

**The United Nations Mission In Sudan****Date: 22 June 2005****Office of the Spokesperson****PRESS BRIEFING**

Good afternoon. The gentleman sitting next to me is Colonel Vikram Taneja. He is the Chief Operations Officer in UNMIS and he will be briefing you after my briefing and will be giving you an update on military issues – on the deployment that is- as many of you have been asking me about the status of deployment so he will be providing you with the latest updates.

But I will start with my briefing starting with the activities of the Special Representative.

SRSG

-The Special Representative left today to the Ugandan Capital Kampala where he will be meeting with Ugandan High officials. Mr. Pronk will discuss with the Ugandan authorities a range of issues, in particular assistance to UNMIS deployment of troops and equipment. As we informed you before, for practical reasons, UNMIS troops and assets to be positioned in certain southern areas have to transit through neighbouring countries, in particular Uganda. Mr. Pronk will discuss also the opening of Yei-Juba road. As you know, this road is of strategic importance for all operations (humanitarian, relief, development) of all actors operating in the South. The SRSG will return to Khartoum tomorrow and will be leaving the same day in the evening for a week on a short vacation.

Joint Implementation Mechanism

-Two teams representing the JIM left Khartoum today early in the morning heading respectively to North Darfur and South Darfur for a two days assessment mission (22-23 June). A report on the findings of the three teams of the JIM will be completed upon the completion of the mission and will be sent to the Secretary-General for inclusion in his monthly report to the Security Council on Darfur.

World Refugee Day

The United Nations and the UN Agencies celebrated on 20 June World Refugee Day. The new UN High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, spent World Refugee Day with refugees in northern Uganda, a country he praised as “an extraordinary example of generosity and solidarity towards refugees”. The High Commissioner said that attacks by a Ugandan rebel group continued to drive refugees into camps in northern Uganda and prevent long-time

refugees there from returning home. “This was supposed to be a transit centre for refugees returning to South Sudan, not a reception centre for new arrivals,”

Almost 9,000 people, mainly women and children, have arrived in the area since January, when the peace agreement was signed, according to UNHCR. The recent arrivals said they stayed in their country for the entire 21 years of the civil war and only fled in recent months for fear of the LRA’s practice of recruiting children for soldiers, porters and sex slaves.

More information is included in the Press Release of UNHCR on the issue. Copies are available in the room. On behalf of the UN and UNHCR, I would like to commend Sudan radio, al-Ayam, al-Sahafa, al-Khartoum, al-Hayat, Sudan Vision and al-Adhwaa for their coverage of World Refugee Day.

-Security: Banditry activities and looting, including armed attacks, continued have been reported in the Darfurs throughout the week 14-20 June. Other incidents are detailed in the UN situation report dated 20 June.

-On the Eastern Sudan incident, and following the attack on an army post in Delabiyay, the SRSG states the following: He deplores the violence that took place in that area of Eastern Sudan and he calls on all parties to start talks as soon as possible without pre-conditions.

-Health: The fourth round of the polio campaign was completed in the three Darfur States, with coverage at or above 100%. More details on Health issues are included in the WHO Weekly Report.

-Food assistance funding:

Darfur- In a press release issued on 17 June, WFP said that up to 3.5 million people – or more than half the entire population of western Sudan’s Darfur region – would need food aid at the height of the annual “hunger season” from August through the month of October. WFP said that it appealed for an additional US\$94 million for an extra 84,000 metric tons of food to raise its monthly targets to up to 3.25 million people out of a total of 3.5 million in need in Darfur from August through October. For its revised Emergency Operation for Darfur in 2005, WFP has received US\$324 million out of the US\$561.5 million required, leaving a shortfall of 42 percent. (Press Release In English and in Arabic are available)

South/East and Transitional areas- According to WFP, the emergency operation (EMOP) for the South, East and Transitional Areas, which includes assistance to returnees, faces a 59% shortfall. As of 13 June, the EMOP, valued at US\$ 302 million, has received US\$ 124 million, representing 41% of the total operational requirements. The operation received a contribution of US\$37.4 million from the United States. However, a shortfall of 49,612 MT is expected from June to November 2005. Heavy rains have already begun in the South and are set to continue through to August and September. Continued funding shortfalls will largely affect WFP’s capacity to put in place adequate staffing and commodities to prepare for the expected food needs of returnees.

