



UNITED NATIONS ADVANCE MISSION IN SUDAN  
UNAMIS

**Date: 9 March 2005**

Office of the Spokesperson  
PRESS BRIEFING

Following is a near-verbatim transcript of today's weekly briefing (12:30PM) by Leon Willems, Acting Spokesperson for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan:

**SRSG**

- The UNAMIS SRSG, Jan Pronk returned last evening from Asmara where he met with president Afewerki of Eritrea and representatives of the rebel movements of Darfur. Discussions with the Darfur rebel groups were fruitful. No dates were mentioned for the resumption of the Darfur talks but no blockages were raised. Dr. Khalil, the JEM leader was in the meeting which enjoyed a good atmosphere. UNAMIS strongly encourages resuming the peace talks.
- SRSG Pronk and DSRSG Zerihoun also met with representatives of the Beja congress and the Free Lions. It was a good meeting and the participants were very articulate and measured in their response. Their feeling is that they have been neglected in any peace process so far. They want to see a genuine effort dedicated to East Sudan. The UN was asked to offer their good offices to probe the readiness of the Government of Sudan.
- March 3 SRSG Pronk made a field visit to Shikan and El Fateh squatter areas around Khartoum last Thursday. He spoke with some of the IDPs who have been affected by demolitions and re-zoning policies which have moved 85% of the former population of Shikan to a new location in El Fateh - a desert area 38 km north of Omdurman with no basic facilities. An estimated 2,000 families were loaded onto trucks and removed under this policy. The remaining inhabitants of Shikan were permitted to stay and promised new plots. SRSG Pronk was briefed on the complete lack of assistance for IDPs in El Fateh and spoke with several families. The case load of IDPs in and around Khartoum exceeds 1 million individuals. The SRSG said the United Nations

will include the IDPs in and around Khartoum in a policy of return and resettlement, now that the peace agreement between the North and South has been ratified.

- In connection with International Women's Day (8 Mar), the humanitarian organisation, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), released a briefing paper on rape and sexual abuse in Darfur entitled, *The Crushing Burden of Rape: Sexual Violence in Darfur*. Upon receiving a copy of the paper, SRSG Pronk issued the following statement:  
"A copy of the MSF report *The Crushing Burden of Rape: Sexual violence in Darfur* has been shared with the United Nations in Sudan. I am concerned about the findings of the report. These findings are consistent with the reports from UN Human Rights Observers and UN Humanitarian Agencies in Darfur.  
I will give a very high priority to this issue and will continue to work with UN agencies and other partners, including MSF, in addressing this evil, this phenomenon of rape. This report is an opportunity for the Government of Sudan to reaffirm its commitment to end impunity with regard to these severe cases of rape and sexual abuse."

### **Security Issues**

- The security situation in February was better than in January and the first week of March seems to follow that pattern. It is too early to speak of a trend and many concerns remain such as the abduction of relief workers and attacks on NGO and commercial vehicles.

### **Protection issues**

- The protection working group is meeting regularly with the AU to discuss the security of women while they venture to collect firewood. Similar interventions are ongoing in North Darfur and in eastern West Darfur, where AU monitors have set up timetables to monitor and patrol IDP gatherings and in some cases, accompany the women during their trips out of the camps.

### **Food/NFI's**

- North Darfur: A general food distribution to the approximately 89,000 IDPs registered in Abu Shouk camp commenced on 3 Mar. The process, which was planned to start last week, was delayed following disruptions by some groups who were believed to be living in El Fasher but were requesting assistance in Abu Shouk. WFP is further investigating the matter.
- The Darfur-wide IDP registration exercise spearheaded by WFP and IOM commenced in Kutum town and Kutum rural on 1 Mar. The exercise was conducted by German Agro Action (GAA), providing tokens to approximately 85,000 persons. The agency plans to proceed to Dissa and adjacent areas to

conduct a similar exercise. Agencies hope that this registration exercise would improve the targeting of the current beneficiaries and give a more accurate estimate on the number of conflict-affected persons.

