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Media Monitoring Report

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Referendum Watch

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Highlights

“I will quit if the people want, I will not escape” – Al-Bashir

Local dailies 26/1/11 – Addressing a huge rally in the town of Al-Damir in the River Nile state yesterday where he went to inaugurate development projects, President Al-Bashir said if a popular uprising similar to that in Tunis takes place in Sudan he will not escape and vowed to quit if the people so desire. He saluted the popular uprising of the Tunisian people, saying the Sudanese people are the ones who taught the world how revolts are sparked.

“I will not escape if the people revolt. I will be buried here,” he said, adding “When we notice that the people do not want us, we will quit before somebody tells us to do so”.

“I am revealing to you the polling result before it is released by the SSRC. 99% of votes will be in favour of secession,” he told the crowds, reiterating his government’s adherence to the application of the Islamic Sharia laws.

“The day we feel that the people reject us we will go out to them in the streets so that they can throw stones on us,” he said, according to *Sudan Tribune.com* 25/1/11.

Bashir took an implicit hit at opposition parties by saying that the Sudanese people disappointed those who thought that recent government decisions increasing food prices would make them take to the streets.

“The southerners have settled the issue by voting 99% for secession of the South,” Al-Bashir said, according to the *Citizen* 26/1/11, affirming his government’s assurance to assist the newly-born nation to stand on its feet.

“Secession is not the end of the world,” he said, adding “in fact it is a new beginning for a new revolution for the building of a Sudan in which security, stability and development prevail”.

The President also confirmed his intention to “attend the secession celebrations with brothers the southerners”.

“We will support the new southern state and will hold onto its stability because we are neighbours and will remain friends,” he said, according to *Reuters* 25/1/11.

SPLM threatens to shelf all Interim Period arrangements

Al-Rai Al-Aam 26/1/11 – FVP and GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit, in press statement yesterday, said he was elected by the people and he would continue to hold his post of GoSS President, indicting that those thinking that he would quit are wrong. Kiir said that during the coming stage he would focus on building strong relations with the North and the neighbouring countries.

Meanwhile, the SPLM has threatened to abolish the arrangements of the Interim Period if the southern MPs and other officials are dismissed from the central government after secession.

National Assembly deputy speaker Atem Garang (SPLM) warned that dismissal of MPs and holders of constitutional posts would entail the immediate cancellation of wealth sharing and that would include doing away with the 50% share of oil revenue for the North as well as the cancellation of the security arrangements and dissolution of JDB the Constitutional Court and other CPA institutions.

"Talk about termination of SPLM membership in the National Assembly is unconstitutional and inconsistent with the CPA. If this is the position of the NCP the SPLM will have no objection to that but it will revoke all the arrangements relating to the Interim Period.

Organisers dismiss Sudan vote fraud claim

AFP 25/1/11 - The commission organising south Sudan's landmark independence referendum dismissed media reports on Tuesday that voter turnout sometimes exceeded 100 percent.

"On this issue of 100 percent turnout, this is rubbish," commission deputy chairman Chan Reec told a news conference in Khartoum.

"I was shocked when I read something about it on the Internet ... This is not true." He added that there had been some "clerical errors" but these related to only around one percent of the ballots cast and were being sorted out.

Reec described as a "miracle" the commission's success in overcoming the problems it faced in organising the poll. These included strict time constraints, limited funding and the logistical challenge of conducting the vote in such a vast, underdeveloped region.

The commission says it was originally promised 400 million Sudanese pounds (160 million dollars, 117.4 million euros) of which it has received only 26.6 million pounds for its operations in the north and another 60 million pounds for the south.

Preliminary referendum results for the north and south are now due to be announced separately on January 30, with the final results expected on February 7, pending appeals.

But SSRC chairman Mohammed Ibrahim Khalil said he did not expect any serious complaints.

"Out of the nearly four million people registered, only 64 persons made complaints to the consideration committees, and out of the 64 complainants, not a single one made an appeal to the court," Khalil said.

