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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

CPA partners began talks in Khartoum on pending issues

Al-Sahafa 8/11/10 – the NCP and the SPLM engaged yesterday in talks in Khartoum to resolve pending issues particularly Abyei, referendum, border demarcation, popular consultation in southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile areas and relations between the North and the South regardless of the referendum result.

AUHIP chairman Thabo Mbeki told reporters that the two parties' talks would continue until Thursday and would focus on issues of citizenship, political and economic cooperation between the North and the South and oil. Mbeki hoped that the two parties would reach an agreement within five days, adding that President Al-Bashir and his deputy Salva Kiir would be the patrons of these talks.

The talks were convened in presence of US envoy Scott Gration and SRSG Haile Menkerios.

Meanwhile, *Al-Khartoum* 8/11/2010 reports that the CPA parties are also to hold meetings in Vienna to settle their controversial issues.

CPA partners receive Obama's road map

Al-Rai Al-Aam 8/11/10 – The Sudanese Government is currently studying phased proposals conveyed by Chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee John Kerry to lift sanctions imposed on Sudan, to write off debts and to remove Sudan's name from the terrorist list in exchange for NCP's concession on the Abyei territory.

Sources said the Government told Kerry that it had agreed to the South's self-determination in return for peace and is ready to accept the referendum result but it would not make concessions on Abyei.

AFP 7/11/10 reported that US Senator John Kerry said during a visit to Sudan on Sunday that he delivered a roadmap aimed at resolving disputes between the North and South before a January referendum that may partition the country.

"President (Barack) Obama asked me to come here with his special envoy General (Scott) Gration and White House security adviser Michelle Gavin to offer his own proposal," said Kerry.

"President Obama offered a roadmap to solve Abyei and other issues," he told reporters of the disputed oil-rich region straddling north and south.

Kerry, who provided no details on the Obama proposal, met presidential aide Nafie Ali Nafie in Khartoum before leaving the country.

Sudan Tribune website 7/11/10 reported Kerry as saying "Sudan can find itself off the list of states that sponsor terrorism as early as July 2011 should it facilitate the self-determination votes in Abyei and South Sudan and recognize their outcome".

The "Politico" magazine quoted unnamed senior U.S. officials as saying that President Barack Obama attached several conditions to the offer including that Khartoum facilitate the conduct of a transparent and on-time referendum on the status of Southern Sudan and respecting its result.

Additionally, Khartoum must implement "all appropriate post-referendum agreements - related to border agreements, currency, citizenship and other matters," to fulfill U.S. conditions to be considered for accelerated removal from the state terror sponsor list, the official said.

The administration proposal Kerry carried to Khartoum "decouples the state sponsor of terrorism issue from Darfur," a second senior U.S. official said Sunday. "But doing this in no way undermines the importance of the resolution of humanitarian and political problems that have plagued Darfur for the last decade. The comprehensive sanctions that have been in place [on Sudan] since 2003 and 2004 remain in place until we see a resolution of the Darfur crisis."

Obama's offer moves up by at least six months the date by which Khartoum might come off the list. But the U.S. officials emphasized a final decision would still be contingent on Sudan halting all sponsorship of terrorism for at least six months before the July 2011 target date and pledging not to resume such assistance in the future.

"President Obama made clear in the proposal conveyed this weekend that if Sudan's leaders take concrete steps to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, including recognizing the results of the referendum in January, he is prepared to immediately take significant steps to begin to transform the bilateral relationship. This would be the beginning of a new roadmap for addressing key bilateral issues as post-referendum issues are resolved," he added.

Obama's carrots to Khartoum may include more than just getting off the terrorism list. On Saturday Kerry met with Sudanese minister of Finance and National Economy, Ali Mahmoud Hassanein to discuss the country's \$35.7 billion debt and ways to get a relief.

Sudan state media said that the US Senator promised the establishment of a committee comprising the Sudanese and US sides to deliberate and arrive at a resolution to Sudan's foreign debts.

A well-placed source in Khartoum told Sudan Tribune on Friday that Western diplomats in the capital believe that Kerry may also offer U.S. support for deferring the arrest warrant against Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir through the UN Security Council for one year that can be renewed indefinitely.

