

Sudans governments approve Addis Ababa deal

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September 30, 2012 (KHARTOUM/JUBA) - The cabinets of Sudan and South Sudan have approved the agreements the two countries recently signed relating to issues resulting from South Sudan's independence last year.

South Sudan's cabinet approved the deal on Saturday followed by the Sudanese Council of Ministers approving the agreement in an emergency session held on Sunday.

In Juba the South Sudanese leaders were also keen to emphasise their unanimous and unconditional endorsed proposal by African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) on the oil contested border region of Abyei and called for immediate implementation to its totality.

The issue of Abyei and other contested border regions are was the major issue not resolved by the talks that concluded with a presidential summit between Sudan's President Omer Al-Bashir and his South Sudanese counterpart Salva Kiir Mayardit in Addis Ababa.

The AUHIP propose that a UN organised referendum in October 2013 should resolve the status of the area but Khartoum wants more members of the nomadic Misseriya tribe, who enter the region with their cattle for some months each year, to be granted voting rights.

"The council has approved the agreements which the Sudanese government signed with South Sudan in Addis Ababa prior to submitting them to the Sudanese Parliament for official endorsement," Omer Mohamed Saleh, Secretary General of the Sudanese cabinet, told reporters here.

"The council has reiterated its commitment to the implementation of all the agreements to end the differences between the two countries," he said.

The two countries inked the deals on cooperation, security and post-secession, witnessed by the members of the mediation of the African Union High Implementation Panel.

The two presidents have earlier directed the two negotiating delegations to form joint mechanism to immediately embark on implementation of the signed deals following endorsement by the two countries' parliaments.

South Sudan cabinet endorses mediation proposal on Abyei

In Juba on Sunday the South Sudanese Cabinet was briefed by President Salva Kiir Mayardit and members of the negotiating team under the leadership of the Secretary General of the country's governing Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), Pagan Amum Okiech.

Members of other political parties including Sudan People's Liberation Movement for Democratic Change (SPLM-DC), the young country's official opposition were also invited to the briefing.

Speaking in an interview with *Sudan Tribune* on Saturday, Michael Makuei Lueth, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and a leading member of the negotiating team said cabinet had endorsed proposal by the mediating team to resolve the decade long dispute on Abyei.

"The president called for a briefing today with members of the cabinet and members of national legislative Assembly. Members and leaders from other political parties were also invited".

"The purpose of the meeting was to brief them on recent political developments between Republic of Sudan and the republic of South Sudan."

"You know that the two presidents have signed cooperation agreement which summarizes all the details of the discussions about post secession issues in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia" said Lueth explaining that the cabinet had unanimously endorsed the deal.

Despite criticism of the decision to move South Sudanese troops out of the dispute Mile 14 border area between the Darfur region of Sudan and Northern Bahr el Ghazal State in South Sudan, minister Lueth said that "the proposal was unanimously endorsed by all the stakeholders."

The Governor Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, Paul Malong Awan, expressed his disappointment Saturday with the Security

Arrangements of the deal which calls for the withdrawal of the armed forces of the young nation from Mile 14.

The members of parliament from the two houses and leaders from other political parties have endorsed proposal of the mediators", explained minister Lueth.

Meanwhile, Pagan Amum Okiech, a lead negotiator on behalf of the government of South Sudan said the government expects the African Union Peace and Security Council to endorse the Abyei proposal in its totality, stressing that the proposal protects the right of nomads to access water and pasture in the area.

"We have agreed to work for peace and stability of the two viable states but there are some of the issues which have not been resolved. One of the main issues is Abyei and the status of the claims and contested areas", Amum said on Saturday.

Amum, the Secretary General of the country's governing SPLM said the two sides have agreed to continue with the negotiations to resolve possible settlements within a period of one month.

"We have agreed to continue the dialogue to and focus on the way forward to resolve the other remaining issues. We have agreed to resume and continue with negotiation for one month. We will continue engaging ourselves to find last solutions", said Okiech denying that his country had conceded Panthou to Sudan.

"Panthou is one of the contested and claimed which we have agreed to resume dialogue about them. No agreement has been reached", Okiech explaining dispelling speculations circulating that mediation team had rejected demand of South Sudan to consider the area one of the claimed and contested areas.

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