

Sudan Domestic Media, October 4, 2010 (covering September 27 to October 3, 2010)

By Kristen Zbikowski, MIGS Reporter for Sudan

State-Owned Media

September 27

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 0400 GMT 27 Sep 10)

- During a September 26 meeting with the delegation of the Al-Khalifah Abdullahi al-Ta'yushi Ansar, including emirs and the Ansar, civil administration representatives, the organization for the Ansar issues, leagues and unions from Darfur, Kurdufan and several parts of the country, headed by Sayyid Muhammad Dawud al-Khalifah, President Omar al-Bashir expressed his gratitude for efforts being made in the name of Sudan's unity and reaffirmed his government's commitment to unity. President al-Bashir also emphasized the National Congress Party's (NCP) desire to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) by holding the South Sudan referendum in January 2011. In his address to the large gathering, al-Bashir stated that the referendum was part of the CPA and that his government was committed implementing the provisions of the agreement because his people keep promises and pledges. Al-Bashir also retaliated against certain critics who said that the government and the NCP had not made unity seem like an attractive option. He added that the CPA gave southerners the right to make their own decisions and be responsible for developing their country and services. As such, he said, southerners have begun to feel like South Sudan is governed as a separate state. According to al-Bashir, the CPA makes unity attractive because it provides for the preservation of the rights of southerners. In response to claims that the implementation of Shar'iah laws in the north will turn southerners into second-class citizens, the president called attention to the Commission for Protecting the Rights of Non-Muslims in the north and in Khartoum. This commission is headed by a Christian from the south who is known to the people and was elected through agreement between the NCP and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). Al-Bashir added that not a single complaint had been received by the commission on a violation of rights because Shar'iah law protects the rights of non-Muslims. He also pointed out that according to the constitution, rights and responsibilities are granted by citizenship rather than religion, point of view, tribe or race.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1415 GMT 27 Sep 10)

- In an address to the UN General Assembly in New York broadcast live on Sudan TV, Vice-President Ali Taha called for the continuation of Darfur peace talks. Taha also remarked on the International Criminal Court (ICC), stating that "it had

become a tool to subdue the ambition of the Third World countries” and “to control their destiny by imposing its authority on a country that is not a signatory.” He also applauded the African Union for condemning the “so-called” ICC and called for the Security Council to reverse its decision and submit the case to the Sudanese judiciary instead of the ICC. Taha also asked the international community to forgive Sudan’s debts in order to help the country conduct the referendum and proceed with talks relating to post-referendum issues.

- In his speech to the UN General Assembly, Vice-President Ali Taha discussed preparations for the South Sudan referendum, to be held as scheduled. He noted the government’s commitment to a free, fair and transparent referendum without any coercion and expressed a desire for voluntary unity, appealing to all to support Sudanese unity. Taha welcomed UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s decision to assign former Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa as the head of the UN team monitoring the referendum. Taha also addressed efforts being made by the Sudanese government to achieve peace in Darfur and acknowledged a number of positive advances with the aim of normalizing the situation and reviving activities in the conflict-affected region. He said that such changes had allowed for elections to take place in Darfur, strengthening the democratic process and establishing democratic institutions. According to Taha, this encouraged a new government strategy in Darfur involving broad-based dialogue among Darfuri individuals, groups, institutions and political forces.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Sep 10)

- The budget for the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission was approved by the Federal Ministry of Finance during a visit by Ali Mahmud, the federal finance minister, to the headquarters of the referendum commission, where he discussed the commission’s activities with its chairman, Prof Muhammad Ibrahim Khalil, and his deputy. Mahmud examined and fully approved all of the commission’s requests and stressed the importance of carrying out commission activities quickly. He also noted that the Federal Ministry of Finance is one of the key organizations among a number of donors and supporters of the execution of commission activities related to the January 2011 South Sudan referendum. Ministry officials pointed out the national government’s commitment to cooperating with the commission in every way. The approved budget was a large budget, according to the minister, and money is the main means of cooperation.
- A meeting held by the National Commission for Southern Sudan Referendum addressed the various administrative, technical and financial procedures to be carried out for the referendum. The commission also decided on October as the date for southern voter registration. With the support of the UN and the commission, arrangements are underway for conducting intensive employee seminars on the process for registering voters. Registration committees will also be set up by the commission in Sudan and outside of the country. Intense lobbying has taken place at the referendum commission’s headquarters on the issues of financial, administrative and technical arrangements. The most important announcement pertained to the registration of southerners in the north

