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Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes in  
Africa



## MEDIA MONITORING

7 July 2015

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### GENERAL NEWS

#### Former congressman Perriello named U.S. special envoy to Africa Great Lakes

##### NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters World Service

Reporting by Lesley Wroughton; Editing by Will Dunham

**Washington, 6 July 2015** - Secretary of State John Kerry on Monday named former Virginia congressman Thomas Perriello as U.S. special envoy for Africa's Great Lakes region.

Perriello replaces former senator Russ Feingold, who stepped down in February. Perriello, a Democrat who worked on Kerry's 1996 Senate campaign, will help oversee U.S. policy for a region that includes Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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## BURUNDI

### Burundi's Ruling Party Considers Delay of Presidential Vote

#### NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

**7 July 2015** - Burundi's ruling CNDD-FDD party has indicated it will conditionally accept the call by East African leaders to delay the July 15 presidential election two weeks to July 30.

Party chairman Pascal Nyabenda said any decision to delay the vote must ensure that the constitution, which mandates that presidential elections cannot go beyond July 26, is not violated. The constitution also states that the president-elect must be sworn in by August 26.

Leaders of the East African Community, who met Monday in Tanzania, also named Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni to mediate a dialogue between the Burundian government and the opposition.

The decision came after the ruling party told U.N. mediator Abdoulaye Bathily to stop his work because he began without first being received by the government.

"It has been taken a decision to delay this presidential election, but what we can say in our party is that everything we have to do, even if we respect the decision by these heads of state, we have to respect also our constitution. So, we will see. We will sit down and see what can be done by respecting our constitution," he said.

Nyabenda commented on the constitutional mandate that the presidential election cannot go beyond July 26.

"It says that the presidential election can't be beyond 26 July because 26 July will be the last date which is mentioned in our constitution, because from there it is one month at the end of the term of the actual president, which means that we can't go beyond [July 26]. If they talk about 30th July, it would mean that we will go beyond that date," he said.

Nyabenda said the ruling CNDD-FDD is also ready to work with Uganda President Museveni's mediation efforts.

"He is a wise man who knows very well what is happening in Burundi. He knows very well Burundians. We hope that he will do well," he said.

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The opposition said President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term violates the constitution and the 2005 Arusha Accord that ended the country's civil war.

Nkurunziza said the election will be his second term because, when he was first elected in 2005, he was elected by parliament, not the people.

Meanwhile, the general who staged a May 13 failed coup announced Monday that he and others will launch an armed resistance to force Nkurunziza to drop his bid for a third term. General Leonard Ngendakumana said Nkurunziza is trying to drag Burundi into a civil war.

Nyabenda said Ngendakumana failed the first time and he will never succeed because the Burundian people are unified behind the president.

"He failed on 13th May, he can't succeed this time. Our population is very determined to fight [for] the country," Nyabenda said.

## **Burundi leader campaigns as region calls for poll delay**

### **NEWS STORY**

Source: AFP

By Ephrem Rugiririza

**6 July 2015** - Burundi's embattled president skipped key regional talks Monday to campaign for a controversial third term amid renewed rebel threats and international calls to delay the vote.

The crisis in the central African nation revolves around President Pierre Nkurunziza's third-term bid, which his opponents say is unconstitutional and violates a peace deal that brought an end to a dozen years of civil war in 2006.

Leaders of the five-nation East African Community (EAC) had been due to meet Monday in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, but Nkurunziza instead sent his foreign minister.

Kenya and Rwanda were also represented at the ministerial level, leaving host Jakaya Kikwete and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni the only presidents in attendance.

The bloc called for elections to be delayed by two weeks, from July 15 to July 30.

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EAC Secretary General Richard Sezibera said Museveni would now lead regional efforts to strike a deal after weeks of unrest, and a delay would allow him time "to lead the dialogue".

Nkurunziza has previously dismissed all previous calls for postponements, but Foreign Minister Alain Aime Nyamitwe said the EAC request would be referred to "highest authority."

The EAC said it would deploy observers for the polls and called on Burundi to disarm armed groups, including the Imbonerakure, or youth wing of Nkurunziza's ruling CNDD-FDD party.

It urged Burundi's rival factions to bury the hatchet and form a government of national unity "irrespective of whoever wins the presidential election."

**- 'Widespread fear' -**

Meanwhile rebel General Leonard Ngendakumana, who took part in a failed coup in May, vowed to carry out further attacks until the government is overthrown.

