

Sudan Domestic Media, December 13, 2010 (covering December 6 to December 12, 2010)

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State-Owned Media

December 6

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 0400 GMT 6 Dec 10)

- President Omar al-Bashir spoke on the phone with Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, emir of Kuwait, thanking the Kuwaiti government and people for hosting the International Conference of Donors and Investors for Eastern Sudan Development and for generously supporting the projects that were proposed at the conference. The Kuwaiti emir affirmed his support for security, stability and development in Sudan.
- In a phone conversation, President Omar al-Bashir inquired about the health of King Abdallah Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Sa'ud, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, during his current recovery in the United States. The Sudanese president wished the Saudi king a clean bill of health. The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques noted his gratitude for the telephone inquiry and the concern for his health.
- Ali Uthman Muhammad Taha, Sudan's vice president, and Dr. Riek Machar, South Sudan's vice president, are expected to hold a high-level coordinative meeting today in Fuluj oilfield in Upper Nile State. The meeting will address oil manufacturing installation security prior to, during and following the referendum as well as ways of guaranteeing unimpeded work that will benefit the north and the south regardless of the results of the referendum. The Oil Ministry noted that the meeting is meant to reassure oil companies and individuals working in the oilfields.

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 1200 GMT 6 Dec 10)

- Gen Salva Kiir Mayardit, Sudan's vice president and South Sudan's president, was scheduled to meet this evening with Mikhail Margelov, the Russian president's peace envoy to Sudan, to discuss the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the peace process in Darfur. Gen Kiir was also set to meet with a number of political party leaders and organizations.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1500 GMT 6 Dec 10)

- The National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) agreed on a framework to protect all of the oilfields and oil facilities south of the 1956 border. The framework agreement, signed at Falluj oilfield in Upper Nile State, emphasizes continued joint efforts to protect both the oilfields and the facilities. Under the chairmanship of Vice-President Ali Uthman Muhammad Taha and South Sudan's Vice President Riek Machar, the ruling parties affirmed their commitment to cooperate in this regard. They also said that they would protect employees of foreign oil companies in the area and urged the federal government's security officials to protect the oilfields.

December 7

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 0400 GMT 7 Dec 10)

- Sudan's presidency will hold a meeting chaired by President Omar al-Bashir this evening to address pending issues related to the implementation of the CPA and arrangements for holding the South Sudan referendum.
- Musa Muhammad Ahmad, the presidential assistant and head of the information and mobilization committee at the national body for supporting unity and the referendum, recommended that media messages be directed and united in order to benefit voluntary unity. During a December 6 consultative meeting with media leaders at the Council of Ministers, he asked media outlets to develop a vision and a robust media plan to bring about peace, security and stability in the coming period.

December 8

(Suna news agency website, Khartoum, in Arabic 8 Dec 10)

- Lt-Col Al-Sawarmi Khalid Sa'ad, spokesman for the Armed Forces, denied charges that the Forces were responsible for bombing parts of Bahr-al-Ghazal State, stating that they were false. Al-Sawarmai told Suna that the party responsible for the allegations was ignorant about the cordial atmosphere witnessed during the December 6 meetings in Falluj town between Sudan's Vice President Ali Uthman Muhammad Taha and South Sudan's Vice President Dr. Riek Machar. The meeting between Federal Minister of Defence Gen Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn and Minister for SPLA Affairs Niyal Deng as well as meetings of the Joint Defence Council were also held in a cordial atmosphere. Al-Sawarmai noted that the meetings highlighted the importance of prioritizing support for stability in addition to carrying out joint activities to safeguard the flow of petroleum, noting that a halt in the flow would result in disaster for the south, which is 98% dependent on it, and would also have an impact on the north's economy. He added that the Armed Forces will continue to fight and go after Darfur rebels in the north-south border area, but will not violate the January 1, 1956 border.

