

N. Bahr el Ghazal parliament on "standby" to consider proposals from north-south talks

Sunday 16 September 2012

September 13, 2012 (RUMBEEK) - The acting Governor of South Sudan's Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Madut Dut Yel, has warned the State's parliament to be on "standby" in case they have to swiftly approve proposals made as part of the post-partition talks ongoing in Addis Ababa between Sudan and South Sudan, which have a deadline of September 22. Governor Madut Dut Yel

Yel's comments, as quoted by the Majang Ngor Kuany MP, a former speaker of the State Legislative Assembly, came as he addressed the House as it prepared for a two month recess on Wednesday.

"The acting governor told us that we can go on recess but we should know that they we can be called anytime when there is an urgent matter which needs support of the house."

Northern Bahr el Ghazal lies in the north-west of South Sudan on the year-old international border between the two nations.

South Sudan and Sudan are currently negotiating over a number of post-partition issues at African Union moderated talks in Ethiopia. One of the major issues is demarcating the border and border security - both sides accuse the other of backing rebels in each other's territory.

Kuany said that Northern Bahr el Ghazal's acting Governor Madut Dut Yel has warned MPs to be on "standby" in case they have to swiftly approve proposals made as part of the talks, which have a deadline of September 22.

Failure to come to agree on a host of issues by the September 22 deadline set by the UN Security Council, could result in non-military sanctions on both sides.

"This is why we need you to go and be on standby. Be around. So you can be able to come when you are needed. There are issues we need you to help us", Kuany quoted acting Governor Madut Dut Yel as saying during his closing remarks on Wednesday.

Kuany, who currently heads the information and communications committee, did not give a specific date for when the parliament would reopen when speaking to *Sudan Tribune* on Thursday. Assemblies in the ten states of South Sudan, with some exceptions are largely used to rubber-stamp the policies of the governor and executive wing of the state government.

State parliament's meet twice or thrice a year to pass government budgets and approve cabinet changes but critics say that little is known about how the decisions made in the assemblies benefiting citizens.

In Northern Bahr el Ghazal the Assembly is dominated by MPs representing South Sudan's ruling party - the SPLM - after elections in 2010, which opposition parties said were neither free or fair and election monitors said fell below international standards.

However, representatives in Northern Bahr el Ghazal say that they have passed numerous resolutions important resolutions in the last two years, including three in the last parliamentary session.

"We have passed resolution on the settlement of those who came from Khartoum. They have now been settled in high land not in the low lying land anymore" Kuany explained, referring to the South Sudanese who arrived in the new nation after independence last year.

The Assembly has also passed a Conduct of Business for the house and a unanimous "resolution demanding removal of the Director General in the Ministry of Health because he said he did not apply for the position when he was appointed", Kuany said.

"We now consider the ministry of health has no director general", he said explaining that the house can be recalled anytime when there is an emergency.

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