



## **MEDIA MONITORING REPORT**

### **United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)**

WEDNESDAY, 15 MAY 2013

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# Highlights

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## **Kiir meets SSLM/A leaders**

*News Agency of South Sudan/gurtong.net Juba, 14/5/2013* – The President of the Republic H.E Gen. Salva Kiir Mayardit welcomed into his office at the State House in Juba the leader of South Sudan Liberation Movement and Army (SSLM/A), Mr. Bapiny Monyuil and his deputies Mr. Karlo Kuol and Mr. Tut Gatluak.

The meeting took place in presence of the Presidential Advisor on Legal Affairs Hon. Telar Ring Deng, minister of Defense Gen. John Kong, minister of Interior Hon. Alison Manani Magaya, SPLA Chief of General Staff Gen. James Hoth and other SPLM figures and senior officers of Internal and External Security.

President Kiir appreciated the SSPLM/A leaders for responding positively to the Republican pardons he declared and for joining the people of South Sudan in the journey of nation building.

Mr. Tut Gatluak told the press on behalf of the SSLM/A leader that they returned back to participate in the process of peace building. He called on those who are still taking up arms against the country to join them in the peace building process.

Mr. Gatluak expressed sincere gratitude to the President of the Republic and all the people of South Sudan for the warm welcome they received since their arrival in Mayom County of Unity state and in Juba town.

## **10 year-old raped girl dies in Juba teaching hospital**

*Radio Bakhita Juba, 14/5/2013* – A 10-year-old girl was raped on Monday in Munuki and died in Juba Teaching Hospital on Tuesday morning.

Margret Sallah, the girl's guardian, told *Bakhita Radio* that she went out of the house and she left the girl with her one-year and half old baby.

She said after she returned home, she found nobody at home, but later she discovered that the girl was in a car parked in the compound with locked doors.

Ms Sallah added that they called the police that opened the car and found the girl unconscious and immediately rushed her to the hospital.

Women Empowerment and Advocacy chairperson Harriet Baka said she was very shocked with what was done to underage girls who are supposed to be sent to school, but are being raped and the offenders are not being prosecuted.

She added that cases of rape should be handled with serious measures because many young girls are falling victims of the circumstance.

Human Rights activist on Gender-based violence Moses Opio strongly urged the authorities to bring the offenders to book.

He said child rape in Juba is frequent and this was the second case registered by his office in one week.

Mr Opio called on human right activists, police and the government officials to take faster action on human rights violations. The suspect is in Munuki police station for further investigation.

## **Security law key to freedom of expression**

*Catholic Radio Network, 14/5/2013* – A law that defines the limits of national security is key for the freedom of speech in South Sudan.

MP Gatwech Lam Puoch, representing Nasir at the National Legislative Assembly, said during the last eight years many journalists were victims of intimidation, some were killed and others went into exile due to lack of protection.

Mr Lam said the Parliament needs to pass a law that sets the boundaries of national security to allow freedom of expression in the country.

The Nasir representative made this statement during the second reading of the Broadcasting Cooperation Bill on Tuesday.

### **W. Bahr el Ghazal calm after doctor dies in hospital shooting**

*Sudantribune.com Juba, 14/5/2013* – A soldier in South Sudan's Western Bahr el Ghazal state opened fire at Wau Teaching Hospital on Monday afternoon, killing a medical practitioner and wounding three others.

Wau's Municipal Mayor, Michael Gebba, said the attacker was the husband of a woman believed to have died at the hospital after an operation. The man, he revealed, last week opened a case at Wau Police station against the hospital. The case is still under investigation.

Gebba said that the killer surrendered himself to the security after the shooting, adding that the situation was under control, while calling on citizens to remain calm.

Marcello Gabriel, the hospital's medical director, said the woman, who died last week, was referred for an emergency operation due to delivery complications.

He said the woman, who had a miscarriage, passed away due to heavy bleeding.

The wounded included assistant hospital administrator and a nurse, the local police department told *Sudan Tribune* on Monday.

"Many of the victims were sprayed by the shots of the bullets. At the moment there is only one death and three people wounded but they are in stable condition. They are not life-threatening injuries", a police officer from the criminal investigation department who went to the scene said on Monday.

The officer, who did not want to be named, said the shooting was due to a personal tragedy and there was "no reason to believe it was an act of terror, just an act of anger".

"The gunman had opened fire because he believed his wife was allowed to die at the hospital during operation. He claimed that his wife was left in the operation room at the time the doctors should have attended to her. This is what we have gathered so far but situation has returned to normal. He surrendered himself to the police and he has been arrested", the officer said.

A source within the hospital said the gunman climbed over the fence and entered through the window into the operation theatre and opened fire against the three personnel. He said services at hospital were interrupted for the whole day following the incident.

Eyewitnesses told Sudan Tribune on Monday that they saw people running away from the hospital as shots rang out from an automatic gun.

"I was coming from the market to the state secretariat when I saw people running away from the area close to the hospital", an eyewitness said.

Another police officer downplayed the "unusual circumstance" magnitude of the incident, which he said was immediately brought under control when the bereaved soldier surrendered to the police.

Primary school students, Garang Mawien and Mawien Dut, said they carefully approached those who remained on the ground after the firing stopped to see if anyone was wounded.

"I just wanted to get out of there as soon as possible, but we didn't know if the shooter was still around until when I came home that I learned from my father that the shooter had surrendered himself. My father and I missed ourselves on the way. He ran to the school for us and [we] run away on our own with my friends and other siblings," said Dut.

"We are all safe. None of us is hurt", he added.

Michael Sabit, another eyewitness, described the incident as tragic for hospital staff.

He said the shooting was a warning to the state government to improve security at the hospital.

"The incident showed that more needed to be done to address lawlessness and crime in general in South Sudan and to nurture a culture of peace and understanding," said Sabit.

The incident comes less than six months after police opened fire on protesters opposing the decision to transfer Wau county headquarters to Bagari area. More than 20 people died and several others were wounded.

### **Government forms committee to probe 3.6 billion dura fraud**

*Gurtong.net Juba, 14/5/2013* – The South Sudan government has formed a committee to investigate the alleged loss of 3.6 billion South Sudanese Pounds in the 2009 Dura supply contracts, an official has announced.

Following an audit report by the World Bank's Stolen Assets Recovering (STAR) team, the Ministry of Justice on Tuesday announced a seven member committee to investigate into the report of the team in which it alleged that 3.6 billion South Sudanese Pounds had gone missing.

