



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit
Communications & Public Information Office

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MONDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2013

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Highlights

Sudan Committed to AU Position on Abyei: FM Karti

Sudanvisiondaily.com Khartoum, 27/10/2013 – Foreign Minister Ali Karti said the ongoing unilateral registration of voters in Abyei for the purpose of conducting referendum is a violation of the will of the government of Sudan and the government of South Sudan, adding that the position of the government of South Sudan is clear because it is committed to the decisions of the African Union and it is not party to what is going on in Abyei.

Speaking to reporters at the Council of Ministers yesterday following a meeting with the President of the Republic, Karti said he briefed the President on the reasons for the postponement of the visit of the AU Peace and Security Council's delegation to Abyei which was supposed to take place last Saturday.

The postponement of the visit was requested by Sudan due to the current situation in Abyei, Karti said. There are some local bodies that have started registering voters for the conduct of referendum in Abyei and such step is a violation of all agreements between the two countries and run counter to resolutions of the AU Peace and Security Council.

He said consultations are ongoing to fix a new date for the visit of the delegation and Sudan requested the postponement of the visit due to the ongoing developments in Abyei.

The Cabinet also listened yesterday to the outcome of the participation of the President in the extraordinary AU summit held in Addis Ababa at the request of Kenya.

Osman Hussein, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, said in press statements that the summit issued a host of decisions in which it expressed concern over direction of charges against African leaders. He said African leaders enjoy immunity in accordance with the international law and AU laws and charters.

The Council also listened to the outcomes of visit of the President of the Republic to Juba in response to an invitation from his South Sudanese counterpart, Salva Kiir Mayardit as part of regular follow up on the implementation of agreements between the two countries.

The most important outcome of the visit of the President to Juba is the agreement that the zero line will be determined in mid November 2013, he said. This will speed up efforts to open border crossings for trade between the two nations, he added.

He said the summit affirmed the continuation of joint cooperation between the two countries particularly the issue of debt write-off.

The Cabinet also approved draft of additional credit law for the year 2013 to allocate revenues to meet the increase of wages of employees in the centre and states, support the agricultural season and the health sector.

Guidelines and objectives of the budget for 2014 were also discussed by the Council which will be subjected to further discussion of the various ministerial sectors. ([Back to Top](#))

S Sudan's Dinka hold unilateral vote on Abyei

Al-Jazeera, 27/10/2013 – South Sudan's Ngok Dinka tribe is holding a unilateral referendum to decide whether oil-rich Abyei, a district they inhabit and is under dispute between the Khartoum government and South Sudan, joins either of the two nations.

Reports said on Sunday that the referendum results were expected on October 31.

The exercise was proceeding peacefully, said Luka Biong, spokesman for the Abyei Referendum High Committee, a civic group that is organising the vote.

About 100,000 Dinkas residing in South Sudan had returned to Abyei for the referendum, which would be conducted over a three-day period.

The Sudanese government says the referendum is illegal and goes against agreements signed between Khartoum and Juba.

Meanwhile, the African Union on Sunday accused the Sudan government of preventing an AU delegation from visiting Abyei following talks that failed to make progress on the flashpoint region.

The AU "expresses its deep disappointment and regret that it was unable to undertake the visit (Saturday and Sunday)", it said, accusing Khartoum of postponing it "for contrived security reasons". ([Back to Top](#))

Abyei community say referendum will not deny Misseriya access

Sudantribune.com Juba, 28/10/2013 – Leaders from Abyei region said they would not to prevent the Arab Misseriya nomads from accessing the area, in the aftermath of a referendum in the oil-producing area, later this month.

"This referendum does not affect the other arrangements. It does not cancel what has been agreed upon in the 2012 September 21 proposal and Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), said Luka Biong Deng, the spokesperson for Abyei high referendum committee.

"It is to make clear the final status", he added.

The official, in an interview with *Sudan Tribune*, downplayed reports that neighboring Sudan was allegedly massing troops in the northern parts of the disputed area, with plans to disrupt the planned vote.

Edward Lino, head of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in the area says the vote was an opportunity his people could not miss because the month was picked and approved by the African Union that it would be "unwise" to keep waiting for the outcomes of the indefinite discussions.

"This is the opportunity which cannot be missed. The month of October was the work of the African Union and [it would] be unwise to keep waiting for the outcomes of the indefinite discussions. The government of Sudan is determined to keep on dragging with these endless discussions. They are not ready to accept the formation of the referendum commission as a matter of urgency so that the dispute is settled once and for all", said Lino

They want the area to remain in that state so that they continue to benefit from the resources extracted from the area, he stressed. ([Back to Top](#))

MPs call for more troops in Jonglei to protect civilians

Sudantribune.com Bor, 27/10/2013 – The Jonglei state assembly has called on the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to deploy soldiers in areas inhabited by armed Murle civilians and Yau Yau rebels.

"There is need for more SPLA forces to be deployed to protect civilians and their property," said Jonglei Speaker, Peter Chol in a press statement on Thursday last week.

The statement said that the assembly in a sitting on October 23 condemned the recent attack on the people of Twic East by a group of armed Murle youth and David Yau Yau rebels.

On October 20, Murle youth and rebels attacked Twic East, killing 79, wounding 88.

The assembly also appealed to humanitarian organizations to offer "immediate emergency response relief food and non-food items to those affected by this senseless violence as soon as possible."

The attack in Twic East sent shock waves and fear in Bor County. Most people in the county are moving towards the state capital for protection.

Ayen Ayuen, one of the residents of Bor told Sudan Tribune that after the attack they do not sleep at night due to fear, adding that he had walked 12 kms on foot towards the state capital in search of safety.

"We did not sleep last night. People from Kolnyang came and got us in Mareng in the middle of the night. They told us that the attack was about to happen in Kolnyang and Anyidi." he said

According to Ayuen, the planned attack had been disclosed by one of the Murle men serving in the SPLA garrison of Kolnyang.

