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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

CPA parties committed to withdraw troops from Abyei - UN

Al-Sahafa 9/5/11 – the Joint Technical Committee on Abyei held its first meeting yesterday chaired by UNMIS Force Commander Major General Moses Obi to discuss a timeframe for JIU deployment and withdrawal of all unauthorized forces from Abyei.

The Committee said in a press release yesterday that all the parties have agreed to withdraw all unauthorized troops and to deploy JIUs as from Tuesday until May 17. The committee will meet on 12 May to assess the process.

"The meeting agreed that both parties will create a conducive environment by de-escalating tensions and speaking to their respective communities on the ground regarding the implementation of the Kadugli agreements, and ensuring freedom of access for UNMIS," UNMIS press release said, according to *AFP* 8/5/11.

"There was goodwill on both sides and we hope to follow up on this spirit, to see that it is actualised, because Abyei is very important in the peace process," Maj. Gen. Obi said in the statement, according to *Reuters* 9/5/11.

"I believe there has been a commitment from the parties and that has been reflected in the way the meeting went today," Obi said according to *Sudan Tribune website* 8/5/11. "There was good will from both sides and we hope to follow-up on this spirit," he added.

UNSC to hold special session in Abyei

Ajras Al-Hurriya 9/5/11 – Abyei Chief Administrator Deng Arop Kuol said the Security Council would hold special session in Abyei on 23 May to assess the situation.

The GoSS dispatched Minister of Regional Cooperation Deng Alor and Minister Commerce Steven Diu to the area yesterday to oversee preparations for the meeting. The GoSS delegation engaged in meetings with Chief and members of the Administration, members of the Area Council and commissioners to prepare for the session.

GoSS to delete reference to Abyei from constitution - AUHIP

Al-Sahafa 9/5/11 – the GoSS has said it would remove claim to Abyei from its draft constitution at the revision stage.

AUHIP Chair Pierre Buyoya said they discussed the issue of inclusion of claim to Abyei in the South Constitution with GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit and the North's reaction to that, saying the AUHIP is committed to submit a proposal for resolving the issue politically. Buyoya made the statement after a meeting with VP Ali Osman Taha.

According to *Al-Raed* 9/5/11, Taha told the AUHIP delegation that the Government is committed to implement Kadugli agreement to defuse tension in the region.

Following a meeting with Sudan's second Vice-President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha in Khartoum yesterday, the member of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel on Sudan (AUHIP) and former president of Burundi Pierre Buyoya told reporters that they had conveyed to Taha the pledges the panel had received from the Government of South Sudan not to take any unilateral measures regarding Abyei and drop claims to the region's ownership from the south's draft constitution, according to *Sudan Tribute website* 8/5/11.

Abyei Administration confirms presence of JIU to maintain security

Al-Watan 9/5/11 – Abyei Deputy Chief Administrator Rahama Abdul Rahman Al-Nur has dismissed claims that SAF elements in the JIU have been withdrawn from Abyei, saying these forces are still present as part of JIU force to maintain security in the territory. He accused the SPLM of seeking to escalate the situation stressing the need to exercise self-restraint to implement the remaining CPA provisions. Al-Nur, however, affirmed that Abyei is part of the North as per 1.1.1956 borders.

Fighting resumed between SPLA and Peter Gadet forces

Al-Raed 9/5/11 – clashes resumed yesterday between SPLA and forces of dissident Peter Gadet in Unity state's County of Mayom. A source close to SPLA said SPLA patrols clashed with Gadet's forces and that Gadet's fighters overran the area of "Doke Nagai". According to the source, the SPLA forces have retreated to Mayom after losing the battle.

Future of UNMIS in the Sudan

Op-ed By Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, Editor-in-Chief, Al-Ayyam daily newspaper
Al-Ayyam 9/5/11 - The UN Security Council is to debate this week the future of UNMIS after the South secedes on 9 July. The UNSG had earlier presented to the UN budget committee a draft for a budget for the Mission on the assumption that the Mission's work will continue for at least another year but at the same time he wished to obtain the two parties' consent to an extension for the Mission since there are outstanding issues.

Apparently, the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) is desirous of an extension for the Mission but the Government in the North sees no need for an extension for UNMIS because its work is linked to the CPA which will come to an end on the 9th of July.

The Security Council is of the view that its resolution on the basis of which it established the Mission grants it the mandate to assist in the accomplishment of all the benchmarks contained in the agreement, it does not argue that the agreement set a specific timeline that is the 9th of July. The point is that all the CPA provisions should have been implemented by 9 July. However, the reality on the ground is that there are benchmarks that have not been implemented yet and may not be accomplished by 9 July and that entails the continuity of the Mission's role to assist in their implementation which necessarily means that UN should have a presence in the Sudan.