"After we saw that we could not succeed our coup on May 15, we found it was necessary to keep fighting," Ngendakumana told Kenya's KTN news channel in an interview aired late Sunday.

"All those actions that are going on in the country, we are behind them and we are going to intensify them until Pierre Nkurunziza understands that we are there to make him understand by force that he has to give up his third term."

General Ngendakumana, a top intelligence officer, is an ally of coup leader General Godefroid Niyombare, who has been on the run since their attempt to seize power was thwarted.

Over 70 people have been killed in more than two months of protests, with almost 144,000 refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries.

"They are trying to move towards an open civil war just to find a way to protect themselves," Ngendakumana said.

Parliamentary and local elections held last Monday were boycotted by the opposition.

The UN electoral observer mission said the polls took place "in a climate of widespread fear and intimidation". The results are yet to be released.

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There is apprehension that the current crisis could plunge the impoverished, landlocked country back into civil war.

During an EAC summit on May 13, army officers staged a failed bid to unseat Nkurunziza while the president himself attended the talks. Nkurunziza did not attend a second summit on May 31.

## **Burundi coup general says force only way to oust president**

### NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

**6 July 2015** - A Burundian general who backed a failed coup in May threatened that he and others would launch an armed resistance after President Pierre Nkurunziza refused to bow to opposition and international demands to abandon a bid for a third term.

General Leonard Ngendakumana, a deputy to the leader of the aborted uprising, accused the president of dragging the central African country back into civil war, comments that will alarm a region with a long history of ethnic conflict.

"The next (step) is to organise ourselves just to resist, to make Pierre Nkurunziza understand that he must leave and then that we are prepared to do it by force, by organising a military force," Ngendakumana said, adding coup leader General Godefroid Niyombare was still in Burundi.

The government told Reuters that any such move would be confronted. "Anybody threatening the security of Burundi, either inside or outside, will meet the full force of our defence and security forces," presidential spokesman Gervais Abayeho said.

Opponents say Nkurunziza's bid for a third term - which triggered weeks of violent clashes between protesters and police in Burundi's capital - violates a two-term limit in the constitution and a peace deal that ended an ethnically charged civil conflict in 2005.

Nkurunziza says a court ruling allows him to stand in the vote scheduled for July 15.

The general's interview with Kenya's KTN channel was recorded on Sunday, before Monday's meeting in Dar es Salaam of east African states plus South Africa as they seek to end the crisis.

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"They (Burundi's government) want to engage the region in that civil war, based on ethnic (issues)," Ngendakumana said. "They want to start by breaking the constitution, by breaking the Arusha reconciliation and peace agreement."

The Arusha accords ended a 12-year conflict that pitted rebel groups of the majority Hutus, including one led by Nkurunziza, against minority Tutsis, which commanded the army at the time. The army and other institutions are now mixed.

He said followers of the coup leaders were behind a spate of grenade attacks, which often targeted police, in the run up to a parliamentary election on June 26. "We are behind them, and our intent is to intensify," he said when asked about the incidents.

U.N. observers said the June vote was not free or fair, and charged the authorities dismissed. The opposition has said it will boycott all the polls.

## **Burundi government kicks out UN mediator as regional presidents meet over crisis; Nkurunziza skips talks**

### NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

**6 July 2015** - BURUNDI'S ruling party and its allies on Sunday told a United Nations mediator to step down, just two weeks after he was sent to help resolve the central African nation's political crisis.

This came as Burundi's president skipped regional talks Monday aimed at brokering a deal to end weeks of unrest in the country, choosing instead to campaign for his controversial third term.

Senegal's Abdoulaye Bathily was told to "resign from his post because he seriously lacked respect for the country's sovereignty," a spokesman for the ruling CNDD-FDD party, Gelase-Daniel Ndabirabe, told news agency AFP.

Bathily was sent to Burundi last month to replace UN mediator Said Djinnit, an Algerian diplomat, who quit after being branded as too pro-government by civil society activists.

According to Ndabirabe, the new envoy angered the government side by allegedly having failed to present himself to the authorities, including President Pierre Nkurunziza, and to have instead focused on meeting diplomats and the opposition.

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Another party allied to the CNDD-FDD also complained of what it said was an “international conspiracy” in support of the opposition and civil society groups, who have been behind weeks of deadly protests in the country.

The crisis in Burundi surrounds President Nkurunziza’s bid to stand for a third consecutive five-year term in office, a move branded by opponents as unconstitutional and a violation of a peace deal that brought an end to years of civil war.