"He claimed to have received a call from one of the Murle men asking him to move out of Kolnyang to save his life", he said, adding they evacuated their village during the night and moved on food to Bor with their children. ([Back to Top](#))

Peace, only way to build country

Voice of Hope, 28/10/2013 – School helps train young people on how to live in peace in the family and inculcates the importance of peace as the only way to build the country.

This is the view Auxillium Basic School head teacher Jane Kinyanjui shared with parents and pupils on Saturday during School Education Day under the theme "Young people to change the world through love", *Voice of Hope* reported.

Sir Kinyanjui explained the celebration was important to show to parents the true changes of education in upgrading the moral standards of young people and forming them for the future.

She said the role of the school is to transform people in both social values and moral principals and to help in spiritual purification.

Sir Kinyanjui added that the school - as the Catholic mystical body - helps train young people on how to live in peace in the family.

She urged parents to send all children to school to become better future leaders.

Major John Kuria Waithaka, from the Kenyan Battalion serving with UNMISS, appreciated the activities performed by pupils, terming them as more than adult people in terms of creativity.

He described South Sudan as a country that is speeding up development and needs the assistance of all for the progress to continue forever.

Major Kuria accompanied the commanding officer with a call of helping the young people in the country.

The Kenyan Battalion donated pens, notebooks and a trophy to Auxillium School for long progress as a sign of encouragement to the pupils.

Auxilium Basic School is a co-education Catholic school operating in Wau under Salesian community. ([Back to Top](#))

S. Sudan, Uganda and DRC priorities border security

Sudantribune.com Juba, 27/10/2013 – A regional conference comprising representatives from Uganda, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on Thursday resolved to prioritise security as a mechanism for peaceful co-existence in the three countries.

The gathering, held in South Sudan's Central Equatoria state, aimed at exploring ways of consolidating peace and security, safe movement of people and property as well as delivery of social services at common border of these regions.

A joint communiqué obtained by *Sudan Tribune* said delegates at the conference agreed on formation of committees tasked to handle security, the economy and free movement of people along the common borders of the three nations.

The conference also agreed on the establishment of mechanisms to address insecurity, commitment on the implementation of the resolutions derived from the conference for the benefit of all citizens.

Regional leaders speak

In his closing remarks, the governor of Central Equatoria state urged other heads of states to come into common dialogue to discuss issues that affect them so that people in the region live in peace.

“Brothers and sisters let’s all work for peace stability for development to progress in this area, our coming together is a clear signal for peace and unity so let’s continue to be in peace with one another”, said Clement Wani Konga.

He further stressed the importance of a regional approach towards education in order to reduce the high illiteracy rates in the region, in addition to Konga more efforts to bring an end to Joseph Kony’s Lord Resistance Army (LRA), which has claimed several lives.

Joseph Bakasoro, the governor of Western Equatoria state urged the three regions to put the conference resolutions into practice so that the next gathering can only focus on progress report, challenges and achievements made.

He pledged commitment to the full implementation of these resolutions so as to champion peace, justice and unity as fundamental values for good governance and development.

“It’s high time we united as Africans and stood together to address the socio-economic needs of our common people”, he said.

John Mutabingwa, a representative from Uganda appealed to the three regions to observe commitment and implement the resolutions especially security as a factor for socio- economic development.

Meanwhile, the governor of Orientale province in the DRC affirmed that weeding out insecurity elements operating in the region require collective efforts from authorities in the three neighboring nations.

“Stable security is the only means to realize [a] peaceful society and development at all levels,” said Jean Bamanisa.

Regional taskforce

Each of the three countries has contributed troops to the African Union and United Nations-initiated joint regional taskforce, which was formed to intensify the hunt against the notorious LRA rebels.

The LRA, which has survived since 1987 by kidnapping and forcing children to become child soldiers, is accused of fight conducting serious human rights violations against civilians in the areas in Uganda, South Sudan, the DRC and Central African Republic (CAR). ([Back to Top](#))

S Sudan soldiers found guilty of murder rape in Jonglei

Voice of America, 27/10/2013 – A military tribunal in South Sudan has found five Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) soldiers guilty of murdering civilians in Jonglei state, military officials said this week.

The soldiers could face the death penalty, SPLA spokesman Philip Aguer said.

They were among more than 30 soldiers who have been arrested since August for violating the military code of conduct in Jonglei state, where rights groups have accused the South Sudanese army of committing serious human rights abuses, including rape and murder.

Two other soldiers were convicted of rape and 24 others were found guilty of unprofessional conduct, including being intoxicated while on duty, and were discharged from the army. Some of the soldiers convicted on lesser charges were given prison sentences ranging from one to five years, Aguer said.

Aguer said this was the first time the army has tried soldiers on charges of rape and murder.

The SPLA has a heavy presence in Jonglei state, where it has been fighting rebels led by David Yau Yau for more than a year.

In a report released last month, Human Rights Watch said the SPLA "has committed serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law" since December last year in its battle against Yau Yau's rebels.

"SPLA soldiers have unlawfully killed at least 96 people, mostly civilians, from the Murle ethnic group during the conflict, and they have engaged in widespread looting of homes, clinics, schools and churches," the report says.

SPLA Information Director Malak Ayuen Ajol denied the allegations when the report was released, but Defense Minister Kuol Manyang vowed that military leaders would look into the accusations. ([Back to Top](#))

EAC to discuss South Sudan's application

Catholic Radio Network, 28/10/2013 – East African Community or EAC scheduled the discussion of South Sudan's application for the first week of November.

EAC Secretary General Richard Sezibera said the meeting will take place on November 7 and 8 in Arusha Tanzania, Tanzania's Daily News website reported.

He said a special team from South Sudan is expected to travel to Arusha to join EAC member states of Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and Tanzania in the task force to determine rules of procedure and programme.

Dr Sezibera said the EAC Council of Ministers approved the proposed process of negotiating with South Sudan to join the Community during its meeting in August.

