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Highlights

NCP accuses SPLM of obstructing functions of the federal government

Akhir Lahza *Khartoum*, 18/08/10 – The NCP has accused the SPLM of putting obstacles before the functions of the federal government in southern Sudan. The federal government is non-existent in southern Sudan, lamented Samia Ahmed who heads the NCP's Women's Secretariat while speaking at a regular media forum yesterday. She cited the absence of the federal customs and taxation authorities in southern Sudan and pointed out that federal ministers even find it hard to coordinate with the southern Sudanese counterparts.

Abducted Jordanian officers released.

Gulftoday.ae *Amman*, 18/08/08 - Kidnappers who abducted two Jordanian officers from the joint UN-African Union peacekeeping force (UNAMID) in Darfur have released them, Jordanian Information Minister Ali Ayed said on Tuesday.

“First Lieutenant Ahmad Qeisi and First Lieutenant Nabil Keilani have been released. They are currently at the Jordanian mission in Darfur and in good health,” Ayed said in a statement run by the state-run **Petra news agency**.

The **Khartoum Monitor** local daily also reports that UNAMID has said the released Jordanian Police Advisors were freed without being harmed.

Acting Governor of South Darfur, AbdelKareem Musa Arbab, told the press in Nyala yesterday that state security authorities exerted much effort to secure the release of the peacekeepers. According to **Al-Ahram Al-Youm**, Arbab vowed to pursue the perpetrators until apprehended to discourage such acts in future.

Sudan re-denies humanitarian access to Darfur camps

Sudantribune.com *Khartoum*, 17/08/10 - Sudan has reinstated a ban on humanitarian access to Kalma IDP camp in south Darfur, one day after allowing a small team of aid representatives to enter the camp and assess the situation there for the first time in two weeks since the camp steeped in violent clashes, UN officials say.

Access to Kalma camp has been suspended since 2 August but the government on Monday, August 16, allowed a small team of aid workers to access the camp and assess humanitarian conditions. According to Samuel Hendricks, spokesman for the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Sudan, the team visited different areas of the camp and found that IDPs vacated some parts because of violence. He pointed out that team also delivered fuel for water pumps and medicine to one clinic.

But Farhan Haq, UN's deputy spokesman, told AP that representatives of UN agencies and humanitarian organizations yesterday tried “to return to Kalma Camp to further assess conditions and additional humanitarian needs but were denied access.”

UN's secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, on Monday expressed concern over the situation in the restive region and urged the Sudanese government to ensure humanitarian access to IDP camps.

The Geneva-based organization, Human Rights and Advocacy Network for Democracy (HAND), has warned that the humanitarian situation in Darfur IDP camp is worsening and accused the government of preparing for an imminent military offensive against IDPs in Kalma camp.

The organization also said that there were “reports that the government has distributed more than 1,500 AK47 rifles and Kalashnikov to members of the Dajo tribe through Omda Salah el Deen in Kalma camp.”

“Machine guns, including RPG rockets were also distributed to the nomad militias in Ishma area (25 km South-East of Nyala)” added HAND’s statement.

Eviction order targeted defaulting employees, not organizations

Local dailies 18/8/10 - Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Muawia Khaled said the aid workers were expelled because of transgressing their mandate. “The expulsion targeted specific staff members not the organizations they are working with,” he explained. “The Ministry has repeatedly turned the attention of the employees of the international NGOs to the need to comply with local directives and the mandate of these NGOs”. Muawia said the NGOs and their staff would be respected as long as they abide by the laws.

National agencies move to combat malnutrition in the IDP camp in Darfur

Al-Ahdath Khartoum, 18/8/10 – The Government has stepped up efforts to address malnutrition in Darfur states following the ouster of the international NGOs. The government has reportedly agreed with UNICEF to meet the running cost and staff salaries for one and a half year.

Director of the Ministry of Health’s Directorate of National Food Programme said the federal Ministry of Health will pay 150 million pounds for staff salaries, Darfur state governments will pay the balance and UNICEF would contribute food items.