But U.S. officials today emphasized that separate U.S. sanctions imposed over Darfur — which Obama extended for another year on Nov. 1 — would remain until Khartoum improved conditions in the region, where the United Nations estimates up to 300,000 people died following a revolt in 2003, they said.

"Those ... sanctions remain in place and they are the ones that have a significant effect on Sudan's economy and on the government of Sudan itself," said another official, who added that future steps such as debt relief and an exchange of ambassadors would all depend upon progress in Darfur.

Sudan unmoved on oil region row despite U.S. offer

Reuters 8/11/10- Sudan refused on Monday to back down over a disputed referendum in an oil-producing region, despite a U.S. offer to drop Khartoum from a terror blacklist provided it goes ahead on schedule alongside a secession vote.

U.S. officials said on Sunday that Washington would remove Sudan from its list of state sponsors of terrorism by July 2011 if the referendum in Abyei region was held on time on Jan. 9, when southern Sudan is due to vote on whether to become an independent nation.

Ibrahim Ghandour, a senior NCP official, made clear the deadlock stands which means Abyei's vote is unlikely to happen on time.

"No prize on earth, the terror list ... or whatever will persuade the NCP to accept that the Misseriya or any other people of Abyei be denied their rights to participate in the referendum," he told Reuters.

Many of the Misseriya were mobilised by the NCP to fight against the south during the civil war.

They are likely to vote for unity to protect their grazing rights, possibly tipping the vote in the region. Many people fear that Abyei, a flashpoint of north-south fighting during a ceasefire violation in 2008, will provoke a new conflict if it is unresolved before the southern vote, which most analysts expect to result in secession.

The SPLM have said a settlement could be reached by annexing Abyei to the south, giving the Misseriya citizenship rights and offering a financial compensation package to the north to soften the economic blow of southern secession.

"There is no way to annex Abyei to the south without a referendum," Ghandour said, but he added that the NCP was open to some form of settlement if it protected the rights of all citizens of the oil-producing region.

Sudanese President establishes committee to support unity, referendum

Sudan Tribune website 7/11/10 - The Sudanese President Omer Al-Bashir announced the formation of a higher committee for the support of unity and referendum headed by him.

SUNA reported that Al-Bashir's deputies in this committee would be First Vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit and Second Vice President Ali Osman Taha.

Bashir also appointed as members the head of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) Mohamed Osman Al-Mirghani, former president Abdul-Rahman Siwar Al-Dahab, presidential adviser Bona Malwal, former minister Mohamed Yousif Abdullah and Ibrahim Ghandour from the ruling National Congress Party (NCP).

Al-Bashir who met with leaders of political parties at his residence on Sunday announced that the committee would be composed of 11 sub-committees including one for national unity, committee for the records and referendum in northern states, the Commission for records and referendum in the southern states, Committee for coordination of popular initiatives, Committee for civil society organizations, Committee for media and mobilization, the Women's Committee,

Youth Committee, the Committee for Student Affairs and the financial and administrative committee.

Ghandour said afterwards that Bashir would name the heads of these committees at a later date.

Fate of southerners in the North will be decided after secession

Al-Ayyam 8/11/10 – Justice Minister Mohamed Bishara Dousa said the most important issue after the referendum is the need to keep and sustain peace.

On the fate of southerners in the North and northerners in the South, he said their fate would be discussed only after the results of the process are announced after which talks would be conducted on a package of issues including the nationality in the two countries during the interim period.

We will protect southerners in the North in case of secession – NCP

The Citizen 8/11/10 – NCP Deputy Chairman in Khartoum state Mandour Al-Mahdi said the southerners would enjoy full protection and welfare and would never be hurt in the North should secession take place. “We welcome the southerners in the North,” he said, and asked the southern citizens in the North to carefully think before taking decisions to determine their destiny.

Al-Mahdi made the remarks yesterday at a celebration at Mandela neighbourhood in Jabel Awlia Locality...

SSRB Senior official resigns, says unhappy with boss

Sudan Tribune website 7/11/10 - A senior member of Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau (SSRB) said on Sunday that he has resigned, two months before the South is scheduled to decide whether it will separate from the north to become the world’s newest nation.