More than 70 people have been killed in more than two months of protests and a failed coup attempt, with almost 144,000 refugees fleeing into neighbouring nations.

There are fears the current crisis could plunge the impoverished, landlocked country back into civil war.

Parliamentary and local elections were held on Monday despite an appeal by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to postpone the polls after months of turmoil.

The UN electoral observer mission said the elections took place “in a tense political crisis, and a climate of widespread fear and intimidation”, which also angered the government.

**Increased pressure**

The results of the parliamentary polls have yet to be released, but former colonial power Belgium has said it will not recognise the outcome and the United States has also ratcheted up pressure, calling for presidential elections on July 15 to be delayed.

Members of the East African Community—which groups Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda—are discussing the crisis in Tanzania’s economic capital Dar es Salaam on Monday, where two regional summits on the crisis have already been held.

During the first summit on May 13, a general staged a failed bid to unseat Nkurunziza while the president himself attended the talks.

Nkurunziza did not attend the second summit on May 31, and as expected skipped Monday’s summit.

“President Pierre Nkurunziza will not attend the summit,” said spokesman Gervais Abahiro, adding that Foreign Minister Alain Aime-Nyamitwe would take his place.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam on the eve of the summit, Nkurunziza’s head of communications Willy Nyamitwe urged the international community, and particularly former colonial power Belgium, to respect the results of the polls.

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“The elections in Burundi were a vote of the people, who are sovereign. It is not for the Belgian people or government to dictate what the Burundian people should do,” he said.

“Burundi wants to have good relations with all its partners but it is not for these partners to not show mutual respect,” he added.

## East African bloc demands Burundi delay polls

### NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

**6 July 2015** - East African leaders on Monday demanded Burundi delay a controversial presidential election by two weeks until July 30, after weeks of unrest and parliamentary polls internationally condemned for not being free and fair.

President Pierre Nkurunziza, who skipped the East African Community (EAC) summit in Tanzania to campaign for a third five-year term in office, has repeatedly rejected international criticism and calls for delays. The presidential vote is due on July 15.

EAC Secretary General Richard Sezibera said Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni would now lead regional efforts to strike a deal, and that a delay would allow him time "to lead the dialogue".

The crisis in the central African nation revolves around Nkurunziza's third-term bid, which his opponents have called unconstitutional and a violation of a peace deal that brought an end to a dozen years of civil war in 2006.

Leaders of the five-nation East African Community had been due to meet on Monday in Dar es Salaam, but Nkurunziza instead sent his foreign minister. Kenya and Rwanda were also represented at the ministerial level, leaving host Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania and Museveni the only presidents in attendance.

Nkurunziza, who stayed in Burundi to lead his presidential campaign, has previously dismissed all previous calls for poll delays.

The EAC, which said it would deploy election observers for the polls, also called on Burundi to disarm the youth wing of Nkurunziza's ruling CNDD-FDD party - the Imbonerakure - as well as "other armed groups."

It also called for unity among Burundi's rival factions, calling for a government of national unity "irrespective of whoever wins the presidential election."

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Parliamentary and local elections held last week were boycotted by the opposition.

The UN electoral observer mission - the only international monitors at the June 29 elections - said the polls took place "in a climate of widespread fear and intimidation". The results have yet to be released.

Over 70 people have been killed in more than two months of protests in Burundi, with almost 144 000 refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries.

## **East Africa: EAC Ministers in 'Difficult' Meeting Over Burundi**

### NEWS STORY

Source: Tanzania Daily News

**6 July 2015** - Ministers responsible for East African Community (EAC) affairs held an emergency meeting in Dar es Salaam to discuss two reports on the political situation in Burundi.

The meeting, chaired by East African Cooperation Minister Dr Harrison Mwakyembe was presented with the two reports on implementation of directives and recommendations made by the EAC Heads of State during their summit on May 31.

The first report was from the joint facilitation committee comprising of members of the international Great Lakes Region (IGLR), eminent persons, representatives from the United Nations and the African Union.

The second report was from the EAC ministerial delegation, which met for a oneday working visit in Burundi to discuss with authorities there on the implementation of the EAC Heads of State directives and recommendations.

The reports were discussed in camera, with the chairperson promising "to brief journalists within two hours" on what has been agreed on an agenda that will be presented to the Heads of State in their Extraordinary Summit in Dar es Salaam today. However, by around 5.15 pm, the high level delegations had not reached a consensus.