The SC is expected to deal with this issue this week because it has to decide the issue of its Mission in the Sudan. The GoSS has intimated to the SC that should the North object to a UN presence, it will welcome the same in the South to monitor the border between the two countries to prevent any violations. But the SC prefers a presence in both the North and the South based on consent of both governments in order to assist the two parties to resolve the outstanding issues which the two parties have failed to resolve during the term of the CPA.

All the pending CPA benchmarks are important and may negatively affect the future relations between the two countries after the South gains independence and can threaten the peace that the agreement sought to achieve particularly the issues of border demarcation, Abyei, Popular Consultations and the security arrangements.

It seems this issue will assume new dimensions during the few coming days and the UN will begin exercising pressure to resolve it. The agreement has come to an end in terms of time but is not over in terms of accomplished obligations particularly that the pending issues constitute a real threat to peace.

We hoped the two parties would seize the opportunity to reach a new agreement to address future issues and to set a new timeframe for resolving the remaining issues through new negotiations under the facilitation of a third party and such agreement should include provisions stipulating joint activity to lay the basis for cooperation between the two countries in the near future based on the historic heritage of the long-standing relations between the North and the South. In short, we are wondering why we do not exploit the question of outstanding issues to hold new talks for an agreement of good neighborliness that determines a new timeline to address the outstanding issues with the UN Mission tasked with the role of a facilitator in these negotiations in order to arrive at a common ground to ward off any possibility of return to confrontations while the pending issues are tackled within the framework of comprehensive agreement of good neighborliness? Why does not the UN adopt such approach in its talks with the two parties on the future of its Mission?

Southern Kordofan Elections Focus

Differences delay release of vote results in southern Kordofan

Al-Sahafa 9/5/11 – Sharp differences between the High Elections Committee and SPLM delegates delayed the process of vote sorting to today because the SPLM rejected a proposal by the Elections Commission to set up four committees to resolve the problem of slowness of the process of vote matching. The SPLM warned of what it described as “intentional delay” of release of vote results.

According to *Al-Rai Al-Aam* 9/5/11, the delay of the announcement of the results was caused by the NEC decision to re-assort and re-count votes in all constituencies.

Al-Intibaha 9/5/11 reports the release of vote results was hampered by the SPLA which deployed large number of troops in southern Kordofan. According to observers, High Elections Committee Chair Adam Abidden left his office after he was subjected to threats from the SPLM.

A high level delegation from NEC headed by Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, the NEC deputy chair, is to visit Southern Kordofan today to address the situation and to receive the final results of elections, according to *Akhbar Al-Youm* 9/5/11.

Release of vote results in southern Kordofan postponed to today

Al-Rai Al-Aam 9/5/11 the High Elections Committee in Southern Kordofan has decided to postpone the announcement of preliminary results of elections from yesterday to today Monday.

Committee Chair Adam Abideen has attributed the postponement to a slow moving process.

Security tightened in S Kordofan; election results postponed for a day

Radio Miraya 08/05/11 - Security has been tightened in Kadugli in Southern Kordofan state which is awaiting the announcement of the preliminary results of the state's gubernatorial and Legislative Assembly. A number of people invaded the state's High Elections Committee's premises, protesting the arrangements for announcing the results. The Deputy Chairperson of state's Electoral Security Committee, Tawo Kanjila, has said that the state has made arrangements to control any security breach after the results are announced.

Other Highlights

Former Sudan spy chief stripped of his position at ruling party

Sudan Tribune website 8/5/11 - The NCP in Sudan conducted a mini-shuffle in its top jobs and removed the former director of the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) Salah Gosh from his position as head of the party's workers' secretariat.

The shakeup also included replacing the NCP Secretary of Information Fathi Sheila with Ibrahim Ghandour who was the party's Secretary for Political Affairs. Al-Amin Dafa'allah, Secretary General of the Supreme Council for decentralized governance, took over from Gosh.

Qutbi Al-Mahdi, the former head of the organizations bureau at the NCP, was given the political sector portfolio while Mutrif Sideeg took over his previous post. Al-Haj Adam, who recently defected from the Popular Congress Party (PCP) led by Hassan Al-Turabi, assumed the political secretariat.

A statement by the NCP emphasized that the shakeup was not made for the purpose of expelling Gosh from the party leadership but it was part of a reform effort and a preemption of an NCP conference next September.