- **Return issues:** OCHA reports continued registration of returnees through Kosti on their way to various locations in the south bringing the total number since 12 February to 4,840 households (15,045 individuals).

This is what I have to say to you for today but before giving the floor to my colleague who will be briefing you on the latest on UNMIS deployment, I wanted to use this opportunity to draw the attention of some of the colleagues here on the way they reported on the arrival of the Italian troops.

It has been reported in two newspapers in Sudan - Arabic newspapers that is - that these troops – and we are talking about around 60 individuals from the Italian contingent – they said that they came here to Sudan in order for them to be deployed to Darfur.

Please, again, and I use this opportunity to repeat again: we always told you that the 10,000 troops to be deployed in Sudan are not to go to Darfur under any capacity whatsoever. And I repeat, the Darfur issue in terms of deployment is under the African Union and all of you know that there is an African Union Mission deployed in Darfur. Our Area of Operation does not include Darfur. Although we have cooperation with the African Union, but we are not deploying any troops in Darfur.

With that, I want to give the floor to Colonel Taneja and he will be giving you the latest on the troops' deployment.

Colonel, the floor is yours.

Col. Taneja

Thank you Radhia; good morning ladies and gentlemen.

I, at the outset, would like to apprise you that today, 22nd of June, is 90 days after the United Nations Security Council Mandate which was on the 24th of March – that is Resolution 1590. The current status, if you see, we have a total of 114 military staff officers who have already deployed in the mission, we have 127 Military Observers – they are the ones who are going to be the front-face of the mission carrying out the verification and monitoring in the sectors, and we have a total of 758 personnel from the Troop Contributing Countries. Now this makes the total as far as the military is concerned to 999 – that is one short of a thousand. That is where the mission stands as of today.

Now just to give you a little incite into what is where; as Radhia brought out, we have staff officers basically deployed in the Force HQ, the military headquarters here in Khartoum, and we have received the advance elements of the Egyptian contingent – 60 personnel – along with their equipment. Their basic task, as you are aware, is the responsibility for the safety and security of the headquarters of the camp and where the staff officers' accommodation is currently. So that is the task and that is what the deployment we have here in Khartoum.

Coming to Juba; basically we have the Bangladesh Engineering Company. It is coming full. It is deployed along with basic medical facilities – that is the Level I hospital – and this is supporting the CJMC and the JMCO which is also located in Juba. As far as future deployments in Juba are concerned, we expect the Sector HQs. to commence deployment in the middle of July. The equipment will precede the deployment of the soldiers.

Coming to Sector II Wau where the Kenya and Chinese have to deploy, currently we only have the Liaisons Officers and a couple of Military Observers which have gone on the

ground. We expect to move some elements of the Bangladesh Engineering Company to prepare the campsite before the deployment of the Kenyan contingent.

As far as Sector III Malakal is concerned, we have brought the engineer advance elements of India but currently they are located at el-Obeid. El-Obeid, as you know, is the UNMIS Logistics Base. They are currently carrying out engineering works at el-Obeid and they will shortly be moving to Malakal to prepare the ground and site for the deployment of the balance of the Indian contingent.

As far as Sector IV Nuba Mountains/ Kadugli is concerned, you would have seen the Mission's Press Release. On the 20th the UNMIS took over the operational responsibility from the Joint Military Commission. As you are aware, the Joint Military Commission was under the operational control of the United Nations post-mandate – that is from 24th of March. So this monitoring mechanism has now phased out and they are now functioning from their rear headquarters in Khartoum. We have deployed over there 39 Military Observers and we have the advance elements of the Egyptian HQs. comprising of 12 officers. So currently the Nuba Mountains stands under the operational responsibility of the Mission.

As far as Sector V Damazin is concerned, we have a Liaisons Officer and Military Observers are yet to deploy there. We expect the deployment of the Pakistan contingent in mid-July starting with their Engineers and the Medical followed by their Sector HQs.

