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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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# Highlights

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## Elections Special:

### Government to negotiate with all factions – Bashir tells elections rally

NCP presidential candidate Omer Al-Bashir yesterday addressed an election rally in Nyala, South Darfur, *local dailies* report. According to *Al-Sahafa*, Al-Bashir said the Government was ready to negotiate with all the Darfuri factions and committed to complete peace in the region. Reportedly, Al-Bashir was received by hundreds of thousands of NCP supporters. He told the rally that he did not expect to be received by such a huge rally since he came as a candidate and not as a President. *Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports Al-Bashir has reiterated commitment to respect separation if it is chosen by the Southern Sudanese.

### NBGS governor vows to support Bashir in upcoming election

*Sudan Tribune website* 8/3/10 – The incumbent Governor of the Northern Bahr el Ghazal state, Paul Malong Awan Anei, vowed yesterday to support NCP presidential candidate Omer Al-Bashir in the upcoming elections.

Addressing a huge crowd that turned out to receive President Bashir and his entourage in Aweil town, Governor Malong urged citizens to give their votes to Bashir so he can fully implement the remaining clauses in the CPA.

"You cannot remove a captain sailing the ship in the middle of the sea because of differences, no?" the governor said adding wise people always settle their differences when they think they are out of the dangerous area.

However, the local population including intellectuals instantly criticized governor's remark saying it contradicts his previous statement pledging support to the SPLM presidential candidate, Yasir Saeed Arman.

Addressing the crowd, President Bashir said he recognized the suffering of Mading Aweil and that he would put more efforts into raising the standard of living.

Bashir further reiterated his position to recognize the referendum result if it comes out in favor of secession. "I will be the first to recognize and join brothers in the South in celebrating the referendum result because it is the people's choice. I promise you that nobody in my Government will dictate your choice if the referendum result comes out in favor of secession," he said. However, he said, unity would bring more economic growth than secession.

### Sudan's NCP signs electoral code of conduct

*Sudan Tribune website* 8/3/10 – The NCP today signed the Electoral Code of Conduct, a week after fifteen other parties endorsed it in the Southern Sudan capital of Juba. The AU issued a statement today saying that the code "commits the parties and candidates to common principles for free and fair elections and facilitates self-regulation by Sudan's political parties during the forthcoming elections". "The AU believes that this Code can play an important role in promoting democratization in the Sudan and in building confidence between the different political parties".

## **NCP, SPLM to discuss proposal on elections delay in Nairobi**

**Akhir Lahza** reports that IGAD Ministerial Council yesterday concluded its meeting in Nairobi held to prepare for summit. The newspaper, quoting Sudan Embassy source in Nairobi, said the summit would discuss a proposal for postponing Sudan's upcoming elections.

## **Elections postponement inadvisable: UNMIS Chief Electoral Officer**

**Al-Rai Al-Aam (SMC)**: UNMIS Chief Electoral Officer Ray Kennedy, reportedly expressed concern over the possibility of postponement of elections, saying delay will be inadvisable after all the exerted efforts. According to the daily, he affirmed that what is being raised about the absence of neutrality of the NEC will delay and make the decision-making process within Commission difficult. Kennedy also affirmed that the ambiguity involving the demands of the parties and the political forces with regard to the postponement or the non-holding of the process in some parts of the Sudan constitute an extra challenge for the Commission, in addition to the poor infrastructure compared to Sudan's vast area.

## **Government says has no authority to postpone elections**

**Al-Sudani** reports that the Sudan Government's delegation to Doha talks yesterday informed the mediation that neither the Government has authority to postpone elections nor the delegation has a mandate to talk about it.

## **Umma Party expects elections delay**

The National Umma Party yesterday launched its elections campaign in Kassala criticising the huge spending on the NCP's electoral campaign, **Al-Ahdath** reports. Umma Party leading figure Mariam Al-Mahdi who addressed the rally did not rule out postponement of elections, citing challenges such as the dispute over the census results, the Darfur crisis and the need to incorporate the framework agreement signed between the Government and the JEM.

