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# Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission in Sudan/ Public Information Office

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# Highlights

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## Local Arabic and English Language Press

### Presidency to announce census results next week

**Al-Sahafa** reports the Presidency will receive census results on Saturday and will announce the final results at a press conference Monday. While the census Monitoring Committee admitted facing logistic difficulties in the conduct of the exercise in southern Sudan, it confirmed that the Halaib Triangle, expatriates, some areas in Darfur including the IDPs had not been covered. According to **Al-Khartoum**, Census Monitoring senior international official Bali Guhood, at press conference yesterday said the census exercise was comprehensive and accurate despite the difficulties encountered. He described the exercise as “very successful” and that there was no doubt that UN would accept the results since the exercise was conducted in accordance with its standards. South Sudan Census Monitoring Committee Chairman Alier Riack Muac told the same press conference yesterday that religion and ethnicity had been excluded from the census questionnaires based on UN advice. Meanwhile, the Census Monitoring Committee Chairman Abdul Bagi Al-Jailani described the exercise as “comprehensive and transparent”. Sources said the National Census and Population Council would discuss the results on Thursday before submitting them to the Presidency on Saturday.

**Sudan Tribune website** 11/4/09 reported Sudanese officials expressed satisfaction that the census conducted last year conform to the international standards in terms of coverage and impartiality. The Census Monitoring Committee Chairman Abdul Bagi Al-Jailani said that monitors from over 20 countries observed the process and vouched for its integrity.

A UN expert told the press conference yesterday that the Sudanese experience in census will be used in post conflict areas in Afghanistan and Angola.

### \$ 95 million for elections

**Al-Rai Al-Aam** 10/4/09 reported the National Elections Commission (NEC) Deputy Chairman Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah as saying that the NEC received offers to the tune of \$ 95 millions from the international donors' contributions for elections in addition to technical support. Speaking at a meeting with political parties in Al-Damir town in the River Nile State, Abdullah affirmed the NEC's keenness to monitor the elections and stressed the NEC's lawful right to accept or reject any international request to monitor elections. He revealed that an agreement was signed between the NEC and Carter Centre to monitor the elections.

Meanwhile, **Al-Sahafa** 10/4/09 reported the National Constitution Review Commission (NCRC) has worked out a final estimate of one billion SDG budget for the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. The estimated budget was submitted to the Presidency and the Presidency forwarded it to the Finance Ministry.

According to **Sudan Tribune website** 9/4/09 the European Union welcomed Thursday the announcement by the NEC that nationwide elections are to be held in February 2010. The EU's Czech presidency described the run of general elections as an important step in the CPA implementation and the democratic transition in the country and urged the Sudanese government to create a conducive electoral environment to ensure the participation of all Sudanese citizens.” Outstanding issues such as the declaration of the results of the National

Census and the border demarcation need to be concluded as soon as possible" the EU statement said. The statement also emphasized that Sudanese government should create necessary conditions to allow Darfur people to take part in the upcoming elections "in a secure environment."

### **Aid workers abductors demand trial of Darfur children smugglers**

**Al-Sahafa** reports that one of the abductors of the French NGO workers revealed that they are demanding the trial of the French NGO which attempted to transport Darfur children from Chad to Paris and denied that they had asked for a ransom to free two French NGO captives. One of the two abductees told the paper by phone they were safe and in good health. The abductor who spoke to the paper yesterday refused to disclose their location but said they belong to the "Free African Eagles" and that they carried out the abduction because of Paris' complicity with N'djamena in transporting Darfur children to France. The abductor has threatened to target French interests in CAR and Chad.

However, **Al-Sahafa** 10/4/09 reported Darfur MPs Chairman Abdul Moneim Umbedi as saying talks with the abductors of the French NGO workers reached a deadlock because they demanded a ransom of 200 million dollars. "No body can afford that amount, but we are hopeful of their release," he said. He added information confirmed the two abductees held by a group calling themselves "Free Africans" were in good health and they are currently held in the area lying between Um Lubasa and Dindo Mountains of western Darfur and that they had abducted them in response to the abduction of Sudanese children by a French NGO from IDP camp in eastern Chad.