#### **Health**

- Polio: There were 10 confirmed cases of Polio virus in the week 28 February – 3 March, 2 of these cases were in the South. The total number of confirmed polio cases for 2005 is now 16 cases 2005 (13 in the north and 3 in the south). The number for 2004 was 126. The number of infected states is still 18. *Unicef* reports that the 2nd polio National Immunization Days held 27-28 Feb-1 March indicate high coverage and high social mobilization. A coordination meeting for North-South Sudan will be held in Nairobi on 17-18 March to identify remaining gap areas.

#### **General**

- Women's Week launched at Ahfad University with UNICEF under the theme of "women, education and culture." This is part of the ongoing strategy, within the UN Girls Education Initiative, to boost the enrolment of girls in school throughout Sudan.
- A team from WFP has been in Abyei since 17 Feb. to carry out the feasibility of opening a sub-office in Abyei. The agency plans to erect a storage facility to preposition food and identify food for recovery projects, general food distribution, supplementary and therapeutic feeding.
- The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations is dispatching a UN team to join an African Union-led assessment of peacekeeping requirements in Darfur. This team will include experts in military and police planning, logistics and humanitarian assistance. They will make an assessment, as a matter of urgency, to determine what more is needed in order to improve the security environment in Darfur. The Secretary-General, as you'll recall, mentioned this mission in his statement issued following his meeting with Security Council members on Sudan yesterday.

#### **USG Egeland visit**

- The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland completed a four-day tour of Sudan. Dawn Blalock from OCHA is here to take any questions you may have concerning Mr. Egeland's visit and his statements.

#### **Spokesperson – OCHA**

- Mr. Egeland visited Rumbek in South Sudan and areas to which internally displaced people are returning. He also travelled to South Darfur and Khartoum. This was his second trip to Sudan since July 2004.
- In Rumbek, Mr. Egeland met with the SPLM/A authorities, encouraging them to respect the implementation deadlines of the Peace Agreement and to form a

stronger partnership with humanitarian actors. He also met with NGOs and UN agencies working on the ground who have been struggling to implement programmes with limited capacity and limited funds. Mr Egeland encouraged NGOs and UN agencies to undertake a massive and immediate increase of programmes in the South, and he called on donors to step up to the plate with funding.

- In South Darfur, the USG met with SLA authorities in Muhajariya to address issues of concern to the humanitarian community, such as the abduction of relief workers and attacks on NGO and commercial vehicles. He also visited Labado, the site where civilians were attacked in Dec. and met with the AU force now protecting the area. Mr. Egeland was very impressed with the job the AU was doing and but more of them need to be on the ground. He will advocate for an increase in their numbers.
- While in Darfur, Mr. Egeland also visited the IDP camps of Al Sureif and Kalma, where there have been notable improvements in the status of the inhabitants, particularly in terms of health and malnutrition. However, conditions outside the camps, particularly in terms of security and protection, remain a high concern. Many of the IDPs he spoke with do not intend on returning home yet because of security concerns.

**Q:** The rebel groups have released statements yesterday saying that they are going to be withdrawing from the Ceasefire Commission. They have stopped working with the Ceasefire Commission in Darfur from Saturday. What is the UN position on this and what are they doing to try to bring them back?

Also JEM this morning released a statement saying that they will not be going back to the Abuja talks until those 51 named suspects are taken to the ICC. What is the UN position on that?

#### **Spokesperson UNAMIS**

**A:** Well, first of all, those concerns were not raised by the rebel groups during the meetings but the UN position concerning the ICC, as far as the Mission is concerned, is that this is a decision that has to be taken by the Security Council in New York. Those are the documents and we think that it is urgently needed that we get some clarity from New York. The International Commission of Inquiry was issued by the Security Council of the United Nations and not by the UN mission in Sudan.

**Q:** Do you have any information about what the UN is doing in regard to the situation in Darfur?

**A:** Well as you know, Secretary-General Koffi Annan, on Monday, also issued statements raising these concerns with the Security Council saying that we need urgent action to get progress done in Darfur and he thinks that it is urgent which is why he thinks and asks for them to get a resolution this week and we are actually waiting for that to happen.