Dr Mwakyembe told journalists that things were not going to end as quickly as he had earlier thought. "I cannot promise anything right now because things are not easy inside there; we don't know what time we will finish," he told journalists who were waiting for the final briefing.

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Earlier in his opening remarks, the EAC Secretary General, Dr Richard Sezibera, said the meeting has come at an opportune time for further recommendations for the people of Burundi.

In less than a fortnight, Burundi is expecting to hold presidential elections. Parliamentary and local elections were held on June 29, this year despite an appeal by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon for a postponement after months of turmoil.

The European Union (EU), a major donor to the aid-reliant country, has threatened to withhold funds after Burundi ignored UN and African calls for a postponement of the parliamentary vote and presidential election.

The UN electoral observer mission said in a report that the elections took place "in a tense political crisis and a climate of widespread fear and intimidation in parts of the country".

## UGANDA

### Fugitive African Warlord Joseph Kony Is Said to Be Sickly

#### NEWS STORY

Source: New York Times

**6 July 2015** - The fugitive leader of the Lord's Resistance Army is sickly and in retreat from an international manhunt that includes U.S. forces, a Ugandan military spokesman said Monday, citing the accounts of recent defectors who are backing up reports that the rebel group is in decline.

Joseph Kony is possibly suffering from diabetes, according to defectors who surrendered to Ugandan troops last month in Central African Republic, said Lt. Col. Paddy Ankunda. That account is probably true, he said, because Ugandan intelligence over the years "also indicates that Kony has diabetes."

Kasper Agger, a researcher with the watchdog group Enough Project, said he receives many reports of Kony's failing health but it is impossible to independently verify them. The reports from defectors suggest that the apparently ill Kony "doesn't have the same willingness to fight," he said.

Although many of the defectors said Kony is suffering from diabetes, some also suggested the elusive warlord has AIDS, he said.

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Kony is believed to be hiding in Kafia Kingi, a Sudanese-controlled enclave on the border of Central African Republic and South Sudan. Watchdog groups have described Kafia Kingi as a safe haven for Kony because African troops hunting for him do not have access to the territory.

The Lord's Resistance Army, which originated in Uganda in the 1980s as a tribal uprising against the government, became notorious for kidnapping children as fighters and forcing girls to be sex slaves. Kony became infamous across the world in 2012 when the advocacy group Invisible Children released an online video that highlighted his alleged crimes.

The group is reportedly in decline, with many of its fighters surrendering or dying in firefights with African troops across Central Africa.

About 100 U.S. military advisers are helping Ugandan and Congolese troops to hunt down the rebels.

## SOUTH SUDAN

### South Sudan army retakes town from Rebels

#### NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

**6 July 2015** - South Sudan's army said on Monday it had retaken the strategic northeastern town of Malakal from rebels, the latest time the ruined state capital has swapped hands.

Rebels led by ex-government general Johnson Olony -- accused by aid agencies of forcibly recruiting hundreds of child soldiers -- seized Malakal, the state capital of Upper Nile, in late June.

The town is the gateway to the country's last remaining major oil fields and has been repeatedly fought over during the 18-month long conflict.

The army late Sunday launched an assault to retake the town.

"The rebels fled to different directions," army spokesman Philip Aguer told AFP Monday, saying the government was in "full control."

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South Sudan's civil war began in December 2013 when President Salva Kiir accused his former deputy Riek Machar of planning a coup, setting off a cycle of retaliatory killings across the country that has split the poverty-stricken, landlocked country along ethnic lines.

Aguer also dismissed the rebel's claims to have shot down a helicopter gunship on Sunday as a "fabrication."

Thousands of Ugandan troops backed by helicopter gunships are fighting for Kiir.

Ugandan airforce spokesman Kiconco Tabaro said the rebels were "daydreaming" and no aircraft had been hit. "None has been shot at unless the rebels shot a ghost aircraft," Tabaro said.

Four years after South Sudan won its independence from Sudan, two-thirds of the country's 12 million people need aid, according to the U.N., and one-sixth have fled their homes.

A U.N. report last week described horrific violence, with witnesses saying the army gang-raped girls and torched them alive in huts.

## **South Sudanese rebels claim to have shot down Ugandan helicopter**

### NEWS STORY

Source: DPA

**Juba, 6 July 2015** - South Sudanese rebels said on Monday they had shot down a Ugandan military helicopter fighting on the government side, killing the two pilots and the entire crew.

The statement by rebel spokesperson Dickson Gatluak did not give the number of those on board.

