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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

NCP, SPLM reject Al-Mahdi's proposal for UN-monitored referendum

Al-Ahdath 23/8/10 – NCP Secretary for Organizations Qutbi Al-Mahdi has rejected a proposal by National Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi to entrust administration of the upcoming referendum on a neutral body under the observation of the UN instead of the present National Referendum Commission.

Similarly, National Assembly Deputy Speaker Atem Garang has rejected the proposal saying it contravenes the CPA and the Interim Constitution.

Meanwhile, the two CPA partners are to resume their dialogue next Sunday in Khartoum to discuss contentious issues including post-referendum arrangements.

However, **Al-Akhbar** 23/8/10 reports informed sources as saying that the two CPA partners have reached an agreement whereby the three-month period before the start of the referendum which is earmarked to registration, appeals etc. would be reduced to one month so that the Commission is able to carry out its task.

Referendum Commission secretary general to be appointed this week

Local dailies 23/8/10 – National Referendum Commission Rapporteur Tariq Osman El-Tahir said the Commission members would travel to Juba today, accompanied by SRSB and Head of UNMIS Haile Menkerios, to administer oath-taking to the Commission's higher committees in the South, adding the secretary-general of the Commission would be appointed this week. The Commission members will hold a meeting with GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit and VP Riek Machar for discussion on the referendum process. According to **Al-Ayyam**, El-Tahir said voter registration for referendum might begin in October.

Meanwhile, **Sudan Tribune website** 23/8/10 reported that the Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) has agreed to let a Northerner hold the post of the Secretary General of the referendum commission, multiple sources told Sudan Tribune.

The veteran lawyer Omer Al-Sheik, who worked in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), is expected to be tapped as the commission's secretary general.

The SPLM launched a fierce media campaign against Al-Sheik, accusing him of "incompetence" and "failure" during his tenure in MINURSO and as such he is not fit to hold the SG position.

Sources tell Sudan Tribune that Al-Sheik strongly resisted the nomination but that the head of the referendum commission Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil urged him to accept it. The secretary-general controls the funds and budget of the commission.

Khalil had threatened to resign if the SPLM continue to stall the appointment of a Northerner Secretary General stressing that Southerners already control 59 out of 63 positions outlined in the Referendum Law.

NCP censures SANU's call for southern Sudan independence

Sudan Tribune website 23/8/10 - Sudan's dominant National Congress Party (NCP) criticized a statement by Sudan African National Union (SANU) party in favor of Southern Sudan independence in the upcoming referendum next January.

Last Friday, Chairman of SANU, Dr. Toby Maduot Parek put out a press release supporting the independence of southern Sudan, accusing the NCP of failing to implement the CPA and pursuing "a strategy to marginalize the people of underdeveloped regions of the Sudan", as well as dividing the national political forces.

Speaking to the press at the NCP premises on Sunday, Qutbi Al-Mahdi, Secretary for Organizations at the NCP censured SANU's position supportive for the independence of the semi-autonomous region.

"This party has lost the road since a long time ago and its current leadership is unable to continue to walk on the line adopted by the party founder, William Deng and his colleagues who argued that the federal system is the best solution."

SANU leaders could not walk on with the idea and finally gave in to the general atmosphere prevailing in the south, Qutbi further stressed.

SANU, founded in Uganda in 1963 by late Fr. Saturino Lahoru, was fighting for the right of all the marginalized people of Sudan including Darfur, Eastern Sudan, Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile.

Abyei residents demonstrated, demanded PCA ruling implementation

Al-Sahafa 23/8/10 – About 8000 civilians in Abyei organized a peaceful demonstration yesterday in front of UNMIS and government premises demanding the implementation of the PCA Award on Abyei and organization of elections in the Area, warning that this would be the fourth and the last demonstration.

Civil Society Organizations chairman Rao Manil told the newspaper that next time the residents would not demonstrate because they would take another step. He said the Area Chief Administrator told him that their previous petitions have been submitted to the Presidency but he received no response, adding that similar petitions have been handed over to UNMIS and they were told that they had been delivered to the UNSG.

UNMIS set up County referendum bases

The Citizen 23/08/10 – UNMIS is planning to establish its presence in all 79 counties across southern Sudan as part of her peacekeeping mandate and the 2011 referendum nears. The county-level office is intended to provide support for the impending referendum, according to the UNMIS Public Information Office.

The first facility shall be opened next Wednesday in Mundri, Western Equatoria State, in

the presence of the UNMIS Regional Coordinator David Gressly, Governor of Western Equatoria Joseph Bakosoro and other senior government officials.

Deputy Speaker proposes dual citizenship

Al-Ahram Al-Youm 23/08/10 – Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Atem Garang said that if the South secedes then the appropriate basis for future relations in which the rights of future generations and border tribes would be safeguarded is to adopt a dual citizenship. He said there is a trend within the NCP to use of the issue of citizenship as a card to put pressure on southern Sudanese. “Expulsion of southern Sudanese from the north in the event of secession will be a mistake that future generations will pay its price,” he warned, pointing out that GoSS has the capacity to absorb its citizens within six months. Atem downplayed the threat of expulsion, saying southerners in the North are doing marginal jobs and mostly IDPs.