“Yes, I tendered in my resignation on October 28, through the Chairperson of the bureau (SSRB) although I have not yet got any response from the [South Sudan] referendum commission (SSRC) in Khartoum,” Dong Samuel who is the bureau’s head of training told Sudan Tribune in an interview.

Samuel said there was a poor working relationship between members of the southern bureau and accused its chairperson of only consulting southerners in the north and preferring to run the bureau as a “personal affair other [than] in national interests”.

The resignation is the latest setback to already lagging preparations for the much anticipated self-determination referendum for the South. With voter registration due to begin on November 15, voter lists will only be completed – under the latest revised schedule – just before voting begins on January 9.

The Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau (SSRB) is based in Juba the capital of South Sudan and is responsible for the logistics of the referendum in the 10 states of southern Sudan. It is a five member subsidiary committee of the national body, the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC).

Samuel said it had become difficult for him to work under the top leadership of the SSRB, citing what he described as “poor institutional working relationship” within the referendum body.

He said that he has yet to receive a response from the SSRB or the SSRC to his resignation despite submitting it to Madut over a week ago.

“In my view, my actions were justified because it was becoming increasingly difficult for me to deliver my mandate,” Samuel said.

The former training official offered a glimpse of the environment inside the SSRB saying that since the bureau was established no formal meeting has been held with chairperson Madut.

“Can you imagine that we never held any formal meeting with the Chairman ever since the bureau in the south was formed? He [SSRB Chairperson Madut] prefers to consult with the [SSRC] commission in the north and we as members of the bureau would instead rely on information from southerners sitting on that commission,” he said.

However he stressed that despite his resignation he will be willing to help the southern bureau if he is consulted and urged members of SSRB to maintain their independence and address the technical processes involved in referendum preparations to avoid “gambling with the future of the people of Southern Sudan.”

Sudan Tribune has, been informed by multiple sources that several failed attempts were made by Southern officials to convince Dong to reverse his decision.

A technical secretariat member of Southern Sudan 2011 referendum taskforce, who did not want to be named described Dong’s resignation as a significant loss.

“Dong Samuel’s decision to quit the bureau is certainly a big loss to the body. That probably explains why there have been repeated attempts by top government officials to lure him so that he can reverse his decision, albeit this has not succeeded,” the official said on Saturday.

Chairman Madut was unavailable for comment on Dong’s resignation but Samuel Maccar, another SSRB member, confirmed the resignation saying that Samuel was entitled to making his own decisions.

But Maccar distanced himself from the allegation that SSRB members have poor working relationships.

“We work as a team and everyone is free to consult with the Chairman at any time” Maccar said.

FM Undersecretary meets USG for peacekeeping operations

Akhir Lahza 8/11/10 – Undersecretary of Sudan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs Rahamtullah Mohamed Osman met yesterday with UN Undersecretary-General for Peacekeeping Operation Mr. Alain Le Roy who is currently on a visit to the country.

Reportedly, the meeting focused on existing cooperation between the Sudanese Government and UN particularly the mandates of the two Missions, situation in Darfur and the ongoing efforts to resolve the Darfur issue at Doha forum.

UNHCR- UNMIS discuss citizenship issues - Sudan Vision

Sudan Vision 8/11/10 - The joint UNHCR- UNMIS symposium on citizenship has closed its work on Sunday. The aim of the symposium is to explore how legal concepts on citizenship can be applied in the Sudanese context.

As the symposium wants to provide support to ensure workable, inclusive citizenship laws and best practice. Mr. Mathias Reuss presented ideas about international legal framework and standards of citizenship in the context of state secession besides the warning about the consequences of losing citizenship.

The meeting discussed corporation experiences in the region. Mr. Garluca Parolin shed light on what happened between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Many presentations were done to tackle acquisitions of citizenship and enjoyment of human rights by Sirisio Oromo in a topic titled citizenship arrangements that the meeting needs of specific or voluntary groups in a paper presented by Mills Kastberg.

The most important issue that took a lot of time was pastoralist and border population conducted by Sarah Poniono. She gave examples to those who move {from} country to another and asked the government to recognize their situation.

The conference agreed on the need to support the commission technically in conducting the referendum and regular pastoralist situation.

