

**UNMIS SRSG Statement on the occasion of the official announcement
of the Southern Sudan Self-Determination Referendum results**

7 February 2011

Your Excellency President Omar al Bashir, Your Excellency First Vice-President Salva Kiir, your Excellency SSRC chairman Prof. Mohamed Ibrahim Khelil, distinguished guests,

Today is a historic day for Sudan and for Africa, as a day when the spirit of peace prevailed over the spirit of war.

The referendum has been unanimously described by all national, regional and international observers, as a credible process, during which the people of Southern Sudan were given the opportunity to express their preferred destiny, freely and fairly. Not a single challenge has been brought against its results. Much of the credit goes to the leaders of the CPA parties. They provided the political will and wisdom to see this process through. Both CPA partners have declared their acceptance of its outcome and thus their support for the creation of the new state of Southern Sudan at the end of the Interim period.

On behalf of the United Nations, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate President Omar Hassan al Bashir, First Vice-President Salva Kiir

Mayardit for their wisdom, courage and leadership, and all other members of the National Government and the Government of Southern Sudan for working together in achieving this CPA milestone.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate SSRC chairman Professor Mohamed Ibrahim Khelil, SSRC vice chairman justice Chan Reec Madut and all the members and staff of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission for this remarkable achievement and for their exceptional dedication to make the referendum process a success.

Last but not least, I want to congratulate the Sudanese people for the civilized, orderly conduct of the referendum that is being cited as exemplary by many observers.

Indeed, while celebrating this occasion, we remember the key tenet of the CPA that unity is preferable to separation. But the leaders of Sudan and all Sudanese have a right to celebrate the correct decision they have made to end a devastating war through peaceful democratic choice. It is a victory of peace over war. This has clearly shown that by working together in respect of one another's interests and choices, the Sudanese people, the people of Southern Sudan in particular, even in separation into two states, can build a peaceful and prosperous common future and become a model for the region and the African continent.

Thank you