The Minister of Justice, Hon. John Luk Jok said that a decision was taken by the Council of Ministers after auditing by the World Bank team.

He added that they were compelled to seek external auditors after the parliament showed a lot of interest and questioning how the Ministry of Finance had handled the issue of the contracts that were meant for food to be supplied to the country in 2009.

Hon. John Luke said that it was a government policy for grains to be supplied to the states but something went wrong and that some people used the opportunity to make what has been alleged to be false claims which involved a huge sum of money.

"So today, we in the ministry are launching full investigation into the dura and the maize contracts," he said.

The minister said the committee will continue with necessary investigations and prosecution in cases where there is proven evidence as from Tuesday adding that they are constitutionally mandated to investigate into the matter which is of fraud and that the basis of the investigation will be the STAR report.

In the report, the 873 companies are grouped into black and white. The white is divided into two phases with the first consisting of 21 companies which are said to be clean with adequate documentation to support payment and are said to claim 59,916,34 SSP.

The second category of the white group consists of 39 companies with legal issues such as sub contracting which are to be considered before claims or payment. They however claim an amount of 94,310,893 SSP.

The second group which is considered to be serious is the black. It is further divided into three categories with the first having 266 suppliers with missing documentations such as way bills with claims of 657, 884, 587 SSP which needs further investigation to verify the claims.

Black list two consists of 497 suppliers with severe issues divided further three categories. The first has 290 companies who have been paid without contracts and have a claim of 345, 683,786 SSP.

The sub category consists of 67 companies without contracts but with large payments ranging from one million and beyond and claims an amount of 257,440,306 SSP.

The third category of the black list has 151 companies with proper contracts but they were over paid and claims 166,022, 978 SSP.

So far the government has paid 706,142,603 SSP.

The minister says the committee has all authority under criminal procedure to arrest anybody whatever his status and warned that if constitutional post holders happened to be involved, their immunity will be lifted.

He promised that those who use the opportunity to defraud the country, cause great loss to the national government in an effort to enrich themselves and will be brought to book.

The probe committee members are drawn from the Ministry of Justice, a member from Interior ministry and another from the Audit chamber. A time frame has not been set for the group.

### **South Sudan could be Africa powerhouse: ex-IMF head**

*Voice of America, 14/5/2013* – South Sudan has the potential to become an economic powerhouse in Africa if the government pursues the right policies, former International Monetary Fund chief, Dominique Straus Kahn, said Tuesday during a visit to the world's newest nation.

"I do believe that there is a lot to do here," Strauss-Kahn said.

"The country has a lot of natural resources and so the possibility for this country to become one of the strong countries among African countries is for me... a challenge that is possible to win."

Strauss-Kahn was in Juba to inaugurate a new bank, the National Credit Bank, nearly two years after he resigned from the IMF amid a widely publicized sex scandal that ended his IMF and political career.

Gaining independence at a time of global economic crisis, as South Sudan did, is not easy, Strauss-Kahn said, but he insisted that with right economic policies, the country will prosper.

The "right economic policies" were, he implied, allowing free market forces to work. "The temptation to go through a state-owned company and for having the state putting its fingers everywhere is something which is very difficult to face," he said.

Despite being endowed with abundant natural resources, South Sudan remains one of the poorest countries on the African continent with around four million of the population of 10 million still living in poverty, the National Bureau of Statistics says.

Strauss-Kahn said that for South Sudan to realize its economic potential, the country needs to attract foreign direct investment and develop the South Sudanese "brand."

"Many people just don't know that you have here your own republic, which is only about two years old," he said.

"So... just explaining to the rest of the world that you have here about 10 million people with a lot of resources and that you want to develop and that there are a lot of opportunities for business is something that has to be done."

He also warned against an over-reliance on oil for revenues, as is currently the case in South Sudan.

"When 95 percent or 98 percent of your resources comes from oil, it is very difficult to say that you are going to diversify rapidly," Strauss-Kahn said.

"Nevertheless, it has to be done, especially in the direction of agriculture because the problem of food security is certainly a problem here."

The Governor of South Sudan's Central Bank, Kornelyo Koriom, said South Sudan is doing everything it can to improve the investment climate in the country to attract business.

### **Kenya: Fuel shortage looming over Mombasa oil refinery crisis**

*The New Vision Kampala, 15/5/2013* – Uganda might experience a fuel shortage following a row between the Mombasa oil refinery and marketers that plunged the facility into a financial crisis, experts have warned.

The Kenya Petroleum Refineries Ltd (KPRL) last week warned that it could soon be unable to refine petroleum products owing to severe financial constraints, a development that could affect Kenya and its landlocked neighbours including Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, according to media reports.

Shell country chairman Ivan Kyayonka said although Uganda imports already refined oil products directly from the gulf, a fuel shortage in Kenya may affect Uganda. "Uganda does not buy oil products

from the Mombasa refinery but since the crisis affects Kenya, it might affect us as well in the long run."

Kyayonka explained that marketers in Kenya abandoned the oil refinery and started importing already refined oil products because it was cheaper to import than to buy crude oil and refine it.

"Initially, the refinery was like a contractor because it would process crude oil brought in by marketers. Over the years, the marketers realised that it was more costly to import crude oil and last year, it turned into a merchant refinery where it would buy the crude oil, process it and sell to marketers," he explained.

Daniel Segal, the chief executive officer of Tapuz Group, an oil consulting firm, agreed with Kyayonka but noted that the stalemate might have an indirect effect on Uganda where oil products destined for Uganda are diverted to the Kenyan market.

He said if the stalemate is not resolved by the end of June or at the beginning of July, the refinery will close.

"This will cause delays in offloading oil products at Mombasa harbour because the major Getty at Kipevu is already overwhelmed and cannot quickly accommodate oil products," Segal observed.

Segal revealed that only a few products such as cooking gas and fuel for heavy industries like thermal power generating fuel and bitumen oil will be affected.

Transport fuel to Uganda is imported from outside East Africa. The refinery is largely for Kenya.

**Machar urges international community to ensure timely conduct of referendum in Abyei**  
*Sudantribune.com Juba, 15/5/2013* – South Sudan's vice-president, Riek Machar, has called on the international community to help the two Sudans ensure conduct of the long awaited referendum for the people of Abyei.

James Gatdet Dak, Machar's press secretary told *Sudan Tribune* that the vice-president raised a strong concern with the top European Union (EU) diplomat in the country, urging the organization to exercise its influence and help the two nations agree on Abyei.