## **NEC agrees to postpone legislative elections in Gezira state**

The NEC has agreed to delay legislative elections in Gezira state until after the general elections, **Al-Ayyam** reports. The Commission announced that the time remains is not sufficient to redistribute constituencies as required by the Supreme Court to meet the elections schedule.

## **EU elections observers to start work next Thursday**

EU Mission has announced that its observers for monitoring Sudan's elections will officially begin their work on 11 March, **Al-Ayyam** reports. The EU team will launch their work by addressing a press conference on Thursday.

## **Security heightened in Upper Nile ahead of polls**

**Gurtong** 8/3/10 – More than 500 new police officers have been recruited in Upper Nile State in a bid to enhance security in the area ahead of the general elections. Upper Nile Police Forces' Commissioner Maj. Gen. Bol John Akot told reporters last week that the new recruits have already been sent to Juba for comprehensive training and would return to the state upon completion of the training.

"The aim of the police recruitment process was to ensure that we have standard protection of Upper Nile State civilians", he said.

Akot added that the new police officers will re-enforce the current force, adding that this would ensure peace is maintained in the state prior to and during the polls.

He said the police forces will employ international standards during and after the electioneering period.

### **Campaigning in Sudan focuses on unity and development**

**VoANews.Com** 8/3/10 - Campaigning for Sudan's April presidential and legislative elections are in full swing. This week, the leading candidates kicked off the race in the South.

Sudan's President Omar Al Bashir took his own re-election bid to southern Sudan's capital Juba in what observers described as a civil campaign. Bashir, the northern-ruling National Congress Party candidate, in three-day marathon rallies, emphasized unity and development.

"He talked about national unity and made a lot of promises, especially on infrastructure development," said Paul Jacob, a journalist and Director of Information in the GoSS. He said the president was mostly campaigning for the unification for the South and North because of the fear that the south may secede.

FVP Salva Kiir, who is also the president of the GoSS, is not seeking national office but re-election as a leader of the South. "Kiir in his campaign," said Jacob from Juba, "is calling for southern Sudan identity and promising to fight corruption in the GoSS. I think he is looking ahead to the referendum."

### **South Sudan police assures impartiality to political parties**

**Sudan Tribune website** 8/3/10 – GoSS Police has reiterated assurance to maintain impartiality to all political parties in the upcoming elections.

Speaking to the press in Juba, GoSS Inspector General of Police Service, Gen. Acuil Tito Madut, said police forces would maintain impartiality to any political parties in the forthcoming elections adding any act associated with biasness would not be tolerated.

Gen. Madut assured citizens that south Sudan police would serve them diligently in spite of the many challenges it faces. According to him, some of the challenges police forces face across the region include poor payment, inadequate facilities, inadequate budget, and poor training.

### **NEC chief, Umma Party leader discuss opposition petition**

NEC Chairman Abel Alier and his deputy Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah yesterday called on Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi for consultation on the media regulations needed for elections campaigning, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports. Reportedly, an understanding was reached between the two sides and that the NEC was still reviewing the petition of protest handed over by the Juba Alliance.

## **Other Highlights**

### **Warrap state armed raiders attack Unity state**

**Sudan Tribune website** 9/3/10 – Security sources have reported a fresh tribal clash as Warrap state raiders attacked a boma in Mayom County of Unity state.

The attack which occurred yesterday was reportedly left six people dead and 17 wounded.

More than one thousand heavily armed Dinka civilians were estimated to have launched the attack into the neighboring Mayom County, inhabited by a Nuer section, in a surprised dawn raid on a number of homesteads as people were sleeping.

No casualties were yet confirmed on the side of the raiders who ran away with 1,800 heads of cattle as they were reportedly being pursued by the villagers. Among the six casualties some are believed to be women and children.

Reportedly, authorities in the states concerned have done very little to stop it.