Abyei which the Zambian contingent is responsible for, currently we are looking for options to get commercial contracts for getting the campsite prepared. Consequent to the contract and the site preparation you will have the Zambian contingent deployed at Abyei.

Kassala; where we have the Re-deployment Coordination HQs. that, as you are aware, was operational since M+60 (that was 23rd of May), we have the entire contingent comprising of 223 all ranks already deployed.

In addition to what I have just told you, the advance elements of the Communications Company have also arrived in the Mission from India and these signal personnel are deployed in Juba, Kadugli and at Kassala to bring up to speed the United Nations communications so that the TCCs are able to communicate round the clock with the Force HQs and Mission HQs.

So that is the current status of deployment of the Mission. We expect major induction of contingents starting in July, as I mentioned, and hopefully we presume that we will be able to achieve our full operational capability by the stipulated date of M+240 which corresponds to 20th of November.

I would like mention here, when you look at the target dates that you may have been given, there has been a delay on the part of the Troop Contributing Countries, there have been delays on the part of logistics preparations which have been contracted by the Mission and also, as you are all aware, the wet season has commenced especially in the Juba, Wau and in the Malakal sector which restricts movement and construction activity.

You will appreciate that Sudan is a logistic challenge and we had anticipated that and, accordingly, the parties and the council was also kept informed. So that is where we stand as far as the deployment of the military is concerned.

If you have any questions or any queries or any clarifications, I will try and answer.

Spokesperson

Thank you Colonel. Just that you know, we have all this on paper – in terms of figures and area of deployment and so on and so forth and you will be having it. There are copies for you. Please if you have any queries ask us because there are some abbreviations in there so if you don't understand something please call us and we will try to ... and please give us also your remarks so if we can make it a more user-friendly document for you we will do our best for you to understand this type of material that we are providing for you.

Now I would like to invite your questions of course but we would like to structure the discussion. If there are questions pertinent to deployment please start with them and then we can continue with the other issues. So I would like first to start taking questions on military issues if there are any.

Well, if there are none, if you have any other questions for me ...

Questions & Answers

Q: SUNA

(In Arabic) You stated just now in connection with the incident that happened in the Toker region, that SRSG Jan Pronk called upon the parties to shun violence and to sit at the negotiations table without preconditions. Could it be understood therefore that the United Nations is now calling for dialogue between the GoS and the rebels in eastern Sudan in a separate manner? Thank you.

Spokesperson

I will address this question in Arabic if you don't mind.

(In Arabic) The United Nations and the statement issued by Mr. Jan Pronk is based on the actual existing framework between the GoS and the opposition movements present in eastern Sudan. you are aware that there has been a dialogue between the GoS and the opposition movements in eastern Sudan, especially the Beja Congress, and we request the GoS and also these movements to expedite and hold the talks they had agreed to hold as soon as possible and without preconditions.

We do not call for something new but only speak within the context of what the parties had initially embarked on or had agreed upon.

Other questions? *AlSahafa*.

Q: (AlSahafa)

(In Arabic) I would like to know of the latest developments in the Abuja talks and what you will do should the two parties reach a deadlock?

Spokesperson

(In Arabic) As for the current situation in the talks, you are aware of the current situation and the current problems. We as the United Nations had announced our position earlier and SRSG Jan Pronk had detailed the United Nations position on the issues that were and still are outstanding before the parties that stood obstacle to the parties entering direct talks where they all participate under the sponsorship of the African Union.

Our position is clear. We said that the parties first have to act on the basis of giving maximum priority to tackling the substantive issues which are basically the causes of the ongoing conflict in Darfur. That is one.

Secondly; we said, emphasized and still confirm that the Darfur problem is a purely Sudanese problem and thus obligates that the talks be basically Sudanese and that the talks in Darfur should not be internationalized with the intervention of other parties be these parties neighboring countries or any other parties from outside the African continent. This is our position. This is the second point.

The third point is that we had always underlined the need for cooperation from all and especially the parties, but also the other countries that participate on the basis of an observer status in these talks, to assist the African mediation and the African Union to carry out its duties. In the end, the African Union and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim is the one to decide, in his capacity as the African Union's Chief Mediator, who is to participate and in what capacity. And we hope that all will cooperate with the African mediation efforts.