Dak further said the EU's ambassador, Suen Kuhn Von, also expressed the importance of restraint by the two countries and not to allow their relations to be spoiled by the recent assassination in Abyei of the Ngok Dinka paramount chief, Kuol Deng Kuol.

**Khartoum-Juba talks on rebel support end without agreement: sources**  
*Sudantribune.com Juba, 14/5/2013* – A joint meeting that took place yesterday in Khartoum between military intelligence teams from North and South Sudan has failed to reach an agreement on the thorny issue of harboring and supporting rebel groups in both countries.

Sources with knowledge of the talks told *Sudan Tribune* that the two-day meetings in Khartoum had reached an impasse and said he expects the African Union (AU) mediation team to intervene in order to salvage the cooperation agreements signed last year which came into force following March's implementation matrix deal.

However, an official at the Joint Political and Security Committee (JPSC) declared that this week's meetings managed to reach solutions on security arrangements as well as rebel support issue.

The JPSC secretary, Moiz Farouq, said at media forum following the meetings that JPSC will continue talks on security arrangements and will likely hold its next meeting in Juba next Wednesday.

In the same context, South Sudan's military intelligence chief expressed resentment over allegations made by Khartoum this week accusing Juba of supporting the rebel Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) recent attack in Kordofan and said that the Sudanese government does not have evidence to support its claims.

The Southern official further stressed that his country intends to move forward with the cooperation agreements but cautioned that lack of trust from Sudan does not help both sides arrive at fundamental solutions to the rebel harboring.

The Sudanese army is now attempting to retake Abu-Kershola district in South Kordofan which has fallen into rebel hands around the same time of Um Rawaba's attack. But the army is reportedly having difficulty expelling the rebels for unknown reasons.

Today Khartoum governor Abdel-Rahman al-Khidir revealed that the army along with the Popular Defense Forces (PDF) entered Abu-Kershola but was forced to withdraw to "preserve lives and equipment".

### **UN mission in Abyei relocates over 120 Sudanese staff to Kadugli**

*Sudantribune.com Juba, 14/5/2013* – The United Nations Interim Force for Abyei (UNISFA) has relocated over 120 Sudanese national staff working in various mission support departments to Kadugli, the capital South Kordofan state, well-placed sources within the mission told *Sudan Tribune* Tuesday.

Abyei youth and other Dinka Ngok leaders recently wrote to the Ethiopian dominated UN force in Abyei, asking the force commander to get rid of and stop hiring Sudanese nationals in the area, as they considered them to be "security agents" of the Khartoum government.

"The force commander and the leadership of the mission following consultations with the headquarters in New York decided to relocate Sudanese nationals to Kadugli. This decision was taken last week and they were taken immediately. They will be there until this situation is brought under control. The initial plan was for two weeks but current situation does not show any sign of changes", a source told Sudan Tribune.

The source who requested anonymity since he is not authorized to talk to the media, said the UN forces in the area are doing their best to control the situation.

"I am telling the Ethiopian soldiers are the best. I have worked for the United Nations in various missions. I was in Sierra Leone. I went to Iraq, Lebanon, Congo, Chad, East Timor and Mozambique. In all these places, I never saw such a level of readiness of the forces to response to any security challenges like this. The Ethiopian troops are the best. They are handling this situation well, even though their efforts are widely seen in the area like a drop in the ocean", he stressed.

### **NEW CHIEF CALLS FOR CALM**

Meanwhile, Bulabek Deng Kuol, the new paramount chief of the Nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms, called for calm in the area and asked youth to remain vigilant and focused on the conduct of a referendum to decide whether the area should be transferred into South Sudan.

"There is no problem in the town only that our people are still mourning the death of our paramount chief Kuol Adol. Some of our leaders who came from Juba have returned and some of them have remained behind. They are calling on everyone to calm down," said Bulabek.

Let peace prevail, no one is to take revenge. Let the UN peacekeeping forces do their work. We are preaching peace, he added.

### **Sudan's opposition party pays condolences to Juba over loss of Abyei paramount Chief**

*Grutong.net Juba, 14/5/2013* – A team of Sudanese opposition leaders had yesterday arrived at the South Sudanese Capital, Juba, to pay condolences to the government and the people of Abyei for the loss of the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief Kuol Deng Kuol.

Kamal Umar, the Secretary General of the People's Congress Party (PCP), the Sudanese party critical to Khartoum's regime led a delegation and met with South Sudanese Minister of Cabinet Affairs Deng Alor and discussed in particular the Abyei issue and how the two countries should trade on the path of peace and stability.

In a statement to the press at the Juba International Airport yesterday, Kamal said his team's mission of visiting Juba is to pay condolence to the South Sudanese government and the people of Abyei for the killing of Chief Kuol Deng Kuol.

Kuol was assassinated on 4 May by suspected Misseriya militia, a move South Sudan held Sudan responsible saying it is aimed at disrupting the conduct of the Abyei referendum scheduled to take place in October this year.

Kamal had also stated that the people of Abyei should be left to decide as to where to belong and the Sudanese and South Sudanese governments should distance themselves from politics that may hinder the referendum process.

### **UN advises eating insects to curb hunger**

*Agence France Presse (AFP)/gurtong.net Rome, 14/5/2013* – Beetles, caterpillars and wasps could supplement diets around the world as an environmentally friendly food source if only Western consumers could get over their "disgust", the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said on Monday.

"The main message is really: 'Eat insects'", Eva Mueller, director of forest economics at the FAO, told a press conference in Rome.

"Insects are abundant and they are a valuable source of protein and minerals," she said.

"Two billion people -- a third of the world's population -- are already eating insects because they are delicious and nutritious," she said.

Also speaking at the press conference was Gabon Forestry Minister Gabriel Tchango who said: "Insect consumption is part of our daily life."

He said some insects -- like beetle larvae and grilled termites -- were considered delicacies.

"Insects contribute about 10 percent of animal protein consumed by the population," he said.

The report said insect farming was "one of the many ways to address food and feed insecurity".

"Insects are everywhere and they reproduce quickly, and they have high growth and feed conversion rates and a low environmental footprint," said the report, co-authored by the FAO and Wageningen University in the Netherlands.

But the authors admitted that "consumer disgust remains one of the largest barriers to the adoption of insects as viable sources of protein in many Western countries".

Mueller said that brands such as yoghurt maker Danone and Italian alcoholic drinks maker Campari used dye from insects to colour their products.

It suggested that the food industry could help in "raising the status of insects" by including them in recipes and putting them on restaurant menus.

"Beetles, grasshoppers and other insects... are now showing up though on the menus of some restaurants in some European capitals," said Mueller, as she showed photo slides of crickets being used as decoration on top of high-end restaurant desserts.