GoSS requests federal support for de-mining

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 18/8/10 – The Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs has ordered the formation of a sub-committee to look into the financial and technical needs for de-mining in southern Sudan.

Meanwhile, the South Sudan De-mining Commission has halted de-mining operations in the Greater Upper Nile State due to heavy rains. South De-mining commissioner Yurkec Brag said mine clearing operations in the South were progressing but said the lack of sufficient funding makes the task difficult, adding that the Commission has requested funding from the federal Humanitarian Affairs Ministry. He pointed out that UNMIS engineering contingent are making considerable efforts in the de-mining area.

South Sudan urgently needs cash for roads - minister

Reuters Juba, 17/08/08 - South Sudan's development is lagging because of a lack of cash to build new roads in the war-ravaged region likely to become the world's newest nation state in five months, the transport minister said on Tuesday. "Every day I receive an average of three to five (international) companies who want to do the roads but I tell them we don't have money," said Anthony Makana, the south's minister for roads and transport.

"To connect all major towns in southern Sudan we need 13,000 km (8,000 miles) of roads ... we need five to six billion dollars to Tarmac about 80 percent of that," he said. Makana said only three towns had asphalt roads -- the capital Juba has 43 km (27 miles) , and regional centres Wau and Malakal have 17 km (11 miles) between them.

"My budget is 463 million Sudanese pounds (\$195 million) for this year. It is the second biggest budget after security," Makana said.

"But I don't see this money ... about 70 percent of the budget goes to the companies who have already done work. That is why you may see in some places we are lagging behind in terms of

addressing the challenges of infrastructure."

He said what remained of the budget after making payments to these companies was spent on rehabilitating dirt roads worn by rain and traffic. New projects are on the backburner.

Makana urged donors to dedicate more funds as quickly as possible to building roads, a necessity before work could begin on constructing the infra structure across the south, which will vote in a referendum on independence on Jan. 9, 2010. Most analysts believe the south will secede.

39 people killed in tribal clashes in South Darfur

MirayaFM.org 17/08/08 - 39 people were killed and 19 others wounded in a renewed tribal clashes between Misseriya and Rizeigat tribes in Kass area, South Darfur state.

The state acting governor said that the government has sent military reinforcements including helicopters to end the mayhem.

Information Minister Underlines need to overhaul media organs

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 18/8/10 – Minister of Information Kamal Obeid said completion of the CPA implementation and the conduct of the referendum to achieve unity would be the key agenda of his Ministry, stressing the importance of the media role at this stage.

The Minister revealed that his Ministry intends to reorganize media outlets and boost their capacity so that they are able to carry out their tasks effectively. He praised the media leaders in the country and stressed the need for the state to build key infrastructure for media work.

Obeid revealed that preparations were underway to convene a conference of information ministers of states as part of efforts to boost overall media performance.

Referendum Monitor:

Referendum should take place on schedule – President Al-Bashir

Al-Sahafa Khartoum, 18/08/10 – The southern Sudan referendum would take place as scheduled, asserts President Al-Bashir. At an emergency meeting with the AUHIP's Thabo Mbeki yesterday, the President revealed that the Presidency would soon hold a meeting to address the differences over the referendum.

Mbeki told the press in the wake of the meeting with Al-Bashir that heir talks focused on the issues of the southern Sudan and Abyei referenda, border demarcation and the implementation of the outstanding CPA benchmarks. He said that what is important at the moment is that the parties work as a team to achieve what remains of the CPA.

Opposition parties, SPLM turn down invitation to referendum meet

Al-Ayyam Khartoum, 18/08/10 – Opposition parties under the National Consensus Forces umbrella have turned down an NCP invitation to a consultative meeting on the referendum on the premise that the meeting would not include other issues that the opposition considers as key to the country's future. The opposition says it regards the envisaged consultative meeting as a public relations stunt and says it was not consulted in the preparatory stages.

The SPLM also says it would not participate at a meeting that would be held “without good preparations”. A statement issued by the Office of the SPLM Deputy Secretary-General Yassir Arman yesterday pointed out that the SPLM politburo met at FVP Salva Kiir’s residence two days ago and decided that the NCP-sponsored meeting would be no different from a meeting of that party’s leadership.