Rising concern as Southern Kordofan census lags

The Citizen 23/08/10 – Political leaders in Southern Kordofan State have expressed growing concern over the delay in the announcement of results of the re-run of the state’s population census which were to have been out mid last month.

The head of the Popular Committee in Support of Popular Consultation in Southern Kordofan, Ramadhan Sheila, said that they could not understand why the announcement has been delayed; pointing out that this has caused much anxiety and tension in the state.

Khidir Abdeen, a member of the Census Bureau, said that the results were scheduled for announcement by the 20th last month, adding that the Central Census Bureau has not given them clear reasons for the delay.

Other Highlights

“Claim of SPLA buying aircraft means North preparing for war”- Atem

Al-Ahdath 23/8/10 – National Assembly Deputy Speaker Atem Garang has considered the rumour about SPLA buying military aircraft floated by pro-government elements as “preparation by the North for war” and a “cheap propaganda”, pointing out that Sudan is manufacturing tanks.

Meanwhile, analyst Salah Al-Dooma said the arms purchase could be a sign of war between the North and the South, adding the arms race is caused by the mutual distrust between the two CPA partners. He expected the SPLA to continue arming itself in anticipation for NCP reneging on the CPA.

Sudan Tribune website 22/8/10 reported that South Sudan’s army dismissed on Sunday a report made by a Sudanese media agency claiming that it has bought heavy military machine guns and eleven aircrafts from a Russian arms dealer.

The pro-government Sudan Media Centre (SMC) reported that the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) has ordered eleven military aircrafts from Kazan Aircraft

Production Association (KAPA).

Lieutenant General Kuol Deim Kuol, official spokesperson of the SPLA, strongly denied that they were in process of acquiring armed aircrafts in a phone interview with Sudan Tribune from the south's capital Juba.

"We do not have such information. When we get our arms, we will make it public. We will make it known to the general public." Kuol said.

Colonel Malaak Ayuen Ajok, head of information and public relations department at the SPLA headquarters also denied knowledge of any arrangement to buy military aircraft from anywhere in the world.

"I am not aware of any military aircrafts said to have been bought the by SPLA because we do not have funds", said Colonel Ayuen.

"I am not also aware of the training of pilots in the countries you have mentioned", Colonel Ayuen said...

Meanwhile, ***Al-Sudani*** 23/8/10 reports that SAF spokesperson Lt. Col. Al-Sawarmi Khaled has denounced the aircraft deal for SPLA. "SPLA import of any weapons particularly tanks and aircraft is not allowable. The task of the SPLA during the interim period is limited to training and assembling prior to integration into the Sudanese armed forces if unity is confirmed," he said.

Uganda Trains 80 from JEM at Behest of SPLA

Sudan Vision 23/8/10 - Sudan People's liberation Army sent a list saying it is the second batch of Darfur rebel Justice and Equality Movement members who were supposed to receive training by the Ugandan military in Uganda.

Earlier, Sudan People's Liberation Army liaison officer in the region of west of the River Nile, Colonel John Marjang, had dispatched a detailed list to Ugandan training and operation commander at Oliver Tambo Cadet School regarding 80 JEM trainees.

Marjang in his letter, which Sudan Vision got a copy from its sources, expressed apology for delay in dispatching the list. He attributed the delay to logistic problems getting information from operations base. The list shows information on 80 trainees regarding their name, nationality, region, locality, age, sex, members of family and tribal affiliation.

SAF denies link with LRA

Al-Akhbar 23/8/10 – SPLA spokesperson Maj. Gen. Kuol Diem Kuol has accused SAF of providing protection to LRA chief Joseph Kony at the Kafia Kingi area which is disputed between the North and the South.

However, SAF spokesperson Lt. Col. Al-Sawarmi Khaled has dismissed the charges, saying Kony is not in the specified area, adding SAF has no interest in harbouring Kony.

Do not pressure aid workers in Darfur - USG John Holmes

Al-Sahafa/Agencies 23/08/10 – UN USG for Humanitarian Affairs, John Holmes, has expressed concern over what he described as pressures imposed by the Sudanese government on the movement of humanitarian aid workers in Darfur. UAE-based *Al-Bayan* quoted the USG as saying that the UN is in continued consultations with Khartoum over the obstacles to humanitarian access to IDPs in Kalma.

“We had been denied access to Kalma for about two weeks and are facing access problems in the Jebel Marra and despite the fact that we managed to resolve most of these problems most of the time, we remain concerned of the continued pressures exerted on the humanitarian community,” he reportedly said. He explained that these pressures are being exerted on them by the government at the local and federal levels in the form of hampering access to some areas, intimidation and threats of expulsion.

Tripoli to form a broad-based front for Darfur armed factions

Al-Sahafa 23/08/10 – Informed sources revealed that Libya has made considerable progress towards preparations for a conference to unify Darfur armed factions to form a broad-based front. The conference may take place in September, the sources say, adding that invitations have already been sent out to the armed factions and delegates are in consultations on preparations.

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