The report also called for wider use of insects as feed for livestock, saying that poor regulation and under-investment currently meant it "cannot compete" with traditional sources of feed.

"The use of insects on a large scale as a feed ingredient is technically feasible, and established companies in various parts of the world are already leading the way," it added, highlighting in particular producers in China, South Africa, Spain and the United States.

"Insects can supplement traditional feed sources such as soy, maize, grains and fishmeal," it said, adding that the ones with most potential were larvae of the black soldier fly, the common housefly and the yellow mealworm.



The report also said the insects most commonly consumed by humans are beetles (31 percent), caterpillars (18 percent) and bees, wasps and ants (14 percent), followed by grasshoppers, locusts and crickets (13 percent).

The report said a total of 1,900 species of insects are consumed around the world. It said trade in insects was thriving in cities such as Bangkok and Kinshasa and that a similar culture of insect consumption -- entomophagy -- should be established elsewhere, stressing that it was often cheaper to farm insects.

While beef has an iron content of 6.0 milligrams per 100 grams of dry weight, the iron content of locusts varies between 8.0 and 20 milligrams per 100 grams, the report said.

It also said that insects require just two kilograms of feed to produce one kilogram of insect meat compared to a ratio of 8-to-1 for beef.

The report concluded: "History has shown that dietary patterns can change quickly, particularly in a globalized world. The rapid acceptance of raw fish in the form of sushi is a good example."

"Not everybody is ready to pop a bug in their mouth," Mueller said. "It will probably take a while. But some people are already doing it."

### **Chadian troops cross into Darfur heading to rebel positions: JEM**

*Sudantribune.com* London, 14/5/2013 – The Justice and Equality movement (JEM) said Chadian troops have crossed the border into Darfur region and warned President Idris Deby from the consequences of his involvement in the Sudanese conflict.

JEM spokesperson Gibreel Adam Bilal told Sudan Tribune that Chadian soldiers left their basis in Abéché on Monday and is now heading into the positions of JEM combatants in North Darfur.

He called on the African Union United Nation Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) to keep away these troops and force it to return back to Chad, warning of dire consequences should Chad insist on continuing its aggressive approach.

"If they don't [withdraw] then the Justice and Equality Movement is prepared to engage in war with Chad which will complicate security and humanitarian situation in Darfur more than how it already is", Bilal said.

Following the killing of the leader of a dissident faction Mohamed Bashar and his deputy Suleiman Arko last Sunday, his group accused JEM of attacking his convoy inside the Chadian territory. But the Sudanese rebels said they clashed with the splinters inside Darfur.

However, JEM spokesperson accused on Tuesday the Chadian president of taking part in this operation saying "We disclose for the first time that Idriss Deby participated with the Sudanese government and other regional partners in the assassination of Dr. Khalil".

Bilal added they have intelligence confirming that the Chadian president plans to assassinate the leaders of the Justice and Equality Movement and warned they will "hold Idriss Deby responsible for the assassination of any of JEM leaders in the coming days".

The rebel official further accused Deby of being involved in the war crimes committed in Darfur region during the past years, stressing they have evidences proving this accusation.

He further vowed to work with human rights activists to provide all these evidences to the International Criminal Court.

The chairperson of the African Union Commission Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma condemned on Monday the killing of Mohamed Bashar terming it as a "cowardly act, aimed at dissuading the hold out groups in Darfur from joining the peace process."

JEM political secretary, Suleiman Sandal, in separate statements to *Sudan Tribune* slammed Dlamini-Zuma statements saying the regional body had to investigate the circumstances of the incident before to issue such "partial statements".

He expressed JEM readiness to explain its position on the conditions of the incident.

Sandal asserted that Bashar and his fighters returned from Chad equipped with vehicles and weapons provided by the Chadian president to attack them.

He added that JEM combatants repulsed an attack carried by the splinter group inside the Sudanese territory, insisting that Bashar and his deputy were killed during the clashes.

Regarding the other members of Bashar group that JEM holds since Sunday, Sandal pointed out they will be tried before JEM courts.

"They are not prisoners of war as it is said they are members of our movement and will be tried for treason and disloyalty", he added.

Sandal underscored that the leaders of the splinter group had been arrested in the past for attempting to assassinate the founder and late leader Khalil Ibrahim when he had being in Libya but were released after a pardon by the current leader Gibril Ibrahim.

### **Sudan's NCP says upcoming shuffle will bring new faces**

*Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 15/5/2013* – Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP) has disclosed it would undergo imminent changes within its institutions aiming at promoting youths to leadership positions.

The NCP's head of the political sector who is also Sudan's 2nd vice president, Al-Haj Adam Youssef, said at a news conference following his visit to the NCP's youth secretariat that "leaders who are getting older should pave the way for young people wherever they are",

Youssef called upon NCP's youth to assume responsibility and get ready for the next phase stressing that these changes are driven by a strong will from its chairman and president of Sudan Omer Hassan Al-Bashir.

The NCP's youth secretary, Abdel-Moniem al-Sunni, said that VP Youssef briefed them on the current political and security situation.

He pointed out that youths in all states have joined the Popular Defense Forces (PDF) in order to support the army in its current campaign against Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) rebels.

His deputy, Obeid Allah Mohammad, for his part, spoke of imminent changes within party's institutions in favor of youth leaders but did not elaborate.

There has been growing rumblings for change within the NCP and particularly its younger members who complain that the leadership has grown too old and stagnant.

### **Sudanese center says incidents of apostasy & atheism increasing in country**

*Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 14/5/2013* – The chairman of the Islamic Center for Preaching and Comparative Studies Ammar Saleh said that cases of apostasy and atheism are on the rise in the country and accused authorities of negligence in addressing this issue.

At a press conference today, Saleh claimed that the number of converts from Islam in Khartoum have reached 109 apostates stressing that these figures are growing in a "continuous" and "scary" fashion especially with the presence of atheists and homosexuals.

The Islamic figure rapped the government for not taking decisive action against missionaries operating "boldly" in the country.

He said anyone who denies the existence of proselytizing or people converting to Shiite faith are either living in Mars or are just in denial.

Saleh appealed to the official bodies and the community to take a stand against the Christianization to find a solution problem and argued that government' efforts in this regard are timid compared to missionaries' efforts.

He also accused the Orthodox Church of building a church in Ombadda without permit in a "de facto" manner.

The former head of Ombadda People's Committee who is also a member of the ruling National Congress Party Adam Mudawi, claimed that they have information indicating that there is an underground storage in this three-story church that contains a large cache of weapons.