I don't have fresh information. The information I have is dated yesterday but it seems that the issue has not been resolved despite the African Union and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim and Nigerian President Obasanjo are exerting all possible efforts to break the deadlock in a bid to bring the parties directly concerned, i.e. the GoS and the rebel movements, around the same negotiations table. I do not know as I speak now whether these efforts have borne fruit or not.

On the other hand, we do know that the African Union is currently in bilateral contact with the parties on the Declaration of Principles. I do not, however, have any information on any progress made. My information is that the GoS had presented its views and proposals on the first draft and the draft amended by the African Union mediators. The African Union mediators were waiting for comments and proposals from the JEM. By yesterday, the JEM had not presented the African Union mediators with its proposals. The SLM had, as far as I know, tabled its views on the issue to the mediators and this is all I have on the issue.

What will the United Nations do, we will comment on this in due course. The talks, despite the difficulties encountered, have not stopped and we can not rule it out as a failure at the moment. Let's wait and see because efforts are being exerted to convince the parties on procedural issues which may be successful and put the process back on track within the forthcoming days.

AlHayat.

Q: *(In Arabic)* The Minister of Foreign Affairs has traveled to the United States. Do you have any information on whether he will meet with the Secretary-General?

My second question is on the trials. Will the United Nations monitor the ongoing trials in Darfur and have you received a formal notification from the GoS concerning these trials?

Spokesperson

(In Arabic) Concerning your first question on the possibilities of a meeting between Minister of Foreign Affairs Mustafa and Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan in the course of the visit by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the United States, I have no idea whether a date has been fixed but I am aware that the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has requested such a meeting. But I do not have any information confirming such a meeting or a date for such a meeting. I will follow up on this issue and will come back to you with any information I may get.

As for the issue of the special courts, the United Nations attended the hearing that took place in Nyala– as for the special courts and the United Nations role : The United Nations represented by human rights observers, had attended. You do know that UNMIS has a human rights mandate and component. On that basis, human rights monitors attended the hearing or hearings held in el-Fasher - Nyala sorry, and we shall continue being present.

Q: *(In Arabic)* Were you (unmis) invited to attend? How were you informed about the trial?

Spokesperson

(In Arabic) I don't have definite information on the way we were informed of these trials. But we are attending the trials and you do know that the court has decided that its sessions be open to the public and you do know that the United Nations mandate provides for monitoring all issues pertaining to human rights. You can go back to Resolution 1590 to look through the functions we have on human rights issues and these trials fall under issues pertaining to human rights in general. In this capacity, we attend in our capacity as observers to these trials.

Q: You stated that [the UN is there] at least as observers. Does it mean that the UN recognizes the courts?

Spokesperson

This is a national institution established by the Sudan, a sovereign state. It is not that we recognize it or not. Mr Pronk spoke about this. That is not the issue. The only issue is that the proceedings of the court are open, we are attending them as an observer and in our mandate we have a section about monitoring and reporting, among other things, about activities pertinent to the human rights field. This is what UNMIS role is about.

Q: I mean that are you recognizing it as a substitute to the ICC?

Spokesperson

That is not the issue at all. The fact that we participate as observers to the procedures of the court does not mean anything as far as the ICC is concerned.

Juba Post.

Q: *(Juba Post)*

I have one question for the chief officer of operations. Initially you talked of the options for Abyei – deployment of soldiers for Abyei. I just want to know what are the options for the deployment of these troops.

Number two: regarding the ICC and the court which is taking place in Nyala. I just want to ask has the United Nations or have you received a list of senior officials, Sudanese, who are suspects of war crimes in Darfur? Do you have the names ready with you?

Col. Taneja

On your question related to Abyei, Abyei is Sector VI of the mission and once when we have our logistics preparations on the ground, the UN will deploy the observers and the Zambian Force Protection as per plans. We have no changes to the plans. It will happen when the logistics preparations are in place.