He added that the council established a high level negotiation team and nominated three members on September 30 and directed the Secretariat to start the negotiations with of South Sudan.

Dr Sezibera said Sudan's application to join the regional body was turned down for not having a common border with any member of the East African Community. ([Back to Top](#))

National ministry assesses education in Western Equatoria

Anisa Radio, 28/10/2013 – A delegation from the National Ministry of Education was in Western Equatoria to carry out an education assessment in the state.

National Ministry Education Advisor William Ater Macier said on Saturday in Yambio that the 14-member team came to assess the education system from pre-school to university level, Anisa Radio reported.

The fact-finding mission aimed to improve the education system countrywide through interaction with schools, learners and teachers.

Advisor Ater said after the assessment the National Ministry of Education will make its strategic plan according to the needs discovered through the assessment.

He added that the education system is moving slowly and it requires much to improve including education policies, school facilities, teachers, textbooks and school equipment.

Mr Ater cited challenges including lack of funds and training.

This year the National Ministry of Education sent three teams to assess education in the three greater regions of Upper Nile, Bahr el Ghazal Equatoria. ([Back to Top](#))

I'll be happy if I can do a fraction of work done by Mother Teresa: Sam Childers

DNA Mumbai, 28/10/2013 – Sam Childers is something of a legend. A self-confessed drug addict, cocaine peddler and alcoholic, Childers, 51, today travels all over the globe talking to the youth about the evils of drugs and alcohol. He went to South Sudan and was shocked to see the misery caused by the civil war.

And while he opened orphanages, he also joined hands with the forces opposing president Omar al-Bashir, 66. The North-South war in Sudan has resulted in the deaths of about two million people and has rendered four million persons homeless. South Sudan attained Independence on July 9, 2011, but remains a nation condemned to utter poverty, violence and disease. Childers, who is in Mumbai to receive the Mother Teresa Award, wrote about his experience in his best-selling book, *Another Man's War* which inspired a hugely successful film *Machinegun Preacher*

directed by Marc Forster. Childers, who is a brand ambassador of the Harley Davidson bike cult, spoke exclusively to **dna**'s city editor S Balakrishnan on Sunday. Excerpts:

What made you take to drugs, alcohol, etc.?

I took to drugs, including marijuana, cocaine and heroin, and alcohol when I was only 11. I was born in North Dakota, but lived in several cities in the US because of the nature of my father's job.

Wherever I went, the youth thought it cool to do drugs and take alcohol. I was no exception. We boys thought that the girls liked it that way. By the time I was 15, I had become an addict and had even started peddling drugs like cocaine. I was part of motorcycle gangs. I offered security to drug cartels. I was jailed several times, but was never convicted.

How did you rid yourself of these addictions?

In 1990, I was involved in a fight in a bar in Orlando, Florida. I was almost killed. I decided to return home. Something deep inside me told me to quit drugs and alcohol. I think it was the call of Jesus. I told my wife to pack up and said 'we have to leave the city otherwise I would be killed'. We moved hundreds of miles away to Samsville in Pennsylvania to start a new life. I am grateful to Jesus for showing me the correct path. I decided to talk extensively to youth across the US and tell them about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. I also tell them about the death of my son Wayne who died of drug overdose.

How did you land in South Sudan?

I think that was also because of the call of Jesus. A massive civil war was raging between North and Southern Sudan which resulted in a huge human tragedy. In 1998, I went to Yei in Southern Sudan where I came across the body of a child who was killed in a mine blast. That tragedy shook me. In fact, the children were the worst victims of the civil war. People believe that the civil war was a religious one between the Muslim-dominated North led by president Omar al-Bashir and Christians in South Sudan. This is a wrong belief. The fact is that president al-Bashir has been targeting his own people who have been protesting against his atrocities. He calls for jihad and justifies the violence he has unleashed on innocent people, including children. My first task was to pull out the landmines so that the casualties can be reduced. Then I started a mobile clinic to provide medical aid and vaccination facilities to the people, who had zero access to even basic medical facilities.

But why did you get involved in the war?

I was in Nimule in South Sudan when there was a raid by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which is a mercenary force backed by al-Bashir. I saw the brutality of the LRA and felt that it was my moral duty to oppose its atrocities on the poor. Simultaneously, I started orphanages not only in South Sudan, but also in neighbouring Uganda where refugees had fled. Every day, my team supplies 4,000 meals for the poorest of poor. We also run schools. Apart from donations from well-wishers I have diverted the royalties from my book and the film for my social work. The situation in places like Darfur continues to be atrocious.

How long do you plan to continue to stay in Africa?

I will never quit South Sudan. My mission is to provide relief to the war-affected persons and also to put an end to the atrocities of the al-Bashir regime, which is interfering in the internal affairs of South Sudan. I want to die in South Sudan.

But, don't you think that the civil war is essentially about oil? South Sudan has huge crude oil deposits which the North wants to control?

Of course, oil is central to the war. But, the North has to pay for the oil it gets from the South. Al-Bashir himself has admitted that he took away oil worth \$880 million just like that. He has been found guilty of war crimes by international bodies, yet no one is willing to act against him and his continuing atrocities. Whoever gets oil from South Sudan has to pay for it, so that the revenue can be utilised to lift the millions of hapless people of that country from the depths of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy.

Do you have any role model?

Yes. It is Mother Teresa. Her life story has moved me immensely. I will consider my life a success if I can do even a fraction of the good work she has done for humanity.

In 1990, I was involved in a bar fight in Orlando. I was almost killed. I decided to return home. Something deep inside me told me to quit drugs and alcohol. I think it was the call of Jesus

My mission is to provide relief to the war-affected persons and also to put an end to the atrocities of the al-Bashir regime, which is interfering in the internal affairs of South Sudan. I want to die in South Sudan. ([Back to Top](#))

Congo army says it captured rebel stronghold; peacekeeper killed

Reuters Kinshasa, 28/10/2013 – Government forces said they captured the rebel stronghold of Rutshuru on Sunday in a third day of fierce fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo in which one U.N. peacekeeper was killed and another injured.