"So that just shows you how smooth the process has been," he added.

Khartoum and Juba prepare for release of polling results

Al-Sahafa 26/1/11 –the NCP and the SPLM shared identical viewpoints at an AEC meeting yesterday on the need to sustain the CPA arrangements until the end of the Interim Period.

Cabinet Affairs Minister Luka Biong represented the SPLM and Sayed Al-Khatib represented the NCP at the meeting.

AEC Chair Sir Derek Plumbly told the newspaper that the two parties did not diverge on the need for the Naivasha arrangements to continue until the end of the Interim Period and stressed the importance of continuity of dialogue between the two parties on all issues.

Biong informed the meeting that the SPLM position was that the CPA arrangements and the institutions set up to assist their implementation should continue to exist until the end of the Interim Period. NCP representative Al-Khatib concurred, and dismissed any tendency to dissolve the current government.

15,000 voters registered in southern Kordofan

Al-Rai Al-Aam 26/1/11 – The total number of voters who have registered for complementary elections in southern Kordofan reached 14,690 in 27 out of a 32 centres.

Chairman of the state higher electoral committee Adam Abideen told SMC yesterday that the registration process continued for the second day in 1463 centres manned by 110 mobile committees.

Opposition parties prepared to talk on a “national agenda”

Al-Rai Al-Aam Khartoum, 26/01/11 – The alliance of opposition parties has announced its preparedness to talk with the NCP on a national agenda.

The National Umma Party has been delegated to inform the NCP that the opposition would send a unified team to represent them in the talks. The opposition alliance issued a statement yesterday following a meeting of its senior representatives.

South Sudan considers ICC membership - minister

Reuters (Juba) 26/1/11 - An independent south Sudan will consider joining the International Criminal Court (ICC), the body which has indicted Sudan's president for war crimes and genocide, a southern minister said.

Asked whether south Sudan would join the international court based in The Hague, the south's minister for regional cooperation, Deng Alor, told reporters: "Why not? We don't have a problem with the ICC.

"The ICC is about human rights. We fought for over 40 years for human rights -- we will see the procedure and definitely they will contact us or we will contact them and we will have no problem," he said late on Tuesday.

"They are looking forward to us formally joining them," he said referring to the five-nation trade bloc.

Alor said it was too early for south Sudan to decide whether it would establish diplomatic relations with Israel, which the Islamic Khartoum government regards as an enemy state.

"We don't have a problem with Israel. If our national interest demands that we establish diplomatic relations, we will do, but we cannot make this decision now."

Bashir on Tuesday pledged support for a new southern state in his first public address since the

vote.

"With the independence of south Sudan and with the role Khartoum is playing so far, this...is going to help in improving relations between Khartoum and Washington," Alor said.

Popular Consultation Monitor

34,000 participate in PopCon in the Blue Nile

Al-Rai Al-Aam 26/1/11 – The number of civilians who have taken part in the ongoing popular consultations in the Blue Nile state rose to 34,000 people in 61 centres.

Rapporteur of the PopCon parliamentary commission Seilla Musa Kinji told reporters yesterday that the process was progressing according to the plan, the security situation is stable and the people are participating in a free atmosphere.

29 dead and injured in SPLA clash with Galwak Gai forces in Unity State

Al-Intibaha 26/01/11 – At least 11 people were killed and 17 others injured in clashes between the SPLA and the forces of Galwak Gai in the last two days. Galwak Gai's forces reportedly seized large numbers of weaponry and have taken 9 prisoners from the SPLA.

Galwak Gai's second command, Apollo, revealed that their forces ambushed an SPLA fore 2 days ago in a place near Tharjas in Unity State.

In a separate development, *Al-Ahram Al-Youm* quotes a spokesperson for renegade SPLA General George Athor as having accused the SPLA of violating the truce between them. Athor's forces said that the SPLA carried out an ambush on David Yau-yau's forces in Faryang on the Pipor River in Jonglei State yesterday arresting three generals and killing two of their guards. Athor says these generals were on their way to talks with the SPLA within the framework of the exchange of visits the two sides had agreed to.