The rebels said the helicopter was downed early on Monday in Kodok near the northern oil town of Malakal, which has seen an upsurge in fighting in recent weeks.

South Sudanese army spokesperson Philip Aguer denied that a helicopter had been shot down, but admitted that Kodok was under rebel control.

Joseph Contreras, a spokesman for the United Nations mission in South Sudan, said he did not yet have information on the alleged incident.

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Uganda has thousands of troops in South Sudan helping President Salva Kiir fight the rebels headed by his long-time political rival and former deputy, Riek Machar.

Rebels have previously claimed to have shot down Ugandan helicopters, but the claims have not been confirmed.

South Sudan is an important business partner for neighbouring Uganda, but thousands of Ugandans had to be evacuated from the country after the military conflict broke out in December 2013.

The conflict has killed tens of thousands and displaced about two million people.

## **Suspected rebels attack S. Sudan-Uganda border town, injure one**

### NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

**6 July 2015** - policeman was injured and three cargo trucks set ablaze when suspected rebels attacked a South-Sudan Uganda border town Sunday, officials said.

Emillio Igga, the chief administrator of Pageri administrative area under which Nimule town falls, said gunmen loyal to Martin Kenyi carried out the attack.

"These are rebels of Martin Kenyi are trying to destabilise Nimule," Igga said Monday.

Kenyi, who deserted the South Sudanese army last year currently commands a rebel group in South Sudan's Eastern Equatoria state.

The shootings in Nimule town reportedly started at about 1:30am [local time].

"Firing from AK47 riffles started in Rock City, a suburb of Nimule followed by a loud explosion. A check point manned by South Sudan customs police came under attack shortly at 2:00am as a policeman was injured and three trucks set ablaze," said Igga.

He, however, said no civilian was injured during the three-hour gun milee at Nimule.

"I was fast asleep and was awakened by the loud explosions," Mary Kedi, a resident of Rock city, a Nimule suburb, told Sudan Tribune Monday.

"My neighbors were calling and children began crying. We were thinking of fleeing to Malakiya but gunshots came from there too and we were now confused," she added.

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A spokesperson for armed opposition leader, James Gatdet Dak said forces loyal to Kenyi pre-empted a pro-government army attack on its base in Eastern Equatoria state.

Nimule is the leading gateway to South Sudan from Uganda and, hitherto, accounts for about 3million South Sudanese Pound (SSP) in revenues collected as custom duty daily.

Meanwhile, dozens of trucks carrying soldiers arrived at the South Sudan-Uganda border town and took positions at strategic locations, including the airport on Sunday.

## SUDAN

### Hacking Team sold spy software to blacklisted Sudan and 'stonewalled UN investigation'

#### NEWS STORY

Source: International Business Times

**6 July 2015** - An Italian Company providing surveillance systems to governments and law enforcement agencies has been providing cyberweapons to Sudan and stonewalling a UN investigation into their business, according to a massive leak of information stolen from the company by hackers.

Unknown hackers dumped a Torrent file with 400GB of internal documents, emails and source code belonging to Milan-based Hacking Team, which has been offering its intrusive technology to governments for almost a decade.

The company is listed by Reporters without Borders on its Enemies of the Internet index for its alleged sale of cybertools to repressive regimes which are known for illegally monitoring activists.

Hacking Team has categorically denied these charges and claimed they have never done business with Sudan, which is subject to EU restrictive measures that include an arms embargo.

However, a leaked spreadsheet lists Russia and Sudan among the countries "not officially supported".

Moreover, a subsequent invoice for €480,000 dated July 2012 seems to prove that the Italian company was involved in selling surveillance software to Sudan.

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The sale of the cyberweapons to Sudan is one of the most controversial revelations from the data dump, as the United Nations has been investigating a report by Citizen Lab that Hacking Team's tools were being used in the country.

Christopher Soghoian from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) said that the documents show that Hacking Team has been "stonewalling" the one-year long UN investigation and told the investigators that it doesn't have a business relationship with the Sudanese government.

Another leaked email dated 10 March 2015 shows the official reply of the Italian ambassador to the UN in New York, Sebastiano Cardi, telling the United Nations that Hacking Team "currently has no business relations or any agreements that would allow the Sudan or any entity in its territory to use the [Remote Control] software".

Human Rights Watch reported that Sudanese authorities have used excessive violence against protesters resulting in their deaths. More than 170 people were killed in 2013.

A UN arms embargo on Sudan, which is incorporated into EU and UK law, bans the export of "arms and related material" to the the country. The Sudan embargo also prohibits technical assistance, brokering services and other military-related services.