Mudawi also said there is a satellite dish in the church that they don't know why it is needed.

He accused the church of exploiting poor citizens by providing financial support and assistance to aid its proselytizing activities.

### **Kenya's deputy President promises to cooperate with Hague**

*Reuters The Hague, 14/5/2013* – Kenya's deputy president, William Ruto, promised the International Criminal Court on Tuesday he and the president would cooperate despite calling their charges over election violence the result of a "conspiracy of lies".

Ruto was attending a pre-trial hearing in The Hague, where he and President Uhuru Kenyatta face charges of orchestrating clashes in which some 1,200 people were killed five years ago after a presidential election.

"The new Kenyan administration ... will cooperate with the court, because President Kenyatta and myself believe in the rule of law," he said at the end of the two-hour hearing, at which his lawyers asked permission for him to appear in future via video link to allow him to carry out his official duties.

Wearing a blue suit and a maroon tie, Ruto looked at ease throughout the hearing, chatting and smiling with his lawyers.

Kenyatta and his running mate Ruto won this year's largely peaceful presidential election, leaving the court case as a complication in the West's relations with Kenya, an ally in the fight against Islamist militancy in the region.

Analysts said the ICC charges boosted their poll performance in a country where sensitivities about post-colonial interference run deep.

Prosecution and defence lawyers repeatedly clashed over the question of whether the prosecution should be allowed to introduce new witnesses to bolster its case against Ruto and his co-accused, the broadcaster Joshua arap Sang.

Ruto dismissed the evidence against him, saying that he was the "victim ... of a syndicate of falsehood and a conspiracy of lies choreographed by networks which are obviously against truth and justice".

Prosecutors have struggled to pin charges on suspects in several other countries' cases they have examined, with judges repeatedly criticizing them for failing to line up convincing witnesses.

In March, prosecutors dropped charges against Francis Muthaura, Kenyatta's co-accused, saying witnesses had been intimidated into withdrawing their testimony.

There were tense scenes in the courtroom as Ruto's lawyer, Karim Khan, attempted to list witnesses whose testimony he said was of little value, before being interrupted by prosecution lawyers who accused him of placing witnesses in jeopardy by reading out confidential material in open court.

Prosecutors said allowing Ruto to attend by video link would do a disservice to the victims of the violence.

"Witnesses need to be reassured that there are people listening to their testimony, not just your honours but also the parties who are present. The victims need confidence in the system, to be heard," said Cynthia Tai, a prosecution lawyer.

Judges will rule on the requests at a later date. They have yet to set a date for the start of the trial.

### **Most governments not transparent in managing natural resources: study**

*Voice of America, 14/5/2013* – A new study says less than 20 percent of the world's major oil-, gas-, and mineral-rich countries meet satisfactory standards for transparency and accountability.

The Revenue Watch Institute report released Wednesday said the lives of over a billion citizens worldwide could be transformed if their governments managed natural resources better.

Only 11 of the 58 countries in the New York-based group's Resource Governance Index were found to have "embraced openness and accountability." In the others, the report said "opacity, corruption, and weak processes keep citizens from fully benefiting from their countries' resource wealth."

The worst-ranked country was Burma, which received a failing score of just 4 on a scale of 1 to 100. The report described the country's extractive industries as "infamously opaque," saying almost no public information is available on the management of the country's resources.

But the report noted it is "widely assumed that corruption is rampant in the sector and that much of the country's resource revenues have been diverted to the foreign bank accounts of a few government officials."

Revenue Watch says that the worst performing countries depend almost exclusively on revenues from natural resources as their main source of income. It said the most resource-dependent regions, the Middle East and North Africa, are the worst performing.

The most transparent country on the list was Norway, one of the world's major oil and gas exporters, which scored a 98. The United States came in second with a score of 92.

The report noted that key U.S. allies, such as Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan, do not manage their resources transparently. It also called on Western countries to "ensure that their multinational companies do not facilitate the opacity found in many countries where they operate."

### **Can Yau Yau capture towns outside Pibor County?**

*Sudantribune.com, 13/5/2013* – The capture of Boma town in Pibor County by the rebels led by David Yau Yau has raised questions. Some people wonder if Yau Yau would move to other areas, both inside and outside Pibor County, or not. Others wonder whether Yau Yau's rebellion is going to increase to a major civil war or not.

People like those who are in the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) that are now talking of pulling out from Eastern Equatoria areas like Kapoeta believes that Yau Yau will capture towns from other counties. The same people would think the rebellion would increase and become a major civil war. Other people like me think it is unlikely that Yau Yau will capture towns from other counties. Even if he does, he cannot maintain them the way he could do for towns inside Pibor County.

First, let us look into Yau Yau's ability to capture towns before looking into his ability to increase his rebellion.

Yau Yau has shown that he can capture towns because he has captured Boma. The capture of Boma has a symbolic meaning because when the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA) started its capturing of towns across the country in the 1980s, it started with Boma. So, the message of Boma's capture by Yau Yau seems to say that Yau Yau has started his rebellion like the SPLA did in the 1980s. Now he is threatening Kapoeta like the SPLA once did.

However, the difference is that Boma was captured by mixed forces that were mainly dominated by people from Bor's current three counties of Bor, Twic East, and Duk. There were members of other communities in those forces too. Unlike those who captured Boma under the SPLA, now those who captured Boma under Yau Yau are mainly from Murle tribe capturing their own town.

Since Yau Yau's rebellion is area based, he will have difficult time moving to other areas because of the way the rebellion is perceived. If Yau Yau and his army move to Kapoeta area, the Taposas will think that the Murle are coming to Kapoeta area in order to raid cattle. So, the resistance will mainly be done by the civilians. The same thing can happen in Bor and Nuer areas. Therefore, Yau Yau could

capture towns within Pibor County, including Pibor itself, but he will have hard time moving to other counties.

Yet, one could argue that if Yau Yau was able to mobilize enough forces to capture Boma, then he has the capacity to mobilize huge rebel army and force his way to areas that understand his rebellion now as Murle issue in Jonglei. I doubt this belief too. My doubt is based on two reasons.

The first reason is the understanding that the followers of Yau Yau have. The Murle youths who have now joined Yau Yau joined him because they are against disarmament. Murle have been keeping their arms for decades and as a result, they cannot imagine a life without their guns. When the disarmament started in Pibor County last year, for example, these Yau Yau followers ran into Ethiopia to save their guns. Yau Yau then came in and told them that they were going to make sure that the SPLA was out of the County for disarmament to stop. That is mainly the reason why they are fighting. They can capture many towns in Pibor County for this reason.