Unidentified gunmen attack UNICEF vehicle in Unity State

Al-Rai Al-Aam 26/01/11 – Unidentified gunmen attacked a UNICEF vehicle on the Manga-Torbonge road in Unity State the day before yesterday killing one and injuring three others. Eyewitnesses report that the attack was said to occur some 70km from Unity State but, the newspaper says, it was difficult to confirm the report.

Other Highlights

New clashes between Government and rebels erupt in North Darfur, UN reports

UN News Service 25/1/11 - A fresh round of intense fighting has broken out in Sudan's Darfur region between Government forces and rebels even as Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for an immediate ceasefire in a conflict that has killed at least 300,000 people and driven 2.7 million others from their homes.

The fighting was still raging today 24 hours after it erupted in Tabit, 45 kilometres south of El

Fasher, North Darfur, between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minnawi movement (SLA-MM), which signed a peace accord with the Government in 2006, the United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID) reported.

The army has prevented UNAMID peacekeepers from entering the area, citing security concerns. There are no indications as to any casualties or whether other movements might be involved.

In his latest report covering the past three months, Mr. Ban cites with satisfaction prospects for progress made in peace negotiations in Doha, capital of Qatar, and the decrease in inter-communal fighting in Darfur. However, he voices deep concern at the upsurge in fighting between the Government and SLA-MM and another rebel group, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), which has taken part in the Doha talks.

"The use of military force will not resolve the conflict; it will only prolong and increase the suffering of the people of Darfur," he writes. "I call on the Government and the movements to recognize their responsibility to the people of Darfur, to ensure their forces on the ground desist from violence, and to show the political will necessary to reach an immediate ceasefire and an inclusive and comprehensive peace agreement."

He notes that Sudan is "at a turning point in its history" after the independence referendum in South Sudan, which had fought a two-decade civil war with the Government. "Never has the time been so opportune to settle the conflict in Darfur," he adds, calling on the international community to step up its engagement with the Government and other parties "in a cohesive and urgent manner" to reach peace.

UNAMID Joint Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari today also called on the belligerents to remember that the conflict cannot be solved militarily and that peace can only be achieved through an inclusive political process, not through the use of force.

Meanwhile, *Radio Omdurman* 26/01/11 reports SAF Spokesperson Al-Sawarmi Khalid, has said that the military yesterday chased out rebel movements and other outlaw groups from Tabit [North Darfur State].

In a radio interview, Al-Sawarmi said that the SAF continues to pursue the rebel movements which comprise of fighters from the Justice and Equality Movement [JEM] and the Sudan Liberation Movement [SLM] factions of Mani Arkoi Minawi and Abd-al-Wahid Muhammad al-Nur.

The armed forces clashed with these during a big battle in the Tabit area and managed to capture four vehicles and destroyed six others, forcing the flight of the rebel groups to the Tukmari area, north of Jabal Marra [South Darfur State], he said.

The official spokesman refuted rebel claims of having downed a combat helicopter used in these raids, saying that the helicopter in question had suffered a technical fault and was forced to crash-land near the Al-Fashir airport [North Darfur]. All on board are safe, he said.

SUNA 25/1/11 reported Al-Sawarmi as saying that SAF killed nine rebel leaders including Abdul Rahaman Tarjook and Isahag Kijjies adding that the Sudanese air force participated effectively in those battles, with all planes returning to their base safe after the end of the battles.

Darfur rebel group says Sudan torturing its captives

Sudan Tribune.com 24/1/11 - The Darfur rebel group Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) said on Sunday that its members captured earlier this month by the Sudanese authorities in western Darfur are being subjected to cruel torture, threatening the government of reprisal attacks against individuals implicated in the process.

On January 11, forces of the Sudanese government and its allied militias ambushed and captured a 12-strong unit of JEM in an area close to El- Geniena, the provincial capital of West Darfur State. The most high profile captive is Ibrahim Al-Maz Deng, who is JEM's secretary for coordination with southern Sudan.