“The SPLM leadership therefore regrets it can not participate in the Thursday meeting and hopes to participate in future meetings that would have better preparation and conducted through agreement with the stakeholders,” the SPLM statement read in part.

SPLM agrees to NCP nominee for Commission’s Secretary-General

The Citizen Khartoum, 18/08/10 – GoSS Minister for Regional Cooperation Deng Alor has revealed that the NCP and the SPLM have asked the referendum commission to delay the schedules related to procedures leading up to the referendum.

On the other hand, the head of the Referendum Commission has censured the five southern Sudanese members of the nine-member commission for voting as a bloc to bar any northern Sudanese from occupying the post of the Commission Secretary-General. He said that the success of the work of the Commission was unlikely unless members of the referendum body cooperate and deal with matters from a national perspective rather than from the narrow north-south viewpoint.

Meanwhile, GoSS Vice-President Riek Machar also indicated that the SPLM politburo has agreed to the NCP nominee for the post of the South Sudan Referendum Commission’s Secretary-General on condition that his deputy be from southern Sudan.

Southern Sudanese not hindering the referendum commission - SPLM

Khartoum Monitor Khartoum, 18/08/10 – The Deputy Chairman of the South Sudan Referendum Commission, Chan Reig Madut, has denied that southerners in the Commission are hindering the appointment of a northerner to higher positions in the referendum body. Madut pointed out that the appointment of the Commission’s Secretary-General is a democratic process which is not based on whether one is a northerner or southerner.

We will show flexibility to overcome obstacles to the referendum - SPLM

Al-Khartoum Khartoum, 18/08/10 – The head of the AUHIP, Thabo Mbeki, held talks in Juba last Monday with FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit. He told the press in Khartoum after his trip to Juba that they agreed with the FVP on the need to expedite the referendum processes, adding that he would hold talks with President Al-Bashir on these issues and on the FVP’s suggestions to guarantee the referendum takes place on schedule.

In a related development, SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum says the SPLM will show flexibility in overcoming the obstacles to the conduct of the referendum to ensure it takes place on schedule.

SPLM politburo calls for a new constitution for Sudan

Al-Ahram Al-Youm Khartoum, 18/08/10 – In the final communiqué issued in the wake of the 3-day SPLM politburo meeting yesterday, the SPLM Political Bureau noted that the party has been advocating for unity for the last quarter century and has reiterated its calls for unity in the SPLM Manifesto of 2008. The unity they call for is based on a democratic, secular Sudan bound by voluntary unity and with respect to the country’s diversity. The communiqué noted however that the NCP seems bent on consolidating a non-democratic system that has no respect for the fundamental

rights of the citizen.

The SPLM politburo also called for considering a new constitution for the country because the current constitution becomes void by July 2011.

Tug of war over return of southerners in north

Afrik News 18/08/08 - According to reports, south Sudanese living in the north may not be allowed to vote for southern Sudan's independence while in the north, thus, the return of 1.5 million southern voters could play a decisive role in the January referendum and help split the oil-rich south from the north.

South Sudan is prepared to use trains, trucks and buses to return its citizens to the south. Authorities say returning families would be directed to reception centres in towns where they would be fed and sheltered for three months. But aid organizations are reportedly wary of a project that could be interpreted as having political overtones.

Despite these claims, South Sudan authorities insist that the reasons behind the demand for the return of southern Sudanese from the north are humanitarian and not politically motivated.

"We're not politicians. We're operating on humanitarian grounds. If they come to vote for unity, we don't care. If they come to vote for secession, we don't care," the government's director of repatriation, Arop Mathiang Amiyock was quoted by reporters.

Experts say a large influx of southern Sudanese needing aid and relocation assistance in the south could create an added tax on aid agencies in a region where the humanitarian situation is already complex with 4.3 million vulnerable people in the south already requiring food assistance.