**Q:** Is there any mediation going on between the Darfur rebels and the GoS?

**A:** As always in these matters, it is exactly the purpose of Pronk's visit to all these people to identify blockages and see what he can do and offer his good offices to smoothen things up and try to get people back on track.

Of course, as I said, UNAMIS has always been a strong supporter for the resumption of Abuja talks. I would like to stress however that the meetings in Asmara were very positive and the rebel movements seem to be ready to come back to the negotiation table. That they want some clarity as to the outstanding issues which the Security Council needs to resolve is understandable. That is why no dates have been mentioned as a result of the talks. We are hoping of course – the government has declared many times that it is willing to resume the talks; the rebels now say that they are ready to resume the talks – we hope that those things can get off the ground and get going.

**Q:** About 20% of the period prescribed for the pre-interim period has elapsed; to date no practical steps have been taken to implement the peace agreement; the UN mandate has not yet been given; what is the UN role on vis-à-vis that?

**A:** Yes, you are very right. This is our main concern at the moment. All of us here are ready to roll out and start working but we need a mandate. That is exactly the reason why Secretary-General Annan went public on Monday to express urgency to the Security Council. We need a mandate, we need to start working and this is our major concern.

As to your reference to the 20% of the pre-interim period gone, of course you have to understand that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement is an agreement between the Government of Sudan and the SPLM. We are concerned that some of the implementation dates have not been met. We understand that the peace agreement itself is a very complex issue. We are still convinced, talking to the partners, that everybody is intent to follow up and to hold the peace. So we are not afraid, at this stage, that the peace is losing momentum but we would strongly advise the partners to get their act together just like we need to get our act together in New York and we need a mandate and I think that if the mandate is passed, then that will be also a very promising sign also for the partners in the peace process to start working meeting the implementation dates.

**Q:** The meeting of the AU in Addis Ababa has not reached any agreement on the trial of the 51 suspects. Do you have any coordination with the AU as it is responsible on that?

**A:** Again, I would like to reiterate the International Commission of Inquiry was issued by the Security Council of the UN. So it is not the AU's job or the UN's job to follow up on this matter. This Commission of Inquiry has submitted a report to the Security Council and the Security Council will at some stage take appropriate action.

As to the reference of the 51 people, names that are in the closed envelope, we have no information on that, nor our mission nor the AU can act on that. It is really the Security Council's role to decide what they want to do with the follow up of this report

**Q:** I was in Rumbek at the same time Mr. Jan Egeland spoke to the SPLM. Is it your impression that all disagreements between the UN and the SPLM about the make-up and size of the mission have been resolved? And do you have something on that?

**A:** The thing is we are really waiting for the mandate. I don't know exactly what disagreement you are referring to.

**Q:** The SPLM rejected a number of countries who are going to be participating. I understand that a couple has been struck off -- Malaysia and Jordan -- have been struck off. And a couple has been approved by the SPLM.

There is also the question of the number -- the SPLM was saying 10,000 were too many ...?

**A:** I don't have any information at this point that the SPLM is strongly objecting. We are not aware of any reason why the SPLM at this stage should be having disagreements with the mission. I don't have any information at this point.

**Q:** But it should have been resolved?

**A:** We think it is.

**Q:** My second question is that when you are talking about the mission of 10,000 that costs about approximately 1 billion US dollars. Why is it automatic that that money will be provided by the UN and yet all the money for development in South Sudan which so far hasn't been coming in has to be sweated over and begged -- why isn't that money automatic?

**A:** To tell you the truth, I am not familiar with the budgetary differences between the two sources of money. So I have to get back to you on that.