- and south and in eight other countries stipulated by law. An important commission meeting will be held next week to decide on the commission's internal rules and the possibility of registering southerners in the north.
- Sudanese armed forces spokesman Lt-Col Al-Sawarmi Khalid Sa'ad refuted newspaper reports claiming that they represent the Sudan Liberation Army (SLM-original), saying that the movement is one of the groups that signed a peace agreement in Tripoli with the government. He added that the agreement led to the integration of 600 of its members into the regular forces. As such, the SLM-original is registered as a political party and has completed demobilization and reintegration. As a result, the group that was attacked in Mara village by armed forces is an outlaw group which harassed citizens and served as a burden on people living in the area.
 - President Omar al-Bashir confirmed that Shari'ah would continue to be implemented in Sudan's northern states and noted that the religious teachings guarantee the rights of all citizens. He also affirmed that the referendum would continue to be carried out in accordance with the stipulations in the CPA.

September 28

(Suna news agency website, Khartoum, in Arabic 28 Sep 10)

- On September 28, Kamal Hasan Ali, the state minister for foreign affairs, briefed the ambassador of Iran on the most recent developments in Sudan, especially those pertaining to Darfur and ongoing preparations for next January's referendum. Iran's ambassador affirmed his country's support to Sudan and its hope to improve economic and cultural ties with Sudan for mutually beneficial reasons.

October 1

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 0400 GMT 1 Oct 10)

- President Omar al-Bashir will visit River Nile State on October 4 to inspect the impact of floods and rains on people in the area. During his one-day visit, President al-Bashir will address a public rally in Shendi town and attend a show put on by the Nile navy.
- Germany announced its support for Sudanese unity and its vision for a new phase of relations with Sudan that will benefit from history and common positions. The announcement followed meetings held between the delegation of the government of Germany led by Dr. Wolf-Ruthort Born, Germany's Minister of State in the Foreign Affairs Ministry, and Dr. Nafi Ali Nafi, the president's assistant. Dr. Nafi welcomed enhanced economic and developmental cooperation between the two countries and Presidential Advisor Dr. Ghazi Salah al-Din applauded Germany's position in support of the completion of the Darfur peace process and improving bilateral ties between Germany and Sudan. The head of the German delegation expressed appreciation on behalf of Germany for the efforts being

made to achieve peace in Sudan and announced German support for the holding of the referendum which is in the interest of Sudanese unity. He also commented that he would visit Juba on this issue.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1500 GMT 1 Oct 10)

- The National Southern Sudan Referendum Commission began the administrative and technical steps necessary for holding the referendum. Commission spokesperson Ambassador Jamal Muhammad Ahmad confirmed that the committees that will monitor the registration of southern voters in the north and south have been established.
- Ali Ahmad Karti, Sudan's minister of foreign affairs, called on the international community to live up to its pledges with respect to the peace process. During a meeting with Dr. Wolf-Ruthort Born, Germany's state secretary for foreign affairs, Karti reiterated the government's commitment to holding the South Sudan referendum as scheduled and to accept the results if the referendum is free and transparent, in accordance with international standards and expressing the will of the people of the south. Karti briefed the German official on overall political development in Sudan and ongoing dialogue between the ruling partners to come to an agreement on post-referendum issues, particularly Abyei and border demarcation. Dr. Wolf-Ruthort Born noted Germany's commitment to support efforts being made to conduct the referendum.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1900 GMT 1 Oct 10)