Following two months of relative calm in the region, fighting flared on Friday after peace talks in neighbouring Uganda broke down when M23 rebels demanded a full amnesty for their leaders. President Joseph Kabila last week ruled out a blanket pardon.

Three days of victories by government forces have raised the prospect that the army could defeat Congo's most important rebel group, ending a 20-month uprising which has displaced tens of thousands of people.

Army spokesman Colonel Olivier Hamuli told U.N. radio Okapi on Sunday that government forces had recaptured Rutshuru, some 70 km (43 miles) north of Goma, the largest city in eastern Congo. Rutshuru had been taken by the rebels just over a year ago and was serving as a regional base.

The army, which is attacking the rebel enclave in north Kivu province from the north and south, took the town of Kiwanja earlier on Sunday, a day after wresting the strategic outpost of Kibumba on the Rwandan border.

"We are consolidating the zones we have conquered," Hamuli had earlier told Reuters. He refused to discuss rebel requests for a return to peace talks in Kampala, saying: "We will continue to do our jobs as soldiers."

M23 said in a statement on Sunday it had withdrawn its troops from Kiwanja, accusing the army of sending in fighters in civilian clothing to try to draw U.N. troops into the conflict.

M23 threatened to withdraw its delegation from the stalled peace talks in Kampala unless there was an immediate end to hostilities. It said it would then launch a large-scale counter-offensive.

The U.N. mission in Congo (MONUSCO) said the Tanzanian peacekeeper was killed during fighting with M23 in Kiwanja.

"The soldier died while protecting the people of Kiwanja," Martin Kobler, the head of MONUSCO, said in a statement. The previous round of clashes between the army and rebels in late August killed at least two Tanzanian peacekeepers.

U.N. BRIGADE

Rwanda, which denies U.N. experts' allegations that it supports the rebels, said on Friday that Congolese army shells had landed in its territory, raising fears of a regional conflict.

Congo's army, supported by a new U.N. intervention brigade, scored its first victories against the rebel movement, which has been fighting for nearly two years, in late August, forcing the rebels away from Goma.

The U.N. brigade has a tough new mandate to eliminate armed groups in the eastern provinces, though it has not been involved in the past three days of fighting.

The support of the brigade and the weakening of the rebels have fuelled belief that Congo's army - notoriously disorganised, undisciplined and under-supplied - could defeat M23.

Army sources told *Reuters* reporters in Goma that M23 had been weakened by desertions, with some 40 rebels taking advantage of a corridor created by the government troops to allow them to flee rebel lines.

M23 began in early 2012 as a mutiny by soldiers demanding the government implement the terms of a 2009 peace deal signed with a previous Rwanda-backed rebel group, many of whose members had been integrated into the army.

Army spokesman Hamuli said some M23 fighters had fled towards the Rwandan border in the face of the army advance.

"There are small pockets of M23 resistance in the hills near Rwanda," he said. "We think Rwanda has to prove its good faith and oblige M23 to disarm, or disarm them itself." ([Back to Top](#))

Army and rebels clash in North Darfur's town

AllAfrica.com Khartoum, 27/10/2013 – Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and rebel Sudan Liberation Movement - Abdel Wahid (SLM-AW) clashed in Mellit town in North Darfur, as the two sides claimed inflicting casualties on each other.

The SLM-AW spokesperson Abdel Rahim Nimir said in a statement issued on Saturday they took the control of Mellit town on Friday where they killed 16 militiamen and captured a number of vehicles loaded with weapons and ammunition.

The rebel spokesperson said their fighters evacuated the town on Saturday. He added that the enemy offered little resistance but however said they lost two combatants.

In Khartoum, SAF spokesperson Al-Soamari Khaled in a statement issued on Saturday evening said they killed five rebels during a pursuit to recover two vehicles the rebels had captured after ambushing a 10- soldiers patrol, two kilometers outside Mellit.

The military spokesperson did not speak about casualties among the army troops but said they recovered one vehicle.

He added that the army continues to chase the assailant rebels, stressing that the rebel attack took place outside the town.

Mellit, which is located 80km north to the North Darfur capital Al-Fasher, remained relatively calm during the ten year conflict in Darfur. ([Back to Top](#))

Sudan parliament may oust NCP members punished by their party

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 27/10/2013 – The Sudanese parliament will resume its sessions on Monday after three months of recess amid speculations that the speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir would issue a decision stripping leaders of the reformist faction within the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) led by the former majority leader in parliament Ghazi Salah Al-Deen Al-Attabani of their parliamentary seats.

This week, an NCP commission of inquiry established by Bashir recommended the dismissal of al-Attabani along with two other members and suspending nine others for 12 months. The NCP leadership bureau endorsed the recommendations and referred it to the NCP Shura (Consultative) Council to review and make a binding decision.

The punished members were among a larger group that included more than 30 NCP figures which signed on an open petition to president Bashir last month following the government's decision to cut fuel subsidies which prompted a deadly wave of protests across the country that killed at least 60 according to official figures and more than 200 as reported by activists and rights groups.

But the head of the parliamentary subcommittee on Judiciary and Legislation, al-Fadil Hag Suleiman, said that dismissal of MPs Al-Attabani and Fadlallah Ahmed Abdallah from the national assembly is conditional upon receiving a request to that effect from the NCP or receiving an official resignation letter from the two MPs.

Suleiman denied that his committee received a request from the NCP to drop memberships of al-Attabani and Fadlallah and told reporters on Sunday that such a request would be based on article

29 of the parliament regulations and should be presented to the parliamentary affairs subcommittee before being forwarded to his committee to question the MPs and see whether they changed their political affiliation or not.