According *Khartoum Monitor* 8/11/10, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, Madam Erika Feller, addressing a press conference at the closing of the two-day symposium on citizenship issues jointly organized by the UNHCR and UNMIS in Khartoum yesterday, placed great importance on the issue of citizenship that was why that symposium was organized. She recommended that the issue of citizenship should be looked at very seriously before the referendum.

Other Highlights

Sudanese army attack JEM rebels near Chadian border

Sudan Tribune website 7/11/10 - Government troops defeated rebels from the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in north Darfur near the Chadian border, said Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) spokesperson Al-Sawarmi Khaled in press statement released Sunday.

SAF managed to destroy today fighters of the rebel Justice and Equality (JEM) in Buba and Fourawya in North Darfur not far from Chadian border, forcing them to flee, leaving behind a large number of weapons and ammunition, said the military communiqué.

Yesterday JEM rebels said they clashed with the Sudanese forces in Um Faniya, 25k North-East of Kornoi, in North Darfur state. The two belligerents had also confirmed fighting in South Darfur and North Kordofan.

Commenting on the recent surge of violence in different states, Al-Sawarmi said the rebels deployed small groups in different states of Darfur and Kordofan targeting commercial convoys.

He further said they captured some 21 vehicles indicating they lost three soldiers in today attack.

The Joint Chief Mediators Djibril Bassole who plans to hold a series of consultations with the rebel groups – JEM and SLM— before the signing of a peace agreement between the government and Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) on Sunday urged the Sudanese President to cease military activities in the troubled region to facilitate dialogue with the rebels.

Al-Bashir, Darfur mediators discuss outstanding issues in Doha talks

Sudan Tribune website 7/11/10 - Darfur mediators discussed today with the Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir the outstanding issues in the negotiations and asked him to consider rebel demands.

President Al-Bashir wrapped up a two-day visit to Qatar Sunday with a meeting with the Qatari state minister for foreign affairs Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud and the Joint Chief Mediator, Djibril Bassole to discuss the outstanding issues in the peace talks.

Speaking to *Sudan Tribune* after the meeting, Bassole said they had a fruitful meeting on the progress of peace process in Darfur and the negotiations between the government and the LJM.

Mediators "have seized this opportunity to request that the Government of Sudan pays particular attention to issues relating to administrative status of Darfur, the compensation and Darfurian participation in the executive power," Bassole further said.

In a press conference held in Doha before the arrival of the Sudanese president, LJM chairman El-Tijani El-Sissi who had been a former governor of the region, said "there is no compromise in the issue of one region in Darfur".

LJM rebels also ask to give a position of vice-president of the republic to the western region of Darfur.

The government sponsored SMC news service, said that Bashir expressed reserves about a proposal made by Bassole to allocate a position of vice-president to Darfur rebels.

The president said the request would open the door to give each region a vice-president and he would not take any step that will lead or help the fragmentation of the country; SMC reported citing a high ranking official source.

Bassole said they also emphasized the need to reach before the end of the year a comprehensive, fair and inclusive peace agreement that will get the support of all the Darfurians and the rebel movements not yet involved in the negotiations.

In this regard, the mediators have finally asked President Bashir to facilitate further dialogue with JEM by deescalating violence and military confrontation with the rebel group.

Government signed agreement with Darfur Liberals and Reform Movement

Al-Rai Al-Aam 8/11/2010 -Government of west Darfur State signed yesterday a peace deal with Liberals and Reform Movement led by Ibrahim Nasir. Government officials said that this deal was legitimate product of the New Darfur Strategy. Presidential Adviser Ghazi Salahuddin who attended the signing ceremony state that this agreement would open doors for more agreements affirming that the government was committed to the international and regional initiatives which did not restrict such agreements and reconciliations.

Collaborators with Radio Dabanga will be brought to justice- official

Al-Sahafa 8/11/2010 - State Minister at the Presidency Amin Hassan Omer asserted that all persons arrested in connection with Radio Dabanga case would be brought to justice, adding that Radio Dabanga was a threat to the national security and social stability of the country. He said that those who smuggled unauthorized equipment inside the country or sent information from the country would be tried.

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