(Suna news agency website, Khartoum, in Arabic 8 Dec 10)

- On December 8, Chief Justice Jalal Muhammad Uthman issued a decree to establish a court to rule on appeals pertaining to the referendum results. This decision is in accordance with the 2009 Act of the Referendum of Southern Sudan. Supreme Court Judge Mahjub al-Amin al-Faki was named chairman of the court and Judges Sir al-Khatim Salih and Benjamin Bak were named members of the court.
- On December 8, President Omar al-Bashir received a visit at his office at the Council of Ministers from the Kenyan minister of tourism. The two men discussed bilateral ties between Sudan and Kenya and ways to improve them. After the meeting, Dr. Ahmad Babikir Nahar, Kenya's minister of tourism, told the press that he had extended greetings from Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki to President al-Bashir and said that his ministry would sign an agreement with Kenya's Tourism Ministry on the exchange of information and experiences pertaining to tourism.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1500 GMT 8 Dec 10)

- The Southern Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC) announced the closing of all voter registration centers in the north, the south and eight foreign countries for citizens from Southern Sudan this evening.

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 1800 GMT 8 Dec 10)

- Shaykh Hamad bin Jasim bin Jabir al-Thani, Qatar's prime minister and foreign affairs minister, and Dr. Ghazi Salah al-Din, the presidential adviser in-charge of the Darfur file, met in Doha today. The two men went over efforts being made to achieve peace in Darfur as well as the ongoing Doha talks. Their discussion also addressed the outcome of the joint mediator's recent visit to Sudan, particularly in the Darfur states and in terms of meetings conducted with members of Darfur's civil society. They also touched upon the remaining steps to achieving a final peace agreement.

December 9

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 1300 GMT 9 Dec 10)

- President Omar al-Bashir affirmed his country's commitment to advancing relations with Iran in order to serve joint interests. He noted the fruitful cooperation between Sudan and Iran. President al-Bashir made these comments during a meeting with Sadeq Khalilian, the Agricultural Jihad Minister of Iran, who transmitted a verbal message from President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad regarding ties between two countries and ways of improving them. After the meeting, Iran's minister noted that al-Bashir had emphasized benefits from energy in both Sudan and Iran, particularly in agriculture and economics. He added that

he met with officials from the agricultural sector during the joint talks and stressed Iran's desire to move cooperation with Sudan forward. Abd-al-Halim al-Muta'afi, Sudan's agriculture minister, said that the Iranian minister's visit was part of his role in the FAO regional conference and the work of the joint ministerial committee.

- Daniel Arap Moi, former president of Kenya, arrived in Cuba to meet with officials to discuss the implementation of the CPA and the referendum. Moi told journalists that he would address the implementation of the CPA and he expected a successful referendum to take place in Sudan. He also said that he hoped the citizens of South Sudan would take a big step in the vote on self-determination.

December 10

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 1300 GMT 10 Dec 10)

- Dr. Luka Biong, the minister of the cabinet of affairs and official of the SPLM, hailed the level of implementation of the CPA, which will be finalized with the holding of the South Sudan referendum on January 9, 2011. Luka Biong told the radio program "Radio Conference" that claims that the SPLM had prevented southerners in the north from registering to vote in the referendum were false. He reiterated that the option for either unity or secession lies in the hands of southern citizens alone.
- George Maker, a member of the SSRC, announced the preliminary numbers for voter registration for the upcoming referendum. He said that over three million voters had registered in the south, 115,000 voters had registered in the north and 54,000 voters had registered abroad.
- Dr. Muhammad Mandur al-Mahdi, an NCP official, said that the SPLM had worked toward making secession a reality for southerners. He noted that many southerners did not participate in the registration process for the referendum. He also said that the Sudanese government has the option of giving Sudanese citizenship to anyone should the referendum result in secession.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1500 GMT 10 Dec 10)

- During a meeting between Sudanese foreign minister Ali Ahmad Karti and Chinese foreign minister Yang Jiechi, China affirmed its commitment to supporting Sudan's peace process and emphasized the importance of peace, stability and development for Sudan. Ali Ahmad Karti is currently on a visit to China. The Chinese minister said that all parties involved must resolve conflicts through dialogue and consultation and they should cooperate in order to carry out a smooth South Sudan referendum. He added that the referendum conduct should be free, fair and transparent so that it will reflect the true will of the Sudanese people. He also noted that the restoration of peace between the north and the south will improve the development and serve the interests of both sides, contributing to regional peace and stability.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1900 GMT 10 Dec 10)