### **UNSG renews calls on government to reconsider NGO expulsion**

Quoting "agencies", **Al-Rai al-Aam** reports that the UNSG Ban Ki-moon told a press conference yesterday that he has requested leaders of Arab and African states to urge President Al-Bashir to reconsider the INGO ouster decision.

### **Presidential Assistant Nafie to visit France**

Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie is to lead a high-level delegation to France next week as part of the government's contacts with the UNSC members on key issues such as the ICC and Darfur, the **SMC** reports.

### **Joint assessment team to visit the Three Areas**

**SMC** reports that a joint assessment team of the UN, the GoNU and the GoSS will be visiting the Three Areas to assess the humanitarian situation. GoSS Voluntary Returns Coordinator Kormaj Chol said that recent humanitarian developments in the areas indicate that those areas have been affected somehow by the expulsion of the aid groups but added that the government is in a position to cover the shortfall.

### **1, 700 soldiers in Southern Kordofan demobilized**

**Al-Wifaq** reports the UN DDR Coordinator in Southern Kordofan Nazar Ahmed Malik as saying that the DDR Commission has begun to disarm and demobilize more than 1,700 soldiers in Southern Kordofan State. He said the step was part of the CPA implementation process.

### **Libyan official says Bashir will be invited to AU summit in Libya**

**Akhbar Al-Youm** reports a Libyan official Mohamed Al-Medani Al-Azhari as saying President Al-Bashir will be invited for the AU summit scheduled for July in Libya.

## **SPLM postpones politburo meeting**

The SPLM politburo has re-scheduled its meeting due on 10 April to the 15th for “technical reasons”, reports *Al-Sahafa*. Participants were supposed to discuss, among other issues, the party’s preparations for the elections.

## **Chadian military buildup on border - SAF**

SAF Spokesperson Mohamed Osman Al-Aghbash has reported a buildup of Chadian military forces in the Um Jaras and Adare border areas in preparation to invade the country, reports *Al-Rai Al-Aam*. He told *Radio Miraya FM* that Chadian forces are in close coordination with JEM fighters in the region and are preparing to attack the country. According to *Akhbar Al Youm*, Al-Aghbash said SAF was ready to repulse any attack.

## **China to construct Dam in southern Sudan**

*Al-Rai Al-Aam* reports that China's Consul General in Juba, Zhang Quinyang, said that China plans to construct a hydroelectric dam besides the construction of over one thousand kilometer road linking Juba, Wau and Raja. China and the GoSS had earlier signed a Memorandum of Understanding whereby China would provide \$100,000 in grants.

## **Egypt to launch a new initiative for peace in Darfur**

*Khartoum Monitor* reports Egypt will step up its efforts in trying to convince various Darfur rebel groups to join the peace talks, a Sudanese official said today. The Sudanese State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ali Karti speaking to reporters at the conclusion of his visit to Cairo said that he held meetings with the Egyptian Intelligence Chief Omer Suleiman to discuss details of the new initiative. However, Karti did not say whether Cairo is seeking to push Darfur rebels to join the already ongoing talks in Qatar or whether new venues will be proposed. However, the Spokesperson for the Egyptian foreign ministry, Hussam Zeki, said that Egypt seeks to give momentum to the Darfur peace process and does not want to launch a new peace initiative, reports *Al-Rai Al-Aam*.

Dhu-el-Noun Suleiman, the Spokesperson for SLM-MM, says his party has withdrawn its reservations towards the Doha-mediated Darfur peace process following the local and regional developments in the political arena, reports *Al-Sahafa*. He said that SLM-MM is consulting with the NCP over what role it could play for the success of the Doha process and for the realization of sustainable peace in the region.

## **US Special Envoy concludes visit**

*Akhbar Al-Youm* reports that US Special Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration has concluded a ten-day visit to Sudan during which he held talks with officials in Khartoum, Juba, Darfur and Abyei. US Charge d’Affaires Alberto Fernandez described the visit as “successful and positive” and said that the Special Envoy would be back here in May this year.