But telling the same youths to go and capture Kapoeta would be very strange to them, unless they are told that they are moving their to raid cattle. If raiding of cattle is the motivator to them, then maintaining of towns outside Pibor County will not be their business.

One would still argue that the SPLA started in the same way. Most of the people who joined the SPLA joined it for different reasons. For example, some joined to get guns and defend their cattle from Murle raiders. Others joined to get guns and defend their areas from the Arab nomads who disturb people in Bahr el Ghazal. If it worked for the SPLA that time, why could it not work for Yau Yau now? This takes us to my second reason for doubting the increase of Yau Yau's rebellion.

Those who initially joined the SPLM/A for misplaced reasons were given better reasons that they agreed with. They were told that the real threat was the marginalization of Southerners by the Arab dominated government in Khartoum. There were many leading members in the Movement who clearly understood and believed in those reasons. Those leading people were from different communities, including communities from the North. The reasons were beyond individual dissatisfaction.

Yau Yau would give the reason why he is angry, especially to those who form his army. He could give them reasons that include the marginalization of Murle because they have no roads in the County. That could be easy there. But could he extend the same argument to other people who understand that he rebelled because he lost elections in 2010? Many will not. So what he would do is to tell the truth as it is in other areas.

The truth that Yau Yau would tell people in other areas is that a nation were election cheating is allowed is unjust and, therefore, he is fighting to restore election justice. But then what if the people he is talking to know the story very well, would they agree? Of course, they will not.

But Yau Yau could target those who will agree. The way he could do this is to connect his personal grievances to a major national agenda. However, there are many people who do not care about who loses or wins in elections. Their main concern is to have good life. Their questions would include how Yau Yau's election grievance would bring good life to people in other counties who might not have the same problem in their elections. Will Yau Yau manage to explain this to many educated people who would make his rebellion a potential future government? I doubt.

If Yau Yau will not convince educated people who are capable of disconnecting his intention of fighting from cattle raiding intention, then how is he going to convince uneducated majority who perceive his rebels as bunch of cattle raiders? It is hard.

Yau Yau's current followers will lose interest too if their main goal is to protect their guns from disarmament so that they can continue raiding other people's cattle. First, the perception of Murle cattle raiders has been changed by Yau Yau's rebellion. The raiders of cattle are now associated with Yau Yau's rebellion. This will give the SPLA all the right to fight them as rebels, not civilians. The human right groups who could have different ways of understanding if the raiders were civilians will say nothing if the raiders are dealt with as armed rebels. This is going to affect the effectiveness of cattle raiding since there will be very few successes in raiding cattle and keeping them.

Second, the hunger is going to increase in Murle area if people will not cultivate in addition to having few successes in raiding other people's cattle. Guns that they now want to keep will be of no use to them. That will make them lose interest in the rebellion and look for other ways of survival.

All in all, I do not see Yau Yau's success outside Pibor County. He will capture some other towns within Pibor during this rainy season, but I doubt how he would maintain them in the coming dry season. SPLA soldiers who deserted towns like Boma recently were afraid of being cut off from the main suppliers since roads to Murle areas are soon going to be inaccessible. The same fear will not be there in the coming dry season. Adding this to my argument above will tell you that Yau Yau's rebellion will be very limited.

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### **ABYEI: Misplaced civility at the heart of an intractable conflict**

*Sudantribune.com, 13/5/2013* – Until death do us part, seem to be the rapturous echoes ripping through the throbbing heart of bewildered Ngok Dinka citizens in Abyei. The disputed territory is aging as it is well over its centenary year in self-imposed exile. It is to be recalled the tiny but much prized territory straddled into the fault lines dangerously lying between North and South of two Sudans back in 1905.

The patriarch also known as paramount chief Kuol Deng Majok thought of rare benefits to bring within the grips of his Abyei off springs both sons and daughters when he decided rather opportunistically to kiss goodbye to the South, then considered Sudan's back water of anything thought credible. The perceived benefits to grasp were modern education and Arabs civilization with which North was enviously associated.

Not to forget, one more additional benefit whether subconsciously perceived or not was conversion to Islam that as well accrued a few more bountiful goodies for people derogatorily regarded as infidels willing to cross over to the dubbed last Prophet's holy land. All these coveted gains turned regrettable poisoned chalice one hundred years later. With Abyei striking it rich in oil wealth and South Sudanese clamoring for the independence, then began Abyei present day perpetual woes of an intractable pogrom.

The Abyei Dinka as truly South Sudanese in all social characteristics of ethnic origin, jet black skin complexion and Nilotic culture turned out to be the tug pulled in between beyond an elastic limit by both sides of political divide. Consequently, that strange twist and turn has attracted a legion of countless regional and international peace keeping interventions all under one leaking roof of the UN, collectively referred to as UNISFA.

And from which arises the present day stalemate or be it sheer miscalculation of sorts that makes it difficult for one rival side to take Abyei over either through brute force or shrewd diplomacy. Nor is there possibility of a peaceful referendum insight as stipulated in an already defunct Comprehensive Peace Agreement, CPA that is now regarded as never comprehensive by still suffering peoples of Abyei, Blue Nile and Nuba Mountains. For so many timelines on that matter mysteriously as indefinitely come and go under protracted non-substantial arguments predicated on ownership rights.

While the tenancy over who should be given the keys turn bloodiest, the victims ironically happen to be the rightful owners but self-acclaimed civilized Ngok Dinka at the hands of hired goons – the Miseriya settlers on the suspected pay list of the bloody game spectators in far flung Khartoum. Fleeing in the face of genocidal Miseriya tribal raids followed by Sudan Armed forces mopping up operations, Abyei Ngok Dinka have a fairer share in their perennial predicament too.

Their treacherous over reliance on external muscles while partly eating with those they call enemy are the conjoined debacles they have to clear on their tortuous journey to freedom. No amount of proxy wars waged by murk-racking press, local mercenaries paid from South Sudan increasingly shrinking public coffer and neither are international mercenaries under the UN financial benevolence shall win over Abyei to their side on silver platter. This brings forth pertinent questions for them to answer.

How many times their paramount chiefs have to be slaughtered like chickens in that abattoir called Abyei under their hapless watch, how longer is the time for patience or veiled cowardice to pay and how many more cheeks remaining for them they the nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms in Abyei to turn for unremorseful slapping? Eight years are long enough even for the faith-based patience or rather disguised cowardice to wither as there are only two cheeks a normal human being has to give away in self-inflicted indignity and concocted helplessness.