Peacekeeping operations, when approved by the Security Council will also, as far as I know -- but I think I have to get back to you on that because I am not really that sure -- that also that money has to be raised by the countries. But there seems to be like an automatic rule. As for the 500 million that is needed, it is not for nothing. Again and again, during the past week, all UN representatives -- Mr. Koffi Annan, Mr. Egeland, Mr. Pronk -- had reiterated the urgent need for money to be pledged by donors because we are seeing thousands and thousand of returnees, spontaneous returnees, as Mr. Egeland was saying, staking their lives on this peace to hold. We should have more forthcoming.

**Q:** Do you not think it will be a better investment in peace, rather than to spend that money on foreign peacekeepers coming in -- I mean if it is going to break down it will break down -- don't you think the money will be better spent on for instance schools in the south and all that?

**A:** I am not sure if you are aware of some of the tensions and the security issues that have been going on in the south over the last weeks. Surely you can not build schools if there is tension that will result in people breaking the schools again.

**Q:** Why is that money just automatic for the peacekeepers for the UN's big operation, why is it going to be taking the rest of the other money?

**A:** It is certainly not arguing. We think that the robust peacekeeping operation is needed because of all the security and tension issues that are at stake in the south. Between the south, in the South-South Dialogue, things are flaring up. That's why we need these people on the ground to remove and observe and make sure that the peace holds. This is something that the partners under the peace agreement themselves have asked for. I don't exactly know why you are pointing at us now saying, 'well what do you do as peacekeepers anyway?' We were asked to operate a huge peacekeeping operation in Sudan and we are implementing that. At the same time, I fully agree with you and I think that OCHA is with me on this, we need more money coming in.

### **Spokesperson – OCHA**

There are two things to that. One is: yes, it is a one billion dollar bill to foot for the peacekeeping operation. We need to get back on that but I am pretty sure that is extra-budgetary and it has to be funded from the governments just like the Work Plan for Sudan which is an estimate of 1.5 billion dollars – that is at least 50% more to fund recovery and development.

**Q:** That's across the Sudan ...

**A:** Yes. But I mean the entire relief and recovery and humanitarian assistance operation is one and half billion dollars plus the peacekeeping operation which will be one billion dollars.

As we said, I think Mr. Egeland made this point when he was here, is that you cannot put a humanitarian plaster on an open wound if you don't have the security measures in place so that recovery and development will go ahead. Otherwise it is just a leaking bucket.

**Q:** I would like to know what exactly the food security situation is in Darfur and the south at present. There are many contradicting reports about this. And there is mention that there is now an ongoing registration exercise. This I think is about the sixth or seventh time I am hearing about this process.

Then there is an accusation by some government officials that some NGOs have blocked the government representatives from participating in some of the meetings of Mr. Egeland in some camps. They think that these organizations have their own agenda.

### **Spokesperson UNAMIS**

**A:** Actually there is a food security research going on and just before this briefing I received figures from WFP concerning the food situation and it says that the WFP is very concerned about a new potential food crisis in parts of Sudan mainly due to a completely disastrous rainfall season in 2004. And the area where there is highly extensive crop failure is Kordofan – particularly North Kordofan. Again, also for this matter, we are searching now for ways; inter-agency meetings are taking place to

address these issues at the moment, so I cannot give you any update on results of that – the information was just shared with me five minutes before the briefing. Of course we are concerned and it is another place where we are facing donor problems also. But I think the most urgent needs can be addressed for the time-being.

As to Darfur, the situation on cereals is rather good. WFP mentioned that they have 90% of their cereal needs addressed but they are still lacking some of the other food items that they are supposed to distribute. It hasn't been promising until now. So that is the information I have at this point.

Concerning your second question on the registration exercise – do you want to take that Dawn?

### **Spokesperson – OCHA**

Sure. There is a massive registration exercise going on throughout Darfur and locations throughout the entire region. I am not sure what has preceded it but it is a huge collaborative effort on the part of the UN and some partners. It is a massive logistical undertaking. Yes it has to be repeated because the numbers of people are constantly changing and they are shifting places. So this is supposed to give us a better definition of who needs assistance and where these people are.