## **LRA build-up on Sudan-DRC border**

Eyewitnesses have reported an LRA build-up along Sudan’s borders with the DRC near the Ezo-Tambora road bringing back memories of the LRA Christmas massacres around Iba, reports *Al-Raed*.

# **Websites/International News Coverage**

## **Sudan opposition leader calls for transitional government**

*Sudan Tribune website*, 11/4/09 (KHARTOUM) – The leader of a Sudanese opposition party

called for the creation of a transitional government to prepare for the upcoming general elections scheduled for February 2010.

Hassan Al-Turabi who heads the Popular Congress Party (PCP) held a press conference in Khartoum outlining 10 points to resolve the political crisis in the country.

The Islamist leader said that the government he is calling for should consist of national figures, not a coalition government of political parties.

“We don’t want it [government] a coalition of two parties but something that is representative of the nation that does not belong to a party and becomes a reference for national consensus” Al-Turabi said. “We want it to run the country for a while...Its goal should be bringing the country out of the current crisis”

The PCP chief criticized the current formation of the government saying that it is a “one man show”. “The officials don’t know anything beyond their ministries. Even the Foreign Minister does not know what is going on in Doha [talks between Khartoum and Darfur JEM]” he said.

Al-Turabi was released from jail last month after being detained on remarks in which he called on Sudanese president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir to turn himself in to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Turabi today lashed out at the Bashir government accusing it of committing atrocities in Darfur and said that the warrant against the president will remain outstanding until his death.

He said he feels “ashamed” that Israeli officials do not enjoy any immunity like their peers in Sudan.

The former ally of Bashir criticized the ex-Southern rebel group, Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) saying that they have failed to make unity attractive two years before the referendum is due to take place.

Turabi stressed that the reform should include areas of political freedom, peace and justice, legal and political reform, accountability particularly with regards to corruption and creating an environment for conducting a fair and free elections.

Asked about the PCP relations with Egypt, Turabi said that his party is in constant contacts with Cairo and that one of his senior aides is currently holding talks with Egyptian officials with a message that emphasizes their role in the Darfur crisis.

He disclosed that Cairo is not happy about the Qatari approach on Darfur saying they want all political powers, rebel groups and NGO’s to be involved “in a manner different than the bilateral talks in Doha”.

Last week the Egyptian embassy in Khartoum vehemently denied reports that its ambassador Afifi Abdel-Wahab met with Turabi following his release from detention.

An Egyptian source told the London **based Al-Sharq Al-Awsat** daily that Cairo contacts with any Islamists group in any part of the world “is a red line” but excluding the Hamas militant Islamist group in control of the Gaza strip.

Some observers pointed out that Egypt's main worry over the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant against Bashir is that his 2nd Vice President Ali Osman Taha would take over bringing hard-line Islamists back to power.

Taha is the secretary general of the Islamic movement in Sudan and he was considered one of Turabi's closest figures in the 90's.

The 2nd Vice President was scheduled to visit Cairo last month but Bashir went instead and the reasons for the change were not known.

According to **AFP**, 11/4/09, al-Turabi said on Saturday that he is unwilling to stand as a presidential candidate against Omar al-Bashir, who is defying an international warrant for his arrest.

People aged "60, 70 or 77 like myself, they have children who can become president. My son is now 40 years, and then you have even grandchildren who can join the parliament. So it is better to leave it for other generations," he told reporters at party headquarters.

"It is better to present new people, a new generation for new times. If you are a very wise person you sit back and write books that guide us, that inspire us, or lecture to us... but don't put yourself forward. I don't have that much energy," Turabi said on the sidelines of a news conference.

The Popular Congress party has yet to say if it will contest the elections and if so who its presidential candidate will be.

But on Saturday it released a plan for a "transitional government" to settle "pending crises" and "prepare the country for elections."

The party held out an olive branch to political groups in Darfur by suggesting that a vice-president of Sudan should be appointed from the region.