Hacking Team has yet to comment on the leak publicly or respond to a request for comment from IBTimes UK.

## **Sudan: 'Sudan's National Dialogue to Commence After Ramadan' – NCP**

### NEWS STORY

Source: Radio Dabanga

**6 July 2015** - The ruling National Congress Party (NCP) has presented new proposals to accelerate the national dialogue process, as proposed by President Al Bashir in January 2014 to resolve the crises in the country.

Mustafa Osman Ismail, head of the NCP Political Bureau, told the government-linked Sudan Media Center (SMC) on Saturday that his party would soon submit those proposals to the dialogue coordinating committee, known as the 7+7 mechanism, without elaborating on the contents, Sudan Tribune reported on Saturday.

The NCP leadership has approved the proposals and requested to turn them into a work programme that will accommodate all political parties participating in the dialogue, which is planned, Ismail said, to be resumed after Ramadan.

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He repeated his party's stance that all political forces are welcome to participate in the dialogue including the rebel movements, but stressed the NCP's refusal to hold the dialogue outside Sudan.

All opposition parties, however, stress that a conducive environment should be created before the launch of a broad national dialogue, by restoration of civic freedoms, the ending of the wars in the country, and the release of political detainees and prisoners.

The National Umma Party, headed by El Sadig El Mahdi, and the Reform Now Movement (RNM), established by NCP dissident Ghazi Salaheldin El Atabani in December 2013, suspended their participation in the dialogue process last year, stating that the ruling party is not serious about reaching peace and implementing democratic reforms.

**Opposition**

The NCP declined to participate in a pre-dialogue meeting called for by the AU mediation team, the AU High-level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) in Addis Ababa on 29 March, together with the opposition forces allied by the Sudan Appeal. The ruling party argued that any meeting on the dialogue should take place within the country, and that the timing was not appropriate, as the election would start two weeks later.

The opposition forces, represented by the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF, an alliance of the main rebel movements), the National Umma Party (NUP), the National Consensus Forces (NCF, a coalition of opposition parties), and the Civil society Initiative (CSI) signed the Sudan Appeal document in the Ethiopian capital on 3 December last year, in which they refuse separate peace talks on Darfur and the Two Areas (South Kordofan and Blue Nile states), a process Khartoum is insisting on.

The two-page political communiqué further calls for the dismantling of the one-party system and the rebuilding of Sudan based on democratic principles and equal citizenship. The signatories agreed that if a peaceful regime-change cannot be achieved by a broad national dialogue, it should be enforced by a popular uprising.

NCF leader Faroug Abu Eisa, and CSI chairman Dr Amin Mekki Madani were detained by security officers in Khartoum on 6 December, a day after their return from Addis Ababa. They were charged of instigating violence against the state and violating the Constitution, but were suddenly released on 9 March, a month before the general election would commence.

During the last week of February, the Sudan Appeal signatories met in the German capital, where they agreed on a joint position paper that became known as the Berlin

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Declaration, on the contents, place and time of a preparatory National Dialogue meeting that, they stressed, should be facilitated by the AUHIP.

The Sudan Appeal forces continued lobbying among members of the international community. On 9 June, a delegation of the Sudanese opposition briefed EU legislators in Strasbourg on the situation in Sudan, calling for support to realise peace in the war-torn country.

**Comprehensive dialogue process**

In the EU parliamentary hearing entitled "Sudan's recent election and peace perspectives", Malik Agar, SRF chairman and El Sadig El Mahdi, head of the NUP, called for support of the development of a new, inclusive and comprehensive peace and dialogue process, to be brokered by the AUHIP, headed by former South-African President Thabo Mbeki.

During a meeting with international Special Envoys to Sudan in Paris on 10 June, the opposition forces stressed the importance of adopting a nationwide basis for the Sudanese peace talks.

The bases for the past peace negotiations are no longer appropriate, regarding the developments in Sudan, NUP leader El Sadig El Mahdi told Radio Dabanga at the time.

"The proposed new mandate for a broad national dialogue should replace the 2011 Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and the peace negotiations on South Kordofan and the Blue Nile," he said. "It should be filed to the UN Security Council, to be adopted under Chapter VII, as a substitute for the separate peace talks Khartoum continues to insist on.

"This is the only way," El Mahdi stressed, "to compel the Sudanese government to return to the negotiating table. The arrogant Khartoum regime will only respond to calls for a dialogue after being pressured, both by the international community and a strong internal unity."