"We are looking for resources from the government and from donors. That's why we haven't started the project yet. We are concerned about the resources we have to support the returnees. That's why we are appealing to the international community," Mathiang Amiyock added.

Some pundits however believe that the north will not let the south become independent because the north is too dependent on the oil from the south.

Jonglei State Assembly imposes financial contribution for referendum

Sudantribune.com Bor, 17/08/10 - Jonglei State Legislative Assembly has unanimously passed a bill that requires all employed citizens to pay money to support a successful conduct of the upcoming referendum on 9th January 2011.

Called 'Citizen Referendum Contributions Bill', the document demands that executives pay 1,000 Sudanese pounds (SDG) per month for five months. Members of the state assembly, directors and other civil servants will pay 500, 250 and 10 SDG per month for five months depending on their respective level of grades. Unclassified staffs and unemployed citizens of Jonglei State will pay 5 SDG once. The organized forces, according to the bill – now law- will contribute varying amounts of money once depending on one's rank.

Speaking to Sudan Tribune on Tuesday in Bor, the Chairperson for Finance and Economic Planning, Deng Chuol Bei, said the bill's success will rely on public contributions.

"This referendum is accepted by majority [of people] in Southern Sudan," Deng Chuol said. "Whether for unity or separation, people are happy indeed that this referendum cannot fail," he responded when asked if public opinion was taken into account during the assembly's deliberations on the bill.

Southern Sudan Plans \$10.2 Billion Projects to Build Animal-Shaped Cities

Bloomberg.com 17/08/08 - Southern Sudan is in talks with two companies about a \$10.1 billion project to redesign the semi- autonomous region's cities into animal-shaped urban centres, the Housing Ministry said.

Southern Sudan's capital, Juba, will take the shape of a rhinoceros, and the second-largest city, Wau, will be in the form of a giraffe, said Daniel Wani, undersecretary of the Housing and Physical Planning Ministry. Talks are taking place with Abu Malek Companies and Agencies Ltd., based in Juba, and Abbotsford, Canada-based UAS Canada Inc., he said.

"This is very innovative," Wani told reporters in Juba today. "The advantage is that there will be uniformity of planning. It will be very easy for future generations to follow our thinking, what we wanted to put in place, because we are not planning for now, we plan for tomorrow."

The project proposed by Abu Malek and UAS Canada, which may take more than 20 years to complete, has yet to be approved by Southern Sudan's executive, known as the Council of Ministers, said Housing and Physical Planning Minister Jemma Nunu Kumba.

The development is awaiting a sovereign guarantee of \$500 million from the Bank of Southern Sudan, which Wani said would be forthcoming "shortly." A public-private partnership will control the new cities, which will then gradually be repatriated back to Southern Sudan as the assets are bought by the government or private owners. The government of Southern Sudan will finance 30 percent of the project, Wani said.

African think-tank predicts possible "painful split" in Sudan

Sudantribune.com Juba, 17/08/10 - The African think-tank, the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), has warned of a possible painful split of Sudan into two independent countries.

In a press release issued on Tuesday the Centre for Conflict Resolution will organize a seminar in Cape Town, South Africa, on Wednesday next week to discuss the future of the country. "As Sudan faces the prospect of possibly being split into two countries and giving painful birth to a new nation – with a referendum in South Sudan scheduled for January 2011 – world-leading scholar-diplomats on Africa's largest country will be speaking at a meeting hosted by the Centre for Conflict Resolution."

Sudanese scholar-diplomat and Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Professor Francis Deng, will be previewing his new book entitled, 'Sudan at the Brink: Self-Determination and National Unity.' The meeting, which is chaired by Ambassador James Jonah, former UN Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs, will also be addressed by Dr. Jan Pronk, a former UN special representative for Sudan and former minister for development cooperation in the Netherlands, and Ambassador Richard Williamson, a former US special envoy to Sudan.

"The speakers will consider the implications of South Sudan's forthcoming self-determination vote while a host of key post-referendum issues – such as security arrangements, sharing of water assets and oil revenues, and decisions about currency and national capitals – remain unresolved," reads the press release.

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