"He is to be chosen by the consensus of the people of Darfur in the armed resistance and others, or immediately elected if consensus cannot be reached," the party said.

### **Arab League to appoint humanitarian coordinator for Darfur**

**Sudan Tribune website**, 9/4/09 (CAIRO) — the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States Amr Moussa, announced that he would appoint a special coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs in Darfur to coordinate Arab humanitarian assistance to the troubled western Sudan region.

The Arab summit in Doha last month decided to allocate 8 million dollar monthly during one year to relief Darfur IDPs also the Arab leaders urged Arab aid organizations to boost their activities there.

In a joint press conference with the Sudanese state minister for foreign affairs Ali Karti in Cairo on Thursday Moussa said that Darfur coordinator would cooperate with the Sudanese government and the international agencies there.

He also added that it had been agreed on a number of steps to be implemented soon in cooperation with the Sudanese authorities and the African Union to improve the humanitarian

situation in Darfur.

For his part Karti pointed out that more than forty Arab humanitarian organization would soon operate in Darfur to support of the humanitarian situation.

In addition to the humanitarian situation in Darfur and the steps to be taken in accordance with the resolutions of the Arab summit in Doha, Moussa and Karti, discussed the Arab-African coordination meeting on the resolution of Darfur issue that to be held in the upcoming weeks.

### **Sudan security bars Ajras Al-Hurriya newspaper**

*Sudan Tribune website*, 10/4/09 (KHARTOUM) Ajras Al-Hurriya, a pro-SPLM daily newspaper had been banned by the security service on Thursday and Friday for the coverage of a press conference held by Pagan Amum the SPLM secretary general and some editorials written by the editor in chief and other journalists on the draft of new press law.

In a press release issued yesterday the daily denounced the abusive censorship saying other newspapers were allowed to publish the same coverage of Pagan statements. It also added that security officials remove official's news, interviews and even the commercial advertising.

In his bared article Kamal Al Gali, the editor in chief of Ajras Al-Hurriya, slammed the heavy fines included in the draft of the new press law saying it breaches the press freedom.

The piece also urged to involve all the concerned parties in the preparation of the press law.

### **NISS suspected of murdering SPLM official in Lakes State**

*Sudan Tribune website*, 11/4/09 (RUMBEEK) — The SPLM Assistant Secretary for Rumbek North County (Maper) was killed Thursday by a member of the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) in Deng Nhial residential area at 8 o'clock in the morning, said an SPLM official.

According to the source from the ruling SPLM party in Lakes State, the late comrade Thon Wuong Manyuon was education inspector of Rumbek North County and also SPLM assistant secretary of Lake State Secretariat, as well he was sitting this year for the Sudan school certificate examination.

Lakes State Deputy Governor Awan Guol Riak, who acts as minister for local government and law enforcement, also added that the cause of killing should be investigated first.

"The officers of the National Security who are suspected of involvement in the killing are in custody awaiting investigation," he said. However, Riak said he can not disclose the cause of the killings until investigations are completed.

The two suspected officers belong to the SPLA.

After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement the NISS integrated a number of SPLA officers and the deputy head of the intelligence and security services, Majac Agot, is also from the SPLA.

As a result of the Thursday killing, two foreigners allegedly involved were also slain on Thursday, according to an eyewitness statement saying that those two foreigners were killed as a part of revenge from angry family of the late Thon Wuong Manyuon. Allegedly, a family member from Rumbek North who was very angry took revenge by killing one

man from Tanzania and one man from Kenya suspecting them to be members of NISS.

James Ndungu Wanjirui from Kenya was killed on Thursday at 3 o'clock PM and Wera Tarimu from Tanzania was killed the same day at 8 o'clock PM, said a foreigner who was a relative of one the victims.

In order to transport the dead bodies back to their respective countries, the Governor of Lakes State Lt. Gen. Daniel Awet Akot provided assistance to the foreigners by giving them one car with contribution from the trade union of East Africa whose members reside in Rumbek. The two bodies were taken away on Saturday from Rumbek to Kenya; thereafter the body of the Tanzanian man will be flow out from Kenya to the country of Tanzania.