Gosh, who was considered a powerful figure within the state and the ruling party, was abruptly fired by president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir from his position as presidential adviser for security affairs last month. No reason was given for the decision.

It was in the same manner Gosh was unexpectedly sacked by Bashir from his NISS role in 2009 and brought in as an adviser.

The former adviser holds a parliamentary seat as a representative of the Merowe constituency. He is also on the joint NCP-SPLM committee for CPA implementation.

A few days before his dismissal, Gosh and powerful presidential assistant Nafie Ali Nafie clashed in the media over dialogue with opposition parties.

Some observers in Khartoum have speculated that Gosh was planning a coup against Bashir with the consent of the US administration while others linked his removal to an Israeli strike carried out in eastern Sudan against suspected arms smugglers in early April. The government had claimed that Israel had informants on the ground that provided the intelligence to carry out the

operation.

Qutbi Al-Mahdi confirmed one of the theories last week by saying that Gosh had "presidential ambitions" but did not elaborate.

Gosh is better known internationally for being the engineer of enhanced counter-terrorism cooperation with the United States over the last decade. It was revealed in 2005 that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) flew him on a private plane from Khartoum to Washington.

The links with the CIA generated criticism from the regime's Islamic base but Gosh defended it in 2007 by saying that this has prevented a "destructive backlash" from the U.S. in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.

Gosh is also accused by human right groups for being instrumental in the brutal counterinsurgency campaign against rebels in Darfur which took a heavy toll on civilians.

Many observers in Sudan as well as the public believed that Gosh's intimate knowledge of state secrets during his tenure in NISS guaranteed him a lifetime role in the government. Some have even likened him to the late FBI director J. Edgar Hoover who stayed in his post for so long because no U.S. president dared to dismiss him.

The NCP downplayed any prospects of Gosh causing a split within the party. Hago Gism Al-Seed, a leading figure in the NCP, said that Gosh has no followers and was not an active figure in the party to trigger any divisions.

PCP threatens to remove NCP from power within a month

Al-Sahafa 9/5/11 – the Popular Congress Party led by Hassan Al-Turabi has anticipated the removal of the ruling NCP from power within a month through a popular uprising, describing the NCP government as the weakest compared to the Arab regimes that encountered uprisings.

PCP political secretary Kamal Omer, while addressing a function to celebrate the release of 9 PCP members from detention said his party is committed to remove the NCP regime from power.

However, the NCP said Al-Turabi has no capacity to mobilize a popular uprising to remove the government, according to *Al-Rai Al-Aam* 9/5/11.

Egypt promises Sudan's Bashir immunity once it joins ICC

Sudan Tribune website 8/5/11 - The Egyptian government assured Sudan that president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir would not be arrested on its territories once Cairo ratifies the Rome Statute which is the founding treaty of the International Criminal Court. Sudan's foreign ministry spokesperson Khalid Musa was quoted by the country's official news agency (SUNA) as saying that Egypt will invoke Article (98) of the Rome Statute which will allow it to receive Bashir without being obligated to arrest him. "At a time when there is a major risk of crimes against humanity and war crimes in many countries in the region, the move by Egypt to ratify the Rome Statute sends a strong message that the days of absolute impunity for these crimes are ending", said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch.

"Foreign Minister El-Araby's announcement is very significant" Whitson said. "Now Egypt should make a clear break with the obstructionist foreign policy of its predecessor, and take a leading role in protecting human rights in Africa, at the UN, and on international justice".

SPLA soldier shoots dead two merchants in Rubkotna Mosque, Unity state

Sudan Tribune website 8/5/11 - Two merchants were shot dead by SPLA soldier at Rubkotna Mosque in Unity state on Sunday at 4:00pm. Osman Mohamed and Tarig Ismail were murdered during a prayer gathering at the mosque at Rubkotna County. Another merchant was seriously wounded in the shooting.

The murderer was captured a short time after the shooting by SPLA forces.

On Sunday the police went to arrest the suspect but were prevented by the SPLA, who claimed that they were responsible for the conduct of the soldier and the suspect would be dealt with within the military.

The SPLA and South Sudan police service almost began fighting over who should take custody of the suspect.

There are fears that the incidents threaten other traders who do business in the Unity state, which border north Sudan.

It is believed the SPLA soldier was motivated to shoot the traders after a quarrel in a restaurant Rubkotna market.

The murderer was seriously beaten up and took his gun to shoot the men as an act of revenge.

The speaker of the Unity state assembly Simon Maguek said it would investigate the incident and that the murderer would face justice.

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