In the same context, president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir is set to address the opening session of the parliament's eighth session today. His speech will tackle several domestic issues including the recent economic measures and internal security as well as regional and international issues.

Suleiman said that MPs would discuss the president's address before approving it, pointing that this session will see deliberations on the state's budget as well as testimonies from ministers of defense, interior, finance, social welfare, justice, and foreign affairs.

In a related issue, the NCP downplayed the implications of the reformist group intentions to form a new political party, denying that the move would shake its ranks.

The NCP spokesperson, Yasser Youssef, told reporters on Sunday that his party doesn't enjoy a "veto" to prevent the reformist faction from establishing their own party, pointing that any group of citizens have the right to form a new party after meeting the legal requirements according to the law and constitution.

He refused to acknowledge the reform efforts of the group led by al-Attabani, saying that his party doesn't distinguish between reformist and non-reformist bodies within its body.

Youssef further said that NCP won't be shaken up by the split of the reformist group, calling upon NCP members to abide by the decisions made by the party institutions in order to maintain the cohesion of the party.

On Saturday, Al-Attabani declared his intention to leave the NCP and form a new party that would "bring new hope to Sudan".

He said that the reformists group would consult with large segments of the Sudanese people to arrive at a consensus that accommodates their hopes and aspirations.

A leading figure of the group, Fadlallah Ahmed Abdallah said that they will name the new party within a week adding that a mini-committee was formed to pick a name. ([Back to Top](#))

NCP breakaway leaders found new party

Catholic Radio Network, 28/10/2013 – Three leading reformers of Sudan's ruling party decided to break away and form a new party.

National Congress Party MP Fadlallah Ahmed Abdallah said on Saturday that together with former sports minister Hassan Osman Riziq and ex-presidential adviser Ghazi Salahuddin Atabani "decided to establish a new party carrying the hopes of the Sudanese people", Middle East Online reported.

Mr Ahmed added that "we have already put in motion a plan to establish this party." The name and structure of the new organisation will be revealed within one week.

On Thursday, an internal NCP investigative committee ruled that the three dissidents should be ousted after they signed a memorandum criticising the regime's deadly crackdown on protests last month. ([Back to Top](#))

Al-Mahdi says EU wants to bring Sudanese government and opposition for talks

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 27/10/2013 – The leader of the National Umma Party (NUP) al-Sadiq al-Mahdi revealed today that the European Union (EU) wants to organize a conference involving political parties and the government in Sudan to find a platform for a peaceful resolution to the crises facing the East African nation.

Al-Mahdi made the revelation during the farewell ceremony he hosted for the EU Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan Rosalind Marsden who is concluding her term in the region.

"The NUP proposed a set of principles based on ten points for inclusive dialogue that is founded on [coming up with] the diagnosis of all issues," al-Mahdi said.

He noted that his planned visit to Uganda for a meeting with leaders of the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) comes in that context.

The trip was postponed due to what al-Mahdi described as unspecified circumstances that highlighted the need for more coordination.

The NUP chief also praised the EU role in the field of humanitarian support provided to Sudan since many years ago.

Marsden on her end welcomed the progress that has occurred at the level of cooperation between Khartoum and Juba.

She also commended the role of the African Union in healing the rift between the two neighbors in the realm of the African House. The EU diplomat expressed sadness at her imminent departure from the country. ([Back to Top](#))

Uganda conducts reviews of security organs after expulsion of Sudanese diplomat over espionage

Sudantribune.com Kampala, 27/10/2013 – Uganda is reviewing its security organs after the expulsion earlier this month of a Sudanese diplomat in Kampala caught in a sting operation as he paid money to a Ugandan security official for classified information, the regional weekly newspaper *The East African*, reported.

Jad-el-Seed Mohammed Elhag, a “Foreign Service Officer” who is also said to have been a security liaison at the Sudanese embassy was declared persona non grata and given 24 hours by Uganda’s foreign ministry to leave the country.

A spokesperson for the foreign ministry, Tayebwa Katureebe, said the diplomat had been expelled because: “The activities he was involved in were beyond the norms and requirements of his tenure.”

Ugandan security had reportedly been monitoring the movements of the Sudanese diplomat before setting him up and “catching him red handed” as he tried to pay money to a Ugandan agent in return for classified information.

According to the newspaper, quoting anonymous sources in Ugandan intelligence, Elhag, had orchestrated an operation that had infiltrated Uganda’s external intelligence.

The sources said the Sudanese espionage operation was “potentially one of the largest intelligence leaks” in Uganda.

An officer in Uganda’s external security agency was last week charged in court for selling the classified Intel.

In comments published in a Ugandan newspaper, Adil Sharfi, Sudan’s Ambassador to Uganda denied his diplomat had been expelled saying the diplomat had been recalled by his government. Uganda said the incident would not affect bilateral relations between the two countries. ([Back to Top](#))

Museveni opens Gulu railway line

Daily Monitor Gulu, 28/10/2013 – President Museveni has urged traders in Gulu District to utilize the Rift Valley Railways (RVR) as a means of accessing better market for their produce.

While launching the Tororo-Gulu railway line operations at the weekend in Layibi Division, Mr Museveni said: “Do not just watch it, but let it make a change in your lives through selling produce in the neighbouring districts and countries.”

Railway transport had stalled for more than two decades in the northern region due to insurgency.

The President also said plans were underway to build a new railway line from Kampala- Tororo-Gulu–Juba to improve trade, although he did not elaborate on when the project would start.

The Layibi LC3 chairperson, Mr Alfred Oluba, said he had already contacted Rift valley officials to find space for market, adding that it would increase revenue operations.

“The train operations will not only increase on the division’s revenue collection, but also improve on the livelihood of the community,” Mr Oluba said.

The RVR general manager western, Mr Mark Rumanyika, said the initiative would economically empower residents.

“We are confident that the development will have a significant impact on the socio economic fortunes of northern Uganda and countries in the hinterland. There will be an increase on the volume of goods transported between Uganda and Kenya,” Mr Rumanyika said.