- According to Sudan TV, the NCP and the SPLM demonstrated their determination to hold the Southern Sudan referendum on time, but the process has come up against numerous challenges that could jeopardize its credibility if appropriate solutions are not found. The referendum commission faces a time crisis with regard to the referendum process and complications and irregularities in the voter registration process. Time is needed for the judiciary to resolve such issues so that the final registers can be published. Referendum Commission Chairman Prof Muhammad Ibrahim Khalil said that the commission would be neglecting its responsibility if it did not request a postponement of the referendum. He said that the law in its current form requires three months to pass between publication of the final register and voting day. He added that the commission does not have three months. According to Sudan TV, the little time remaining before the referendum forced the commission to violate the timetable in the referendum law. This resulted in harsh criticisms of the commission. Sudan TV added that complications in the referendum process include low turnout and irregularities in voter registration such as the isolation of some southerners in the north out of fear that they would vote for unity. Many legal complaints were made as a result and they could have an impact on the referendum process.
- The SSRC began publishing the preliminary register of southerners who are eligible to vote in the referendum. During the period of publication, the specialized courts will hear appeals and complaints. The national media committee for the referendum announced that it would give all political parties the opportunity to propagate for either unity or secession in the media outlets. According to SSRC Chairman Prof Muhammad Ibrahim Khalil, the complaints committees have only five days and it looks as though there are many complaints. Individual and group complaints can be found daily in the newspapers. He said that five days is not enough time. With more time, every complaint can be verified. The referendum constitution and law state that political parties and individuals have the right to express, publish and announce their views on the two referendum options via various media outlets. The chairman of the National Media Committee for the Referendum said that the commission will seek to give the same time to those calling for unity and those calling for secession. The SSRC asked the CPA partners to allow for a conducive environment in order to arrive at the voting period and announce the referendum results in a secure environment. During the time leading up to the referendum, it is expected that various post-referendum issues will be discussed. Many analysts believe that this will influence how southerners will vote.

December 11

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 1300 GMT 11 Dec 10)

- On December 13, President Omar al-Bashir will witness the last day of the implementation of the training initiative at the Uthman Diqnah Base in the Karsabu area of the Red Sea State. National Defence Minister Eng Gen Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn, the chief of general staff, members of general staff and various military leaders will also attend. Al-Sawarmi Khalid Sa'ad, the official spokesman of Sudan's Armed Forces, said that forces from several air, land and air field defence units will attend, along with the officers who are doing their studies at the Infantry Institute in Jabet.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Dec 10)

- On December 11, Gen Salva Kiir Mayardit, first vice president of Sudan and president of the government of South Sudan, briefed a parliamentary delegation from the East African nations in Juba on political developments in Sudan, South Sudan referendum preparations and the outcomes of talks between the NCP and the SPLM on pending issues such as borders and Abyei. Kiir lauded the cooperation between the East African nations and South Sudan as well as Africa's role in supporting Sudan.

December 12

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 0400 GMT 12 Dec 10)

- Dr. Umar Adam Rahama, the official spokesman of the Sudanese government's delegation to the Doha talks, announced that the Darfur negotiating parties had agreed on several issues in the negotiation files between the government and the Liberation and Justice Movement in Doha, Qatar. Dr. Umar Adam Rahama told the radio that the negotiating parties had agreed on establishing a timetable to conclude the negotiations on a number of files in order to arrive at a final agreement in the coming days.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1900 GMT 12 Dec 10)

- President Omar al-Bashir instructed the Ministry of Finance and National Economy to pay dues to the Al-Manasir, the victims evacuated from the Marawi Dam area, immediately. The Ministry of Justice mediated and confirmed this. President al-Bashir also called for the cases that have not been confirmed by the Ministry of Justice to continue to be resolved. A press release indicated that the president called for the connection of electricity cables from Marawi to Karimah and the connection of road services between Karimah and Abu Hamad. The president also called for stalled agricultural projects in the area to be completed as well as the mobilization of a campaign to support the new lake at the Marawi Dam. He asked the concerned parties to implement these directives.
- Gen Salva Kiir Mayardit, first vice president of Sudan and president of the Southern Sudan government, confirmed the commitment of the NCP and the SPLM to settle post-referendum issues. Addressing a Sunday service on

December 12 in Juba, Kiir said the government of Southern Sudan was fully committed to protecting the lives and properties of northerners in the south regardless of the referendum results.