It will take time because Zambia did not have an engineering element to deploy so we had to utilize commercial contract. We had requested the nation to come with an engineering platoon but since they expressed their inability because of their commitments in other missions, we have to go through civil contract. That will take time. Once that is ready we will deploy our forces there.

Spokesperson

On the question addressed to me on the ICC, again, and the list – I don't know what list you are talking about – why should we receive a list in the first place?

If you are referring to that list of the 51, well the case is closed as far as the list is concerned. The list has been put together by the International Commission of Enquiry, it had been given to the SG in a sealed envelope and then he handed over the envelope without opening it to the Prosecutor of the ICC, the International Criminal Court. so UNMIS or the United Nations has absolutely nothing to do with that list. We are not supposed to see it, we are not supposed to know what is in it because it is an issue for the ICC since the Security Council decided to, in its resolution 1503, to seize the ICC with the case of the crimes in Darfur.

So, not only did we receive it but we are not supposed to receive it or to receive any other list because ICC is the competent body and that's it. This is what I have to say about it.

But a little comment on it for those who are curious about the ICC: you know that the ICC has a website. You can have all the latest on ICC and also on its consideration of the Darfur case – you will have the latest there - and at some point I gave you the phone number of the Spokesperson of the ICC and for the Prosecutor so please feel free to ask them these questions because they are not relevant to UNMIS. We are not a judicial body. We are just a mission for peacekeeping in Sudan.

AlBayan.

Q: (AlBayan)(In Arabic) I have two questions. My first question: you stated that you have observers to the trials in Nyala. Have these observers given you any reports on the proceedings of the case and how it is going on and what is your assessment of the proceedings? Is there any information on the proceedings, the course of justice and all that?

My second question is on the issue of the LRA. Up until now, and for more than a month, the United Nations states that the LRA still poses a formidable threat in East Equatoria. The LRA threat remains real until now. How will this issue be dealt with? Have any practical steps been taken to handle this issue or what exactly will happen?

Spokesperson

(In Arabic) As for your first question on the hearings in the special court, United Nations human rights observers present in the hearings will of course present their reports but we can't give any evaluation at this stage because the hearings have just started. We cannot give an assessment on the trials. This is one

Secondly, I had said earlier that the hearings are public and open even to the press. So anyone who wants to get acquainted to the proceedings can attend these trials in person and get information first hand from there. As for us, there is no report as yet and we can not evaluate trials that have just started.

On your second question on the LRA, we had in fact answered this question on more than one occasion. *(In English)* I don't know Colonel if you want to address the LRA issue. I just said we addressed the LRA issue in many, many occasions and what the UNMIS troops will be in a position to do or not to do as far as the LRA activities are concerned. But if you want briefly to give him an answer to his question – I don't know if you heard it in English or not – but the question was that the United Nations is reporting quite often on the LRA activities and he is saying that the LRA activities are quite dangerous. So what will UNMIS and UNMIS troops do to face activities of the LRA?

Col. Taneja

I want to draw your attention to the United Nations Security Council mandate which allows or authorizes the Mission to monitor and observe the movements of other armed groups. Now when the UNMIS is carrying its mandate of overall support of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and in particular the Ceasefire Agreement as signed between the Parties, when the United Nations is carrying out its task and if the LRA or any other armed group restricts or curtails its freedom of movement, definitely the United Nations will take appropriate action.

I will leave it at that. The appropriate action, definitely, will be negotiations and dialogue and not the use of force but if it persists or if any of the armed groups or the LRA would try to threaten use of force against the UN monitors or UN personnel on the field, then the Mission, as you are aware, is mandated under Chapter VII to take appropriate action.

I will leave it at that – it is too premature at this juncture to say as to how the situation will unfold but hopefully, we will find that the situation will allow the Mission to carry out its task in southern Sudan.

Spokesperson

Sudan Vision.

Q: (Sudan Vision)

According to the World Food Program, there is a very big shortage of nearly 40% and when we see the donor countries, the United States is the major one – it is 47% and all these other countries have contributed only 11%. So what is going to be the solution? I cannot think that the United States is going to contribute more. So what is the solution to this; what are you proposing can be done? What is the United Nations proposing to do; or what can we do?