This is not a first time in Lakes state that foreigners have been killed: within the same week in October 2008, a leading Tanzanian man was shot wounded at his garage and another Kenyan man was shot dead in a residential area near Canal Hotel Bar by an unknown assailant.

### **Mbeki's Darfur panel to visit Sudan neighboring countries**

**Sudan Tribune website**, 11/4/09 (KHARTOUM) – AU Panel headed by former South African leader Thabo Mbeki is scheduled to visit a number of Sudan's neighbors to listen to their views on bringing peace to Darfur.

**SMC**, quoting a senior unnamed official said the panel will visit Chad, Libya, Eritrea, Egypt and Saudi Arabia for consultation and discussions. The official added that the commission will seek to meet Darfur rebels and would later make a second visit to Sudan.

Some observers have expressed skepticism about the role of the panel saying its goal is to save Bashir from ICC prosecution. The Sudanese head of state have praised the work of the panel last week.

### **Ugandan Minister to Visit Khartoum Tuesday**

**SMC**, 11/4/09 Ugandan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Ezekiel Miesoka would arrive in Khartoum Tuesday for 3-day official visit. A diplomat told (**smc**) that the Ugandan Minister visit aims at controlling weapons trafficking across the border between Sudan Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya. It noted that international conference for greater lakes area proposed an initiative to control weapons trafficking phenomenon.

### **New group of Darfur rebel commanders merge with JEM**

**Sudan Tribune website**, 11/4/09 (PARIS) — Some 21 political leader and military commander from the rebel Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) – Unity announced yesterday their merger with the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), joining a first group that merged with JEM recently.

Formed by SLM commanders who defected from the former rebel leader Minni Minnawi after the signing of Darfur Peace Agreement in 2006, the leader of the group Abdallah Yahya failed; despite the respect he had among the military commanders, to impose his authority with a clear political vision.

A rebel veteran Suleiman Jamous, who joined JEM two weeks ago with some 30 commanders, criticized Yahya for joining a Libyan initiative to forge common grounds between SLM-Unity and other small groups saying the group had to seek unity with real groups not with fictive ones.



Jamous further accused the SLM-Unity leadership of seeking to at any cost to maintain themselves at the presidency of a group. He further stressed "with divisions we are harming the cause of Darfur people."

The four political leaders and 17 military commanders who joined JEM said in a press statement released yesterday that their merger is motivated by the need "to build a strong fortress of struggle able to reach the targeted goals and to protect it."

Two of this second SLM-Unity group that merged with JEM yesterday, Hammad Shatta Rabah, and Sediq Bura Moussa, were close to Charif Harir, a secular Sudanese opponent and a former leading member of the Federal Alliance of Ahmed Diraig.

## Commentary

### Sudan-US dialogue agenda

Mahjoub Mohamed Saleh (Chairman Board of Directors – *Al-Ayaam*): The writer calls upon the government to look into the broader picture while trying to address the problems of the country and to consider the views of the other political parties.

He points out that US Special Envoy to Sudan, Scott Gration, concluded his visit to Sudan which he said was aimed at seeing, hearing and assessing the situation on the ground without prejudice. He pointed out that the new US Administration came to power on a slogan of "Change" and has adopted constructive dialogue and cooperation as means to reach solutions to many international issues. However, he adds, it is important to note that what has changed is the method of dealing with the issues but the political objectives based on US interests remain greatly unchanged.

He cites Darfur and the implementation of the CPA as key points of focus for the US Administration. The US Envoy almost ignored the ICC issue and chose instead to talk on other issues such as the flow of arms to Darfur, access to humanitarian assistance, the situation in the IDP camps, the CPA, democracy, Abyei and the elections, the writer notes. He pointed out that the message the envoy wanted to convey was to push Sudan into looking at the whole picture. Sudan needs to base its strategies for any future talks with the US on looking at the broader picture, he points out.