional capital of Juba to reinforce its message that the referendum must be held on time and in peaceful conditions.

Thousands of children and adults lined the streets of Juba for the arrival of the UN Security Council ambassadors as they started a four-day trip to Sudan to highlight the importance of the vote.

"The Referendum Must Be Held on Time," said banners held up by the crowds, who chanted songs, while some beat out rhythms on the ground with spears.

Ambassadors from Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States and 10 other Security Council nations were warmly greeted by Salva Kiir, the vice president of Sudan and leader of the administration that wants to break away.

Kiir has called the vote date "sacrosanct" and warned of the risk of conflict if it is delayed.

The UN ambassadors say their message to Sudanese on this mission is to make sure that the January 9 votes are held on time, in peace and has a credible result.

Some Western governments fear that if the vote is delayed, Kiir's former rebel movement could declare unilateral independence, sparking a new conflict.

The UN ambassadors arrived from Uganda where they held talks with President Yoweri Museveni, who pledged his support for efforts to make sure the vote is peaceful. Uganda has in the past been a strong supporter of Sudan's southern rebels.

The ambassadors are to inspect UN training facilities for south Sudanese police on Thursday before going on to Darfur where the rumbling conflict since 2003 is causing new concern.

South Sudan president pardons rebel army officers

Sudan Tribune website 6/10/10 - The President of the semi-autonomous Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) and Commander-in-Chief of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), General Salva Kiir Mayardit, has issued an Executive Order, pardoning senior army officers who rebelled or fought against the SPLA forces before and after April's elections.

Kiir's order issued on Wednesday bestows amnesty on Major General Gabriel Tanginye, Lt. General George Athor Deng and Colonel Gatluak Gai. It also urges them to rejoin the rank and file of the SPLA forces and move freely in the South.

The SPLA accused its ex-foe, Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) of supporting the renegade officers saying they serve to destabilize the southern region.

Major General Tanginye was accused by GoSS of causing military confrontations with the SPLA in 2006 and 2008, which left about three hundred people dead in the Upper Nile state's capital of Malakal. General Athor and Colonel Gai have also rebelled and clashed with the SPLA in protest of the outcome of the gubernatorial elections in Jonglei and Unity states, respectively.

Athor, who served and held senior positions within the SPLA, refused to concede defeat and claimed the vote was rigged.

Kiir said that the pardon will not come into effect unless the three officers unconditionally lay down their arms and rejoin the SPLA.

The move comes one day after the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) kicked off preparatory meetings with all the Southern Sudan political parties for the purpose of reaching a consensus on the referendum and post-referendum era.

On Tuesday and Wednesday the Vice President and the Deputy Chairperson of the SPLM, Riek Machar, chaired meetings with 17 southern political parties to discuss the way forward and prepare for next week's conference.

In a press statement after Wednesday's meeting, the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry and the SPLM Deputy Secretary General for Southern Sector, Ann Itto, said the parties have agreed on the agenda.

Itto who will also head the Information sub-committee in the preparatory committee added that the conference is to reconcile and achieve a consensus on the upcoming Southern Sudan referendum which should be free, fair and transparent.

Doha Talks to conclude on the 19th of October

Al-Sahafa 7/10/10 - The Qatari mediation set the 19th of October as the final day for the talks between government and the Liberation and Justice Movement over the contentious issues. The mediation will then prepare a document on matters agreed upon to be presented to all components of Darfur.

Mr. Omer Adam Rahma, from the government side, stated that some progress has been made while other issues such as reconciliation and compensations remain contentious.

UNAMID patrol attacked, four aid workers killed in an ambush

Al-Rai Al-Aam 7/10/10 - A UNAMID patrol was attacked yesterday by unidentified armed men near Kutum in North Darfur State. A UNAMID press release stated that the armed men opened fire on a patrol protecting a water tanker which resulted in wounding two UNAMID personnel.

The press release also stated that four aid workers were killed in an ambush in Gandi area to the west of Nyala city in South Darfur where armed men opened fire on INGO vehicle and looted the luggage.

According to *Sudan tribune website* 6/10/10, gunmen opened fire on a patrol of peacekeepers Tuesday in North Darfur but nobody was harmed, the hybrid operation said today.

The ambush occurred 16 km south west of Kutum, North Darfur when a group of seven armed men opened fire on the patrol which was escorting a water tanker.

The assailants ran away when the UNAMID peacekeepers returned fire, the hybrid mission said.

Also no UNAMID soldier was injured during the attack only two tires of an Armoured Personnel Carrier were damaged by bullets, the mission said.

The peacekeepers, who are supposed to cover an area the size of France today, said also they are investigating an attack on four Sudanese aid workers belonging to an international NGO.

The ambush took place on October 4 by two gunmen in Gandi area, 45 km west of Nyala, South Darfur. The attacker robbed the personal stuff of the workers and tried to carjack their vehicle but nobody was injured.

Sudan government continues to restrict aid groups from Kalma Camp

ReliefWeb 6/10/10 - The IDPs at Kalma camp complained of poor health and lack of water at the camp because of the fuel shortage. Aid organizations are prevented from entering the camp, said a camp official to Radio Dabanga.

He said that since early September the water supply at the camp has been a responsibility divided among three organizations, CARE Switzerland, Oxfam UK, and IRC. But the government is still restricting organizations from entering and making them go at night for permission to enter, he said.

Great lakes leaders meet in CAR to counter LRA

Al-Sahafa 7/10/10 - UN and African Union send out invitations to countries affected by the LRA attacks for a consultative meeting to be held in CAR capital Bangui between 13th and 14th of this month.

The government of the Southern Sudan will be represented by a delegation headed by the head of the executive committee on talks with LRA while the central government of Sudan will be represented by a separate delegation. The consultative meeting aims at working out new road map to deal with the LRA which threaten lakes region.

Head of Darfur's United Revolutionary Front killed in a battle

Al-Sahafa 7/10/10 - Ibrahim Ahmed Abdalla Jadalla Alzibaidi, leader of the Revolutionary Forces Front, was killed two days ago near Jabal Marra when his convoy was attacked. A press release signed by Alhadi Ajab Addor, Front commander, revealed that Alzibaidi was killed and the spokesperson of the Front was arrested.

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