On your third question; there were some accusations in the press about that NGOs had blocked participation of the government in certain meetings of Mr. Egeland and IDPs. It is not true. Mr. Egeland had a private meeting with IDPs who are in the Karma camp. These were mainly women and people who had suffered from trauma and abuse. This is a standard practice when a high-level UN official visits a place. When Kofi Annan came he did the same thing, when Mr. Pronk is also visiting with IDPs and beneficiaries he also does it. Mr. Egeland had this meeting on his own. The only other person in the room was the translator and this is so that they can talk freely about what is going on. No one asked to participate, no NGO, not the press and not even Mr. Egeland's staff.

**Q:** There was a memo presented to Mr. Egeland by SCOVA accusing the UN of marginalizing participation of national NGOs in the humanitarian interventions in Darfur. They cited one example that there, I think, 75 cars which were all being given or donated by the UN to international agencies.

I would also like to add something. I myself, professionally, I am not happy about this idea of the cars. Because I think every four should have a car. So I don't know - are all these personnel all the time going into the field? And how much money is being spent on this? I am not happy about this because they are saying that the 75 cars have all been given to the international agencies.

### **Spokesperson UNAMIS**

**A:** I haven't seen reports but ...

**Q:** It was reported on the memo presented to Mr. Egeland. I have one more copy and I will give it to you.



## **Spokesperson – OCHA**

I haven't seen the memo that was given to him so I don't know about SCOVA's issues. But I would like to respond to the issue.

NGOs, international and national, are all working in extremely limited capacity and there is a lot of cars and vehicles and transportation assistance on their way. It may be more extreme in the case of national NGOs but the INGOs are working under the same constraints. It is not of course any intention but national NGOs are important implementation partners of both INGOs and the UN and they are the people who are going to be here assuring that the Sudan's recovery and development leaps forward so they are a very important partner.

**Q:** Following reports circulated and the briefing held by Jan Egeland that the south has only received 5% of the money pledged by donors. Today, it is almost two months since the peace agreement has been signed and nothing has been done in the south: roads to major areas are still closed; from Juba you can not go to Yei, to Nimule; you can not go Maridi or Mundiri – I don't know what the UN is doing. What I can say in Juba is that the UN is busy driving cars, trucks and looking for houses to stay in and this carries nothing on the ground that can change the lives of the people. So I don't know what the future of this agreement will be since the UN can not do anything at all and there is no money at all to change anything on the ground. Currently we are left with four months to the beginning of the Interim Period. What is the solution to this?

## **Spokesperson UNAMIS**

**A:** I can imagine the frustration that you are hosting and actually we share the same frustration. As you know, we are not flying in cars and looking for houses in Juba to have a nice life there. We are there and trying to set up there in order to serve the people of Sudan. As I told you before we have not been issued the mandate. That is what we are waiting for. We can not, under the terms of the peace agreement, enter and start doing things if we don't have a mandate. That is what is keeping us down.

I can assure you, both from the mission leadership and from a personal perspective of all of us here, we want to enter the south; we want to get our programs going and we want to assist the people. The visit that Mr. Egeland made to the south made it very graphically. As I said, during the briefing before, returnees are putting their stake on the peace and we are encouraged by that and at the same time we feel at this moment that we cannot respond and that is why we need the donors to come forward. So we share your frustrations.

**Q:** Follow up to Jonah's question about the deployment of UN troops: if Jordan and Malaysia have been dropped and then countries like Egypt, China and others have been welcome, does it not seem like there is an agreement between the SPLM and the UN in terms of the deployment or dropping out of other countries as proposed by the UN?

**A:** I am not sure what you mean by agreement.

**Q:** Is there an agreement that led to the dropping out of other countries like Jordan and Malaysia that were supposed to take part in the peace operation in South Sudan?

**A:** When peacekeeping operations deploy, the UN issues a general pledge asking countries to contribute troops. These plans change until the final mandate comes down. They change on a day to day basis. We have discussions with the Government of Sudan, we have discussions with the SPLM leadership, issues were raised, objections have been put in place, we found, concerning the Egyptians and the Chinese. let me make a brief statement on that: Mr. Garang personally said he has no problem with Egyptian peacekeepers, China is one of the most important Security Council members of the UN and we are very happy that they are joining this peace effort; they are very disciplined troops, we are happy that they are going to be here and we think they will do a very good job.