### **Armed groups captured UNAMID weapons in Jebel Marra – SAF**

The Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) implicitly accused UNAMID of aiding the armed movements, warning of a possible explosion of the situation if the Mission continues to support the movements in the region, *Al-Sahafa* reports. SAF spokesperson Lt. Col. Al-Sawarmi Khaled told a press conference that a UNAMID team of 61 members ignored the South Darfur Security Committee's advice not to travel to the area but they went and were ambushed by armed groups which got away with the patrol's heavy weapons. He said 61 soldiers returned safe to their base, but "without their weapons". Khaled avoided to directly point figure at UNAMID but said, "SAF is extremely concerned about this incident of heavy weapons been captured by a small group of armed rebels". *Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports Lt. Col. Khaled as saying that what happened between UNAMID and SLA-AW was just a "handover takeover".

### **Sudan army says it now controls strategic Darfur plateau**

**AFP** 8/3/10 — Sudan said yesterday its army took control of the strategic Jebel Marra plateau in Darfur after fresh fighting between Government forces and rebels.

"The Sudanese armed forces are currently in control of all of the Jebel Marra," military spokesman Sawarmi Khaled Saad told a news conference in Khartoum. "There are still occasional clashes, which are normal, but they have no bearing on the overall situation in that sector."

An SLA-AW official denied the military controlled the area. "The Sudan Government said they control Jebel Marra, but that is not true. We control one hundred percent of Jebel Marra," Ibrahim al-Hillu told AFP by phone.

According to the rebels, more than 200 civilians were killed in recent fighting in the Jebel Marra. French Medecins du Monde estimated that some 100,000 people had been displaced by the clashes.

Neither the United Nations nor the joint UN-African Union UNAMID peacekeeping force could corroborate these figures because of a lack of personnel on the ground.

### **CPA Partners need dedication to overcome obstacles**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports DSRSG Jasbir Singh Lidder as saying that the CPA has made great strides and has overcome the most difficult obstacle by virtue of the two parties' efforts and desire to reach a lasting settlement, adding that UN would continue to monitor the implementation of the agreement. He said the most difficult challenges have been overcome and what remains needs patriotism and dedication. The DSRSG expected a successful elections and referendum and ruled out a return to war.

### **Sudan's envoy to US denies tense relations with UN Ambassador**

**Sudan Tribune website** 8/3/10– The Sudanese Charge d'Affaires to the US Akec Khoc issued a statement this week denying that he had troubled relations with Sudan's permanent representative to the United Nations Abdel-Mahmood Abdel-Haleem during his tenure as his deputy.

Khartoum has reportedly ended the mandate of Abdel-Haleem as he has reached the official retirement age.

A press release by Khoc sent to Sudan Tribune stated that he enjoyed “cordial relations defined by mutual respect for one another”.

### **US lifts web sanctions on Cuba, Iran and Sudan**

**Guardian.co.uk** 9/3/10 - The US yesterday said it will allow export of instant messaging, web browsing and other communications technology to Cuba, Iran and Sudan, in an effort to facilitate the flow of information and promote freedom of speech.

The move by the US Treasury department comes after Iranian anti-regime protesters used Twitter, You Tube, Facebook and other sites in the aftermath of the disputed June elections. In the months since, anti-regime forces have used the technology to organise demonstrations, spread news and communicate with the outside world, including western journalists largely barred from covering the protest movement.

"The issuance of these general licenses will make it easier for individuals in Iran, Sudan and Cuba to use the internet to communicate with each other, and with the outside world," deputy Treasury secretary Neal Wolin said. "[Yesterday's] actions will enable Iranian, Sudanese and Cuban citizens to exercise their most basic rights. As recent events in Iran have shown, personal internet-based communications like email, instant messaging and social networking are powerful tools. This software will foster and support the free flow of information - a basic human right - for all Iranians."

### **Well-known trader found dead in Renk**

**Al-Sahafa** reports informed sources as saying that a well known trader was found dead in a market in Renk. The sources said the deceased trader used to have commercial links with an army officer in the area and that a heated argument was noted between him and a group of soldiers a day before his death.