

Regional News Roundup

KENYA

Kenya PM warns UN, AU over Sudan referendum Kenya is mobilising international support to avert political violence in Sudan through next year's referendum on independence for the South. In a statement on Wednesday, Prime Minister Raila Odinga warned the UN, the African Union (AU) and the USA against taking sides in the vote to determine the future of Southern Sudan. "Having done so much to advance this historic process of self-determination, it is preposterous that anyone would now seek a predetermined outcome," Mr Odinga told an international press conference. The PM's statement came after reports from the AU meeting in Addis Ababa quoted the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon vowing to 'avoid the secession of south Sudan in a referendum' though he later retracted the comments.

Read more: <http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/854704/-/vpy4cm/-/index.html>

Kenya tightens security on porous Somali border Kenya has increased security on its porous border with Somalia ahead of an expected offensive by government forces there that could prompt hardline Islamist rebels to try and cross the frontier. Al Shabaab insurgents who declared their loyalty to al Qaeda this week and want to impose a harsh version of the sharia law on the Horn of Africa state, have controlled several small towns on the Somali side of the border since last year. Fearing the threat from weapons and narcotic traffickers, as well as the heavily armed militias, Kenya officially closed its border in 2007. But it has allowed thousands of refugees from Somalia to enter the country. That, however, might change with the start of a long-promised offensive by Somali government forces against the al Shabaab rebels and other Islamist insurgent groups.

Read more: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LDE611132.htm>

Neighbours' polls raise fears over new refugee influx Kenya may witness an influx of refugees from Uganda, Southern Sudan and Somalia if experts' projections of increased political tensions in these countries come true. This could mean a strain on limited humanitarian resources, including the budget, physical holding capacities of camps and relief supplies. UN resident and humanitarian co-ordinator Aeneas Chuma said the referendum in Southern Sudan is heightening tensions, while Uganda is likely to have a hotly contested general election, joining Somalia in the list of troubled countries whose nationals have been seeking refuge in Kenya.

Read more:

<http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/-/2558/856766/-/pvqmkaz/-/index.html>

SOMALIA

Community leaders pool together to deliver water to IPDs Community leaders in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, are filling the gaps in aid distribution by raising funds to assist thousands displaced by fighting, leaders said. "For no we are addressing the most pressing problem, and that is water," a religious leader said. Their efforts are, however, not meant to replace aid agencies who were absent on the ground at present. The leaders go around Bakara market collecting donations from the business community and had set up billboards showing the poor living conditions of internally displaced persons (IDPs). "People have been amazing; even those with little contribute," one leader said.

Read more: <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88047>

Bomb survivors tend to IPDs

Survivors of the bomb blast that ripped through a graduation ceremony in Mogadishu on December 3, 2009, killing students, lecturers and guests, have now formed the Somali Young Doctor's Association (SOYDA) and have since started delivering healthcare to thousands of people who would otherwise have none. According to a member the groups visits the camps for the displaced around the capital once a week. He said, they are doing the voluntary work for three reasons: "First, it is in remembrance of our fallen friends and professors; it is also a way of telling those behind the attack that we will continue no matter what, and thirdly, our people need our help."

Read more: <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88033>

SUDAN

Southern Sudan may opt to continue oil sharing with north Southern Sudan will consider giving half its oil revenues to the Khartoum government for a limited period even if the region becomes independent next year, a senior minister has said. Luka Biong Deng, the minister of presidential affairs in the government of south Sudan, sent a conciliatory signal to Khartoum in an interview with the Financial Times. Under a peace agreement that ended the civil war between the north and south in 2005, revenues from the southern oilfields are shared equally between the two regions. But Mr Biong said the division of oil revenues could continue. The alternative - gaining independence with all the oil revenues - could trigger another civil war. By continuing to share the proceeds, the south could prevent the north's economy from suffering and avoid a dangerous flashpoint.

Read more:

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/4064d9c0-15e3-11df-b65b-00144feab49a.html?nclick_check=1

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article34078>

UGANDA

Thousands displaced by cattle-raid migrate to Kenya Around 20,000 people have been displaced by cattle-related clashes in Uganda and are now camping in open air in Pokot North District, according to the Kenya Red Cross Society. The cattle raid occurred on January 28. Reports indicate that clashes erupted when some Pokot and Kaldama herdsman raided the Karamojong community in Uganda and drove away some cattle. After the cattle raid, the Ugandan army raided Loparakoja and Kalekelia area, occupied by the Pokot and Kadama tribes in Uganda, to recover the stolen animals. This led to an exodus of women and children from Pokot and Kadama into Kenya.

Read more:

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/MGAE-82GHL8?OpenDocument&clickid>