Does that answer your question?

**Q:** Does it mean then that there is an agreement between the SPLM and the UN? The UN agreed to drop some countries.

**A:** The troops that are positioned there are constantly under revision.

**Q:** Why then did the UN decide to drop out Jordan and Malaysia?

**A:** They were taken out as part of objections being raised by the SPLM.

Just to make this clear, I don't know what it is that you expect to hear from me, we are here to support peace that was agreed upon by the SPLM and the Government of Sudan. We consult with all the partners to make this peace as fruitful as possible. In the process, you discuss things, it is not as if there is a formal kind of negotiation process - you consult.

**Q:** Is that discussion over?

**A:** We think it is.

**Q:** It has been resolved?

**A:** I told you before that we think it has been resolved, yes.

**Q:** But Jan Pronk said it has been resolved.

**A:** Actually we think it has been resolved.

**Q:** You talked of the IDPs, the situation in Khartoum and the plans the UN is having for their return. When are they going to be registered? And what figure do you currently have of the IDPs in Khartoum and what services are you going to give them? Are you giving them services -- as you said they lack completely basic needs -- are you now giving them any service?

**A:** Mr. Pronk, as I said, visited the Sheikan area and is planning to follow up and make more visits. He has made it a point in his meeting with Mr. Mustafa, the foreign minister of Sudan, to tell him that he was shocked about the conditions that he found. As of that visit, his statement has been that the IDPs in and around Khartoum will be included in the return policy that the UN is proposing for the whole of Sudan. I can not give you an exact answer because discussions are still taking place on how to do this.

Dawn, may be you can say something about the number of refugees or IDPs we are talking about?

#### **Spokesperson – OCHA**

There are IDPs based in Khartoum, in and around of Khartoum area, they are both in IDP camps and spatial areas. I am not sure of any specific registration campaign that is moving forward but as Mr. Pronk said it seems to me that the IDPs in and around Khartoum both in IDP camps and in spatial areas will be included as part of the UN, call it, planning process.

As for assessment that is going on, but immediate assistance have happened as we are aware with NGO partners such as the Norwegian Refugee Council, *Enfant de Monde*, they are supplying NFI, health services and information dissemination.

#### **Spokesperson UNAMIS**

**A:** Mr. Pronk has also made it clear that he thinks, as a general policy, IDPs should be given a choice to return and make their own decisions on when to do this. Some of the people he has seen are in such a bad condition and shape that they are not in a position to travel. This is the reason why he was so shocked so certainly we are looking for solutions for some of these humanitarian problems at the moment.

**Q:** The Free Lions say they have a pledge from Mr. Pronk to present the case of eastern Sudan to the Security Council. Is that true?

We have been asked by the Beja congress and the Free Lions to offer our good offices in this case and speak to the government of Sudan.

--Something missing, not understandable--

**Q:** You were talking about general tensions and things flaring up in the south. Could you give us some details of exactly what has been happening in the south?

**A:** We have a report of clashes in the Akot area. Two staff members of Save the Children have been relocated to Rumbek, which is in the Lakes region, on the first of March. There is growing tensions in Maseera, north of Akobo, which caused some people to be relocated to Lockichoggio as a precautionary measure.

**Q:** Do you have any idea what is the extent of the skirmishes between militias of the Dinka and the Nuer?

**A:** Our assessment is that what is happening and is taking place in the south at the moment is that the tensions have to do with the lack of implementation of the peace agreement, of peace not gaining on the ground; that there are tensions between the people who are returning. We are getting security reports. We would rather be there and support them. Again, our gist of the whole thing is that we need implementation soon. As I said before, we don't have the impression yet at this point that the genuine peace desire of the two parties is failing. Not at all. But Sudan is a vast country and there are local militia leaders who sometimes worry about what will happen after the national unity government comes in. There is a lot of uncertainty; there is a lack of information on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. There are programs for all these things provisioned when the UN mandate comes down. I can say often enough that we want to go down and explain and play a role. So that is basically my answer.