Despite all indications that point to the grim reality that future - as bleak as it is - of Abyei will not be decided at the ballot box. Since the conflict has hitherto defied well-crafted amicable solutions that came far and between such as that of Abyei Boundary Commission, ABC, The Hague based - International Court of Arbitration and now the on-going shuttle diplomacy to determine Abyei troubled future which all have ground to a halt if not come to nothing.

With one more saddest and time wasting thing at stake typical Nilotic ethnic groups lack but Abyei Ngok Dinka strangely have; being the false modesty under which they have recoiled hoping for never coming one day when the territory shall peacefully return home - South Sudan - to roost.

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### **The case for reconciliation as the mandate of the church in South Sudan**

*Gurtong.net Finland, 14/5/2013* - "...it is common knowledge that throughout our history the church has always served as our peace broker, and often assumed the role of our true government not only in relation to our spiritual and moral management, but also in terms of delivering services"

One is truly left bemused when one reads statements against the assignment by President Mayardit of the church to lead the reconciliation process in South Sudan. As such in light of our apparent muddling through pertaining to our reconciliation efforts in South Sudan, it seems timely to put this issue to bed, and make the case for reconciliation as the mandate of the church, and to inform ourselves about the doctrine of reconciliation or salvation in the Christian faith tradition, which justifies this mandate.

Some cynics remain doubtful of church reconciliation mandate, and declining of any genuine reconciliation outcome in South Sudan that is led by civil society and faith-based institutions. They argue that the church should not have been assigned to spearhead a process that is meant to redress what are strictly governance and political challenges related to past atrocities and current political failures.

Because the problems are political in nature and scope and have not been created by the church, they cannot be resolved by the church, but by political actors, so goes the two wrongs make a right reasoning. In other words, it is argued that political actors should be the ones cleaning their own mess beginning with the President himself.

What I find utterly debilitating is that, some of our brothers, even those with no expertise and academic authority to speak on the issue have weighted in their un-informed opinion. Some continue to cry over the spilled milk caused by the withdrawal of the delegated powers to the Vice President to spearhead the reconciliation process. Few have started opinionating under several authorship names by the same individual promoting the same argument, to create a false impression that the view is shared by multiple thinkers and analysts.

Such an undertaking only amounts to multiple personality disorder and blatant academic dishonesty. Are these people actually serious about contributing to South Sudanese efforts of wanting to build a nation and a just state or are they rather in need of serious psychological help and counseling?

Not that I am against the Vice President Dr. Riek Machar. I actually admire his political maturity and the progress in character he has made since the tragedies that befell our people during the 1990s. The Vice President's issuing of public apology to the Bor people for his potential role in the 1991 massacre

takes a lot of courage, and reveals remorse and change of character that can only signify that there is a change of heart from his part.

In fact I wouldn't hesitate voting for him, or for President Kiir or whichever candidate. As is the case with most South Sudanese, we are swing voters who need to be persuaded through a political agenda that outlines strategies for good governance and service delivery.

In this sense, I will cast my ballot even for the devil, as long as the fundamental rights that guarantee my dignity as a human being are protected, and the policies that are being pursued are downwardly accountable to the people to better our life and create a peaceful just and prosperous nation.

As the age-old adage attests, "to err is human and to forgive divine." But the Vice President is not the right man to lead the reconciliation process, precisely because he is seen as a lead actor in the ongoing conflict resulting from the 1991 division in the liberation movement.

I am all about freedom of expression and the protection of the basic human right of access to information among other fundamental human rights that safeguard our dignity as human beings as enshrined in our Transitional Constitution and regional and international bills of rights and conventions.

However, freedom of expression must come with utmost responsibility. Not anyone who has learned few English words can just write some rubbish under the pretext of free expression, without any expertise and authority in the area about which they are opinionating.

If I cannot resist commenting on a specific policy issue, I must be an authority or an expert on the subject, or at least be familiar with the literature and debate about it, or have rich experience with issue, in order for my views to count. How can such un-informed views of some of our opinionated brothers constructively contribute to our nation-building aspirations?

It is very unfortunate that in South Sudan today even the cattle herder from the village is purporting to be a public policy analyst and opines on governance issues in the Republic.

While I agree with most informed views that identify the numerous challenges confronting our fledgling state as strictly political and related to issues pertaining to the (mis)governance of the land, I disagree that the church must be separated from the state, particularly as it relates to the national reconciliation process and other issues of social and economic service delivery.

After all it is common knowledge that throughout our history the church has always served as our peace broker, and often assumed the role of our true government not only in relation to our spiritual and moral management, but also in terms of delivering services.

Why then are we now trying to keep the church off the loop, and render its rich experience and expertise of sustaining us for decades irrelevant, particularly as we strive to reconcile?

Shockingly, the view that reconciliation mandate is the exclusive function of the government and political actors to the exclusion of the church and other civil society stakeholders, seems to be shared by non-other than the new chair of the reconciliation committee, his most reverend Bishop Daniel Deng Bul Yak himself.

To my dismay, during the recent handover of the national reconciliation documents to the new committee by the Vice president, Bishop Bul is quoted as saying that reconciliation is not the sphere of the church. "The field I am coming into is not my field; it is not a religious field," reserved the Bishop (Sudan Tribune, May 5, 2013).

I would like to think that Bishop Bul was being humble, and that he did not mean what he said by declaring that reconciliation is not an area of religious expertise. Else one is left speechless and wondering about where the Bishop received his theological training from and whether or not he is up to the task. If reconciliation is not the function of the church, I don't know what is.

Even a catechumen or a casual lay reader of the Christian faith tradition will know that the grand narrative of the Christian faith is reconciliation, and therefore the church mandate is to primarily moderate the reconciliation of humanity and the world to God, and with ourselves. This understanding



of the Christian Gospel as centered on the reconciliation mission is shared by the overwhelming majority of Christian faith practitioners and theologians.

For example, the prominent twentieth century German Protestant theologian, Karl Barth, concluded in his “Church Dogmatics” that reconciliation is the core of the Christian message. In the Christian message of reconciliation or “Versöhnung” in German, Barth argued, “we enter that sphere of Christian knowledge in which we have to do with the heart of the message received by and laid upon the Christian community, and therefore with the heart of the Church’s dogmatics.”

It is true though that the term reconciliation originates from secular Hellenistic settings to describe ancient political realities and processes seeking to amend ruptured societal relations caused by some form of political injustice inflicted on a political community. On the individual level, the term also references efforts to address tensions in interpersonal relationships.