Spokesperson

What you can do is to keep drawing attention to the problem as media because we need the word out, we need to mobilize opinion, we need even to mobilize public opinion so they can mobilize their own governments and authorities for them to speed up meeting up the commitments that they actually pledged. This is what we need.

From our side, we are doing everything it takes to get in touch with the donors, mobilize them and highlighting the risks. We do not want the famine that took place some years ago to happen again. Everybody is talking about Sudan; everybody is talking about the problems of Sudan and Pronk said it many times, ‘please put your money where your mouth is’. The Secretary-General made it a big priority of his be it in Oslo, be it when he attended the Addis donors’ meeting and be it after he left to New York following his visit to Sudan, he made it an utmost priority to draw attention to this problem particularly in the south - and we have to say it because it is really a big problem in the south more so than in Darfur. We are doing what we can but we need your assistance and we need every single effort to assist us naming names, and mobilizing public opinion. This is what we can do.

Unfortunately we can not do more. You know that these activities are financed through voluntary contributions. These countries made pledges to provide the money. Well, we are waiting for them to live up to their commitments. Unfortunately this is what we can do – we can not do more.

Q: (*Sudan Vision*)

But here the statement doesn’t say who have made what pledges and what they actually have delivered.

Spokesperson

Actually the press release, if I am not mistaken, by WFP puts the names – of course we have the United States and we have the other countries. in my briefing I only highlighted the United States because it is the biggest bulk of money that came in and that narrowed to a great extent the shortfall that they had. So that made it quite a difference. Because I think, if I am not mistaken and my colleague Penny Ferguson from WFP is here and she can elaborate further, but I think it narrowed the shortfall by at least 20 – 25% if I am not mistaken. But Penny you can correct me if I am not right.

For the information that you asked about, the WFP can provide you with further details because they keep their list updated who pledged what and who provided what and what is the current status of funding. So they have the information and, if I am not mistaken, I think the information is public maybe in the website as well of the WFP.

Q: (*Sudan Vision*)

Okay because I would like to know exactly who pledged what. And we see here there is only one Arab country. Only we have the Arab Emirates from the Arab countries and this is ... maybe my other colleagues from the Arabic press should stress on this: one single Arab country and has contributed less than 1 million dollars.

Spokesperson

Thank you very much for that remark and we hope that all of you show the same interest to this issue because it is quite an issue. I know, I don't want to blame the media, but the media is more interested in political issues more than these aspects of things but these are the things that make a difference in the daily lives of people, your people, and that is what would make peace a reality eventually.

Any other questions? SUNA.

Q: (SUNA)

(In Arabic) You mentioned something about the list of 51. resolution 1591 stipulates that a list is to be prepared by a panel of experts in coordination with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. I think the panel of experts was to sit in Addis Ababa. What, so far, is the progress concerning this issue – of preparing a list of government officials suspected of involvement in the Darfur incidents?

Spokesperson

(In Arabic) There is no progress on the issue. The panel has not yet been appointed and, consequently, nothing has been done on the issue as far as I know.

Any other questions?

Okay. Before you leave I would like to mention two things. First, I apologize on behalf of the UNDP which is not present here who have requested me to make an announcement which is as follows. Sorry I will have to read it in English because it came to me in English:

‘The Sudan first National Millennium Development Goals Interim Report will be launched in an official celebration on Saturday, June 25th at the Friendship Hall. The launch organized by the Government of Sudan in collaboration with the United Nations Country Team will include high-level representation from the government, SPLM and United Nations.’

I understand that this is an event open to the media so if you are interested, and I hope that you are – I already spoke to you about the Millennium Development Goals, it is quite an important report and the media is invited. So you know the date and you know the place and for follow-up please get in touch with the UNDP and they will give you more information on this.

(In Arabic) Finally, this is my last Press Briefing for one month at least because I will be absent from the country on vacation. I will return, God willing, on the 21st and will resume

work on the 22nd of July. I wish you good luck and my colleague George Somerwill will be giving you these briefings and I hope our cooperation with you will continue.

So, until we meet, this is the last time I am seeing you and thank you.