“I urge traders and other business people to make the use of railway because it is a safer alternative and saves road infrastructure,” he added. ([Back to Top](#))

After Ruto ICC’s prosecutor now wants Kenyatta’s ruling reversed

Sudantribune.com The Hague, 27/10/2013 – Only a day after the Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Court (ICC) reversed a conditional leave it had granted Kenyan Vice President William Ruto, the prosecutor at the court now wants a similar leave granted to President Uhuru Kenyatta reversed.

On Friday the Appeals Chamber reversed an earlier ruling by trial judges granting Ruto absence from some of the hearings in the case against him at The Hague.

Ruto had been granted leave by trial judges on June 18. But the prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, appealed against the ruling, saying the judges had acted outside of their discretion.

The office of the prosecutor said in a statement on Saturday that it would appeal the ruling granting Kenyatta leave from attending all hearings of the case against him.

“The Office of the Prosecutor will request Trial Chamber V (b) to reconsider its decision to conditionally excuse Mr Kenyatta from continuous presence at his trial or, in the alternative, to grant the OTP [office of the prosecutor] leave to appeal that decision,” Ms Bensouda’s office said in a statement.

Trial judges had granted Kenyatta leave from some of the sessions to enable him to attend to his constitutional responsibilities as president of Kenya.

Hearing of the case against Kenyatta is set to begin in November but he has made an application to the court to stop it. ([Back to Top](#))

A bad smell is wafting out of the oil wells of South Sudan

The Standard, 27/10/2013 – Salva Kiir, president of South Sudan, is not a very decisive man. Back in June 2012, President Kiir ‘discovered’ (that’s the word used by his office) that 75 senior government officials had stolen more than US \$ 4 billion from State coffers.

This was an astonishing 40% of the country’s Gross Domestic Product. Considering South Sudan had, by then, been in existence for barely a year, the revelation was not only astonishing. How those officials could steal so much, in such a short time, when the country was essentially the poorest on earth was mind-boggling.

Guilty

It seemed obvious, then, that President Kiir would wield the axe. It was expected that he would get his prosecutors working overtime, suspend the officials guilty of the mega-theft and have them arraigned before courts across South Sudan but Wapi (nothing happened). President Kiir reacted rather lamely — he sent a letter to the 75 government officials, begging them to return the stolen funds.

President Kiir appealed to “the better angels” in his officials’ consciences in the futile hope that the thieves would get guilty and return the cash. But, as expected, not a single penny was returned.

The dysfunction within South Sudan's government is legendary, even by African standards: armed militias roam the land and terrorise citizens and foreigners alike, at will.

The country's ministry in charge of livestock attempted to commercialise the vast herds of cattle that South Sudanese prize more than their own lives, and was met with hostility and even a few threats.

Foreign investors put money into any venture outside of the rag-tag capital, Juba, at their own very significant risk. It is common for foreign workers to be shot dead for reasons as frivolous as looking suggestively at the tall ladies of South Sudan.

Such a country, riven with tribal rivalries and patrolled by half-naked locals carrying AK-47 rifles, needs a ruthless, decisive president to impose peace and clamp down on ethnic and other sectarian divisions. Not President Kiir.

Just when decisive leadership was expected from him, he buckled again. Look, in July this year, President Kiir sacked his entire cabinet, including his then vice president, Riek Machar. Dr Machar had been a vocal opponent of Kiir's leadership style, and it was always just a matter of time before he was kicked out. ([Back to Top](#))

Why I care about the Abyei Referendum

Sudantribune.com, 27/10/2013 – In August, Ashai Arop Bagat, a good friend and a native of Abyei, asked me to help raise awareness about and support for the Abyei Referendum scheduled by the African Union for October 2013. Ashai was near Abyei when the government of Sudan attacked and destroyed it in 2011. She was there when a mother walked for miles to carry her children to safety and then died on the side of the road - something Ashai will never forget.

The Abyei region of Sudan, which sits on the border between Sudan and South Sudan, was introduced to me by one of Abyei's and Sudan's greatest friends, Roger Winter, the U.S. State Department's former Representative to Sudan. In 2008, the New York Times published a piece on Roger and Abyei. In re-reading the article, it is remarkable to see how the regime has repeatedly and successfully manipulated the international community, keeping it at arm's length in order to achieve its objective of stealing the resources of the country.

In the New York Times' article, Roger is quoted as saying to the people of Abyei, "Honestly, the people that have your interests at heart are you, really only you...it's your place, it's your life, it's your future." This weekend, the Abyei community is taking Roger's words to heart by conducting its own referendum since the government of Sudan has failed to implement the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which guaranteed the permanent residents of Abyei the right to decide if Abyei will belong to Sudan or South Sudan.

So because of Ashai and Roger and so many other dear friends, I care about the Abyei referendum.

But I also care about the Abyei referendum because I care about justice and good governance – the keys to peace and prosperity in Sudan. For 24 years under the Bashir regime, the people of Sudan, in every region, have experienced the exact opposite – horrible injustice, the worst form of governance, unending violence and conflict and of course, extreme poverty. The decision by the Abyei community to carry out its own referendum represents just the most recent manifestation of Khartoum's complete and utter failure as a state.

It also represents yet another failure by the international community with regard to Sudan. Warren Buffet's son, Howard, just published a book, "40 Chances", that is based, in part, on more effectively addressing critical human needs by listening to those most affected – to those most in need. It's not a new concept – but it is one that is talked about much more often than it is practiced as is the case in Sudan.

For example, the people of Darfur don't trust the Doha peace process. It hasn't worked for ten years, but rather than listen to the people who have lost their entire lives, the Africa Union is referring them to the UN Security Council for reprimand. Parents in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile who live in constant fear of their children being killed by bombs dropped by the

government of Sudan (for the purpose of killing them) are being chastised for creating “obstacles” because they don’t trust the involvement of the same government to vaccinate their children. Calls by youth in Khartoum for an investigation into the killing of hundreds of peaceful protesters has largely gone ignored. And now, the people of Abyei are being warned by the international community not to stand up for their internationally guaranteed right to their land, their homes and their future.