In the Hellenistic world therefore, the Greek form of being reconciled “*diallassomai*” is a compound of the Greek verb “*allasow*” which means “to exchange,” and derived from the Greek adjective “*allos*” which means “the other.” Reconciliation as understood this way is meant to exchange other or be in each other’s shoes so to speak, in order to understand and ameliorate each other’s grievances and pain.

“The words thus carry with them the sense of exchanging places with ‘the other’, and therefore being in solidarity with rather than against ‘the other’.”

Reconciliation, is therefore the practice and process of “overcoming alienation through identification and in solidarity with ‘the other’, thus making peace and restoring relationships,” as John W. de Gruchy aptly contended in his book “Reconciliation: Restoring Justice.”

While the grand narrative of the Christian faith speaks of reconciliation using its cognates, such as salvation, redemption, atonement, or even justification, the Bible and Christian traditions also explicitly speak of “reconciliation” as such, as our moral and spiritual goal.

For example, the gospel according to Mathew attributed reconciliation as an integral moral message of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, even more important than offering prayer and sacrifice to God. “So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then

As is the case with most of his theological explications in the New Testament where he consistently incorporates concepts from Jewish traditions and Greek philosophy and vocabulary, Apostle Paul is credited with importing the secular Greco-Roman reconciliation term into the Christian square to elucidate on the salvation history of the Christian faith in the language and reason of his targeted audience—the Gentiles.

Thus the term reconciliation, which only occurs 15 times in the New Testament, is almost exclusively found in Paul’s letters. In his letters to the Roman and the Corinthian Churches, Paul uses the metaphor of reconciliation in emphasizing the contrast between hostility and peace, and love and hate (cf. Rom. 5:1-12; 8:31-9; and 2Cor. 5:14-21). In 2Corinthians particularly, Paul exposes reconciliation as the means for being newly created in Christ, and as the righteousness of God and the mission of the Church.

However, what makes the Pauline understanding of reconciliation different from the Greco-Roman conceptualization and praxis of the process is that in all Pauline reconciliation discourse, God is the subject or the initiator of the act. Whereas in the Hellenistic culture, akin to the dominant contemporary practice of reconciliation process, the offender is the one expected to demonstrate guilt and seek forgiveness.

This is not the case in the Christian way, however, where God who is the offended takes the initiative to reconcile with us who are the offenders. As Christians we are then expected to behave likewise towards our brothers and sisters who have offended us, without any pre-condition of demanding or expecting the offender to issue a public apology, or show remorse and beg for forgiveness.

As victims in the Christian faith, we are the ones expected to initiate the process and forgive the perpetrator already. In short, reconciliation is not only the core of our faith, but also the primary mandate of the church.

Of course, reconciliation continues to be the domain of the secular political discourse. In the conflict resolution arena, reconciliation has gained acceptance as part and parcel of transitional justice practice or peace-building, more generally.

I will enumerate on this in some detail when we discuss the way forward and the peace-building model that best suits our reconciliation efforts in South Sudan, in order for the process to deliver the intended results of restoring harmony and healthy relationship in our broken society.

Until then, I encourage our brothers and sisters, elders and mothers, political leaders, spiritual leaders, and traditional and tribal leaders to form a cohesive unit and rally behind the national reconciliation initiative.

Let us begin to think of strategic planning and design of the process that can better serve our aspiration of peace-building, nation-building, and state-building in South Sudan.

### **Grind of Euro crisis wears down support for union, poll finds**

*New York Times, Brussels, 14/5/2013* – A report with a poll by the Pew Research Center refers to the European Union as the "new sick man of Europe."

Europeans have never been wild about the European Union. With the region sapped by the euro crisis, confidence in the institution and the benefits it was supposed to provide is flagging faster and further than ever before, according to an influential opinion survey released Monday.

The results of an annual survey by the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan organization based in Washington, show a deepening disillusionment with the union in major member countries.

The results of the survey suggest that more citizens than ever could end up opposing the transfer of more power to European Union institutions that may be vital for transforming the euro into a viable currency over the long term.

"The effort over the past half-century to create a more united Europe is now the principal casualty of the euro crisis," according to a report that Pew published with the survey results. The title of the report summed it up: "The New Sick Man of Europe: the European Union."

The poll pointedly noted that, "No European country is becoming more dispirited and disillusioned faster than France." Last year, 60 percent of the French surveyed said they had a favorable impression of the European Union. This year only 41 percent did a decline of 19 percentage points that was the biggest annual drop among the countries surveyed.

The results corresponded to some degree to the health of a nation's economy. Only Greeks and Italians professed less belief in the benefits of economic union than the French, according to Pew. In Germany, 60 percent held a favorable impression of the union.

That could have everything to do with the listless economy in France, which is on the verge of joining much of Southern Europe in recession and has an unemployment rate of 11 percent. The German economy has fared better and has a relatively low unemployment rate of 5.4 percent.

"French and the Germans differ so greatly over the challenges facing their economies that they look as if they live on different continents, not within a single European market," the authors of the Pew report wrote. As a result, the "French look less like Germans and a lot more like the Spanish, the Italians and the Greeks."

The gloomy view is understandable given the economic crisis in Europe.

"The limits of the European Union institutional architecture are perceived more directly by the citizens now," said Enzo Moavero Milanesi, Italy's minister for European affairs, in an interview. "They have

always been known, but citizens expected a more rapid and efficient response to the crisis and ended up complaining about the lengthy procedures, the many meetings, the difficult discussions.

“But it’s a paradox,” said Mr. Milanesi. “The E.U. has made great steps toward further integration and a strengthened monetary union. We even started discussing forms of possible political union, but people are still disappointed.”

One of the smallest declines in sentiment — two percentage points, to 43 percent — was in Britain. But the economic union has never been popular there.

“We should try and renegotiate our relationship with the European Union,” said William Drake, co-founder of the investment advisory firm Lord North Street in London, expressing an opinion shared by many in his country. He added that many regulations were “not being properly discussed and debated by our own democratically elected Parliament. It’s sort of feels like we don’t rule our own country anymore.”

The polls were conducted during March in Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Poland and the Czech Republic, by telephone or in person, with between 700 and 1,100 adults in each country. Each poll has a margin of sampling error of either three or four percentage points.

In France, where voters eight years ago rejected a constitutional treaty meant to streamline decision-making in the European Union and lay out a blueprint for its future, 77 percent of Pew survey respondents said this year that European economic integration had made things worse for their country. That was an increase of 14 percentage points from the previous poll.

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