A press release undersigned by JEM's general commander Suliman Sandal and seen by Sudan Tribune said that the group's "reliable" sources in Khartoum had informed that the captives were being subjected to the "cruellest forms of torture" under the direct supervision of Brigadier-General Abdul Hafiz Ahmad Al-Bashir, the head of the interrogation department at Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS).

JEM's statement said that the captives were being interrogated under duress to elicit confessions in "a blatant violation not only of international and regional laws and conventions, but also of the provisions of the interim constitution and national laws."

According to JEM, its prisoners were being transferred on daily basis from their cells at Kober Federal Prison in Khartoum North at 7 pm local time to a place known as the "oven" at the NISS headquarters and returned to their cells at 7 am the next morning.

The movement further claimed that the group's leader Ibrahim Al-Maz was being subjected to "special torture techniques departing from disgusting racist grounds."

JEM warned the government that it had detailed information on the individuals involved in the torture process and would not hesitate to avenge the torture of its captives.

The Sudanese government already has a number of high-profile JEM members in custody, including the half-brother of the group's leader Khalil Ibrahim, who were arrested after JEM staged an attack on the capital Khartoum in May 2008. Sudan sentenced a large number of JEM prisoners to death but none has been executed, and the government uses prisoners as a bargaining chip in peace negotiations with the rebel group.

Sudan frees human rights activist Mudawi

Sudan Tribune.com 25/1/11 - The head of Sudan Social Development Organization (SUDO), Mudawi Ibrahim Adam, has been released from prison in Khartoum after serving a little over one month of his one-year sentence on charges of embezzlement, his organization said on Tuesday.

Mudawi was released from Al-Geraif Prison in Khartoum on the morning of January 25 after receiving a piece of paper telling him that the court which sentenced him on 22 December to one

year in prison and a fine 3000 Sudanese pounds (1250 US dollars) had upheld his conviction but decided he had spent enough time and should be released immediately.

The genesis of Mudawi's case dates back to 2006 when the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), the Sudanese government's official regulator of NGOs activities, charged him with mismanaging SUDO finances.

Subsequently, HAC appointed an auditor who scrutinized SUDO accounts and was unable to find evidence of financial mismanagement. After a series of hearings on the case, the Khartoum Criminal Court acquitted Mudawi of the charges on March 15, 2010.

HAC appealed against the court's ruling and Mudawi was informed that the judges would be reviewing his case on December 22, 2010.

In a statement dubbed "Murky Justice" seen by Sudan Tribune on Tuesday, Mudawi's organization SUDO ridiculed the fact that the court upheld his conviction "in his absence and the absence of his lawyers."

SUDO welcomed the release and claimed that the charges are part of "a long saga" of the targeting of the organization and its head by Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Service.

In a call for urgent action following Mudawi's sentence, the global human rights watchdog Amnesty International said Mudawi was "a prisoner of conscience, held solely in relation to his human rights work."

Authorities release some PCP members

Al-Rai Al-Aam 26/01/11 – The Popular Congress Party (PCP) has revealed that authorities in Khartoum have released two senior members of the party. Mohamed Al-Amin Abdulwahab and Baroud Sandal were released but some 13 others recently arrested, including Dr. Turabi, are still behind bars.

Following his release, Baroud Sandal told the press that authorities have not brought party leader Hassan Turabi for questioning ever since he was arrested but have allowed in his books although he is not allowed to write. His family and lawyer were also allowed to see him.

Sudanese official denies agreement to give vice-president post to Darfur

SUNA 26/01/11 - Presidential Advisor Ghazi Salah-el-Din has described as false recent media reports that the government has agreed in Doha to grant the country's Vice-President position to Darfur and to the establishment of a special status for the region.

Salah-el-Din who is also the Sudan government's point man on Darfur, said that the government's policies on such issues are based on full equality in the constitutional rights of the people.

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