**Q:** So the delay in the UN mandate is contributing to raising tensions in the south?

**A:** I wouldn't say that, I wouldn't go as far as saying that. But what I am saying is that it is unwise that the mandate is being delayed all the time.

**Q:** Yesterday Mr. Jan Egeland was talking about systematic rape and he was, for the first time for me, he was putting soldiers as being involved. Was this part of the report submitted by the UN commission or was this something new?

Last week I was in Wau, actually the displaced IDP camps around Wau, and I saw misery there. The UN has instructed all emergency relief operations there and even the WFP says it will only provide food after April, I think. It was a miserable situation. I don't know if you have any plans there or an assessment mission in that place to see the situation in Barya, Lokoloko and up to Gogrial?

**A:** Starting with the last question, I really have no information at this point but go back and write down, after this, the names then I will try and find out for you.

#### **Spokesperson – OCHA**

Mr. Egeland did say that violations had occurred on all sides and amongst the violations were rape, abuse, looting, that sort of things. Because of the conditions, he did say specifically that, because of the conditions in which victims of rape and sexual violence explain it is very hard to know at times who the perpetrators are. It may be at night, groups of people, I think that is the best way I can answer your question.

**Q:** He did say men carrying heavy weapons – men in arms. Referring to arms, who are responsible?

#### **Spokesperson – OCHA**

I am sure that is true. That could be a soldier, a rebel, a militia.

#### **Spokesperson UNAMIS**

**A:** Just to make it clear, if you look at the MSF (Holland) report on rape and sexual abuse, it is very clear looking at the statement by women, that rape takes place by

armed men. Now, armed men can be people on either side. As you are aware, what we know of the Commission of Inquiry report that including in the 51 names are people from both sides. We don't know, however, who they are but I think it is a fair assessment that rape is becoming a rampant phenomenon and should stop. Rather than concentrate on who is doing it, it should stop and steps should be taken to end impunity and measures should be taken into place to do that.

**Q:** In January, the UNHCR had said the UN has been in meeting and then after some weeks the implementation of repatriation should begin. Today I am still hearing that the UN are for meeting and the IDPs are still suffering. What is the real pace of the UN in saving their IDPs who are facing problems in camps and then the refugees?

**Spokesperson – OCHA**

The position of the UN is that the IDPs have to be supported first where they are, second on their return routes on their way home. The protection monitoring methods need to be placed so that the return is done in safety and dignity and that they should not return home until conditions are on the ground so that there is something there to meet them when they get back. And that is why Mr. Egeland was here last week to be in the south where hundreds of thousands of people are expected to return home to advocate that the funding gets there so that we can put in place the conditions that are needed to support them. If not, a massive influx of returnees, refugees or IDPs regardless, could create a humanitarian situation in the south. So that is the position of the UN.

**Q:** My second question is: what is the exact calendar prepared by the UN to put implementation into practice? When will return start?

**Spokesperson – OCHA**

Returns will start once there are conditions in place that returnees can go home to. Until then, we have got to support them where they are and then we have to put in place the mechanisms so that there can be return routes.

The UN will support any emergency assistance on the way but the return process will be handled by the government.

**Q:** Voluntary returnees have already reached Juba some times back and the Minister of Finance, once I met him, said there are many people already in Juba. Now two big markets in the town have been burnt down and, according to what people understand, prices are rising in the town. What is UN's concern regarding saving the people on the ground?

**Spokesperson – OCHA**

Juba, like the other locations in the south – SPLM-controlled and government-controlled – are return areas. But where we stand now we only have 25 million dollars of the funding needed and 50 million dollars promised of the over 500 million dollars we need to support the populations there. However, certain support is going on like

food assistance: the WFP has propositioned food and is prepared to distribute it throughout the rainy season and that kind of assistance is ongoing.

Thank you very much.

\*\*\* *End* \*\*\*