Why do the people of Sudan so often find themselves standing alone? And why does the international community choose to define respecting state sovereignty as following the lead of wanted criminals rather than upholding the will of the people?

Tomorrow, Sunday, October 27th, the Abyei Community will hold its referendum and I’m worried. Certain members of the Misseriya tribe, who do not represent all Misseriya, have threatened violence; and this week, the Satellite Sentinel Project issued a warning about the build-up of Sudan troops in the area. Given that the government received absolutely no consequences from the international community for wiping out Abyei in 2008 and 2011, it would not be surprising if a third attack is being planned. Just like the first two attacks (predicted by Roger), the international community knows what to expect and it has the ability to prevent violence and to protect Sudanese. The question is, does the international community have the will?

So the real point of this article is that today, Saturday, October 26th, as we sit on this side of history, while my friends from Abyei are hopeful and, for that matter, still alive, and the international community is scrambling to manage its liability, I want it to be crystal clear that if violence occurs in Abyei as a result of the referendum tomorrow, the Sudan government and the international community – specifically the AUHIP, the Africa Union and the UN Security Council – bear the responsibility for the loss of lives and property, not the people of Abyei.

Esther Sprague is the founder and director of Sudan Unlimited, a non-profit that seeks to support all Sudanese and Southern Sudanese in their efforts to secure and enjoy freedom, justice, equality, democracy, peace and prosperity. ([Back to Top](#))

Consequences of the Kiir-Bashir summit

Sudantribune.com, 26/10/2013 – This policy brief underscores form and content of the head of states summit in Juba this October 2013 and the surrounding events. It focuses much more on Abyei referendum as the bottom-line agenda amongst outstanding issues in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005. Three days ago, Sudan’s President Omer el Bashir arrived Juba on 22 October, 2013 for a meeting with his South Sudan counterpart Salva Kiir Mayardit. The meeting was welcomed by international persons and institutions as gesture of good will to improving bilateral relations between two countries.

This is reciprocal visit since South Sudan gained independence two years ago from Sudan. In a rare presidential meeting, Abyei referendum was supposedly to dominate discussion amongst other outstanding issues, as part of ongoing efforts to consolidate normalization of relations between the two countries. Indeed, the presidential summit was a golden opportunity on Abyei Area including agreement on definite timeline of Abyei Referendum this October 2013.

The Ngok Dinka people are only in dire need to hold their self-determination referendum within the framework of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement CPA 2005 and supplemented by African Union High Level Implementation Panel respectively. Despite the U-turn position of the Government of South Sudan to distance itself from unilateral action on Abyei referendum; I believe the SPLM party which negotiated the Abyei Protocol on behalf of the Ngok Dinka people has now divided itself over Abyei issue. The creation of dissenting opinion within the ruling party is a big credit to NCP-led government and the will continue building defense strategy to win the balance of power in negotiations as usual.

In a confirmation statement, the first Deputy Chairperson of SPLM party, member of the political bureau and leader of delegation to the Hague-based Permanent Court of Arbitration in July 2009 on Abyei file Dr. Riek Machar Teny has pointed out that the ruling party in South Sudan should stick to the initial proposal by the African Union (AU) for the people of Abyei to exercise their

self-determination's referendum this month". The SPLM Deputy Chief asserted that Misseriya members who are residing in Abyei after the court ruling should be considered mere traders who no longer have the right to participate in the Dinka Ngok referendum.

On the same note, other important topics of the presidential summit discussed were to revitalize cooperation agreement, inter alia the boarder access, abolition of entry visas for the holders of diplomatic, special and official passports, security arrangements and economic related matters. The question is how these common benefit proposals work well when Abyei Area, the bridge between the North and the South is not fully stable considering unpredictable behavior of NCP-led Government in the course of implementing Abyei Area Administration.

On Abyei file, the both leaders failed to come out with tangible achievement rather repeating previous arrangements to establish Abyei Area Administration, Council and Police organs, and reaffirmed that 2% share of oil revenues, including arrears, will be paid to the Abyei Administration". Apparently, there is nothing new in this resolution because it's repeated in all resolutions of negotiations except 2% share of oil revenues is the only renewed product of Juba presidential summit.

It is mindboggling how this interim arrangements help expedite the final status of Abyei when it was there since 2005 and did not finalized the Abyei contentious issue. Strategically, the consultation made by civil society organizations on Abyei and led by Community Empowerment for Progress Organization CEPO correctly define Abyei from three different perspectives namely Sudan-South Sudan and competitive perspectives. The latter position is unfolding tie because it is thought by either country to be hidden interest. However, evidence shows that Khartoum Government always connects Abyei with security assurance while South Sudan connects Abyei with economic interest. Consequently, people become victims in such endless competitions. It must be proven either of two to vote in self-determination as an end result to break this tie.

According to the voices on street in South Sudan and around the world, South Sudan leadership is accused to have cheaply given in Abyei for flow of oil in the best economic interest and viability of the two states particularly shrinking economic situation in South Sudan where almost 98 % of its fiscal budget singlehandedly depends on oil. Nevertheless, the SPLM-led Government failed to diversify other non-oil revenues to improve it economic development. Regrettably, such decision by the SPLM-led Government raised cloud of doubt to the credibility of South Sudan in support of the Ngok Dinka People in their just cause for peaceful settlement. It also raises wider concern why there are no redlines on the side of South Sudan in Abyei negotiations, unlike Khartoum government that has a lot of redlines on their sides.