- Lt-Col Al-Sawarmi Khalid Sa'ad, the official spokesman of the armed forces, announced today that the armed forces successfully opened Kator-Diribat-Jawa road in Jabal Marra area, South Darfur state, following intensive combing operations. This came after roads in the region were closed by groups sympathetic to Abd-al-Wahid Muhammad Nur. The groups also extorted money from people using the roads and farms in the area. According to Al-Sawarmi, during the operation the government forces destroyed the vehicles belonging to group members and arrested several of them. Seventeen rebels were killed and four Sudanese armed forces soldiers were hurt. Al-Sawarmi noted that citizens in the area went back to their villages following the operation under the protection of the armed forces to carry on with their lives.
- In a television interview with NCP official Dr. Rabi'i Abd-al-Atti, the official commented on the SPLM's "clear and frank" call for secession. According to Dr. Rabi'i, the call for secession totally contradicts the CPA and the SPLM should understand that it is an "outright violation of the CPA which clearly calls for SPLM to work together with the NCP to achieve unity." He said that this call was totally unacceptable and insisted that the SPLM must abide by the implementation of the CPA in accordance with the stipulations it included. If not, Rabi'i warned that this would lead to a failure of the implementation of the CPA, "especially its last provisions". He added that the "consecutive violations" and "clear breaches" of the CPA by the SPLM would undoubtedly "threaten the process of the CPA

and also threaten the referendum on the self-determination of the south.” He insisted that the SPLM backtrack on current views and work with the NCP toward unity “and to make secession an option only for the southern citizen during the referendum.”

October 3

(Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic 0400 GMT 3 Oct 10)

- During a meeting with Foreign Minister Ali Karti yesterday, President Omar al-Bashir discussed the results of the Sudanese delegation’s involvement in the meetings of the UN General Assembly. Following the meeting, Karti told the radio that President al-Bashir commended the results and called for them to be used in the interests of Sudan. This related specifically to setting up a complete plan to be implemented in the next three months. Karti also noted that an upcoming UN Security Council delegation visit on October 5 would be a normal visit. He said that he hoped this visit would contribute to exposing the facts and resolving issues in Sudan and added that the delegation would visit Darfur and Juba. Karti noted that the meetings between the NCP and the SPLM set to start in Addis Ababa were a routine follow-up on post-referendum arrangements.
- President Omar al-Bashir will address the first meeting of the youth of political parties at Friendship Hall in Khartoum today. The outcome of the meeting is expected to be a declaration of the parties’ youth on Sudanese unity and all other critical issues. A number of political party leaders, academics and experts are expected to speak at the meeting.
- Ambassador Muhammad Uthman al-Nujumi, the Referendum Commission’s secretary-general, stated that preparations for announcing the registration campaign for the general referendum register for Sudan were being carried out as planned. The Commission’s structures and special committees in the south have been formed. In the next two days, committees in the north and at the level of eight foreign countries will be established. Ambassador al-Nujumi told the radio that the printing of papers and documents will take place outside the country under UN supervision. He expected the documents to arrive in Sudan in the third week of October.
- Dr. Kamal Abd-al-Qadir, the first under-secretary at the federal health ministry, announced that the ministry aims to sign a health cooperation protocol with Chad in order to enhance processes and exchange medical information and to establish a referral hospital at the border between Sudan and Chad. A medical convoy composed of 30 doctors with different specialties prepared by Sudan’s ministry was sent to Chad to implement President al-Bashir’s directives to improve cooperation with Chad.

(Sudan TV, Omdurman, in Arabic 1500 GMT 3 Oct 10)

- President Omar al-Bashir emphasized the importance for the SPLM, a Naivasha peace agreement partner, to give southerners the freedom to exercise their

constitutional rights in the upcoming referendum “without hindrance or exclusion”. In an address to the first forum of the youth of political parties, the president focused on respect for choice for southerners, be it for unity or secession. He pledged to protect the lives and property of southern citizens in the north and stated that the government had established a billion dollar development and services initiative in South Sudan. President al-Bashir called the protection of southern citizens in the north a “direct responsibility” regardless of the referendum’s results.