In a plain language and without Ngok Dinka to decide their fate now, there are reasons to be believe that there will be no Abyei referendum in the foreseeable future because of the following reasons: First, NCP-led government is convinced that the Ngok Dinka have no majority support from South Sudan; Khartoum is convinced that South Sudan has failed in the diplomatic front to challenge the contrary before the international community; and further Khartoum is convinced that there is no military might in South Sudan even if the matter may resort to confrontation and war.

Khartoum Government will only allow Abyei Referendum to take place when the secure economic domination in South Sudan following advice from Norway and other eastern allies. This is seen when Norway was so supportive of the SPLM movement and Dr. John Garang in particular because he was believed to be a unionist. And this was confirmed in an interview with Norwegian Diplomat and expert on Sudan affairs who was extensively involved in pre-negotiation and CPA negotiations dated 3 November 2006.

Historically, Abyei problem has been dragging on since 1965 when hostilities first broke out between the Dinka Ngok and Missiriya with massacre of 72 Dinka Ngok in the Misseriya town of Babanusa. During the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement in 1972, the Abyei Area was granted self-determination referendum under Article 3 (iii) of Addis Agreement for the Dinka Ngok to voluntarily choose whether to remain in the North or to join the South. Yet Khartoum administration failed to implement the agreement. The second solution for Abyei was under Abyei Protocol in the Comprehensive Peace agreement 2005 where it was also granted self-

determination to choose its political status subsequently with that of the South, but Khartoum government failed the referendum and South Sudan who was part of the Ngok Dinka did not vigorously confront the matter.

In conclusion, the Ngok Dinka people are so tired to wait for almost 40 years for self-determination referendum and have truly run out of patience. Since there is no final status of Abyei ever touched by the two leaders, it's high time for Ngok Dinka to unilaterally decide their fate.

In other words, failure of Abyei referendum this October 2013 under CPA 2005 will not bear any new agreement that may produce another protocol on ending Abyei contestable identity. The Ngok Dinka must go ahead with their unilateral decision as the case may be, to determine their national identity. Otherwise, the question of recognition of self-determination is an issue of international law and should not be politicized by political leadership of the two countries. ([Back to Top](#))

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This opinion does not represent SSHURSA position but of the author. He can be reached at benygmabor@gmail.com

Caught between Sudans, region tries to pick side

The New York Times Khartoum, 27/10/2013 – Residents of the disputed Abyei region, on the border of Sudan and South Sudan, began voting in a referendum Sunday on which country to be part of. Though the voting was largely symbolic, and likely to be heavily one-sided, it could have very real consequences if it raises tensions and prompts further conflict in an area plagued with violence.

Abyei has been in limbo for more than two years since South Sudan declared independence, and as a result the border between Sudan and South Sudan, roughly 1,250 miles long, has not been settled.

The region is shared uneasily by two ethnic groups: the more-settled Ngok Dinka and the nomadic Misseriya. The Ngok Dinka, who has links to the south, was expected to vote in favor of joining South Sudan. The Misseriya people, who cross in and out of the district with their livestock, fear that if they join South Sudan their movements may be restricted and their way of life threatened — but they were not expected to take part in the referendum.

Luka Biong, a spokesman for the Abyei Referendum High Committee, which organized the vote, told The Associated Press that there would be three days of voting. “This was a special moment, a historic moment,” he said. “This was like crowning the history of the struggle of the people of Abyei. I saw my people so determined.” Results are expected on Thursday.

Residents described the balloting as peaceful and organized, with people waiting patiently in line for their chance to vote.

Much of the tension over the referendum turns on who qualifies as a resident of Abyei, and thus a voter. The African Union does not regard the Misseriya as residents because they are in Abyei only during the dry season.

“Legally, the vote has no value, since most of the engaged parties have decided not to recognize it,” said Al-Tayib Zainalabdin, a political-science professor from the University of Khartoum. But politically, he said, it will have consequences.

Elements of both ethnic groups are heavily armed; clashes between them were especially severe in 2008, leaving hundreds of casualties. Analysts say the referendum could prompt renewed violence.

“It can cause more tension between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya,” Mr. Zainalabdin said, “who could take up arms and fight on their own despite the Sudanese government.”

On Sunday, the African Union accused the Sudanese government of preventing its delegation from visiting the disputed area, expressing “its deep disappointment.” It said that “Sudan must refrain from obstructing its work and extend full cooperation in support of the African Union’s efforts to manage and resolve the situation in Abyei.”

Both countries have struggled to find footing since South Sudan seceded two years ago. The Sudanese capital, Khartoum, was rocked by protests last month after the government, trying to make up for the loss of oil revenue when South Sudan broke away, stopped subsidizing gasoline, nearly doubling its price at a stroke.

South Sudan has tried to build a modern state after decades of fighting. But with little infrastructure, high infant mortality rates and ethnic divisions, the challenge has proved enormous.

President Omar Hassan al-Bashir of Sudan and President Salva Kiir of South Sudan met last week in Juba, the South Sudanese capital, and promised to go ahead with plans to establish a local government and police service for Abyei, but the Ngok Dinka have grown impatient.

“The international community is not serious,” said the Rev. Biong Kuol, a Catholic priest in Abyei, in a telephone interview. He said he had voted to join South Sudan because people there were suffering and the plans for local administration were taking too long to implement.

“It is not the right of Khartoum or Juba” to decide the region’s course, he said, “but the right of the Ngok Dinka.”

The United Nations Security Council expressed “grave concern about the highly volatile situation in Abyei area” on Thursday and called on both sides not to take unilateral action. Marie Harf, a State Department spokeswoman, called on “Abyei community leaders to refrain from actions that could increase tensions in Abyei.”

Oil fields in the 4,000-square-mile region once provided an important share of Sudan’s oil exports and have been a source of tension between the two countries. But oil production in Abyei has significantly declined.

Much of the region is swamp and scrub brush, but there is also coveted pastureland, and a river that the two ethnic groups cannot agree how to name. The Misseriya call it the Bahr al-Arab, and the Ngok Dinka the Kiir. ([Back to Top](#))

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