



## The United Nations Mission In Sudan

### Office of the Spokesperson

*Following is a near-verbatim transcript of the press conference of 28 September (12:30 PM) by SRSG Jan Pronk at UNMIS Headquarter, Khartoum, Sudan :*

**Spokesperson:** Welcome to this pres briefing for today and with you is the SRSG Jan Pronk. This press conference is part of his regular meetings with you and this time around he is going to be briefing you on many issues relating to the latest developments based on the overall situation in Sudan and his own activities that he undertook lately.

Without further ado, I give the floor to Mr. Pronk.

**SRSG Pronk:** Thank you. I will raise a couple of issues but you can also raise other issues, which I am not touching upon, during question time.

Last week I was in New York for a meeting of the Security Council. That meeting took place in order to decide on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations presence here in Sudan. The decision was taken on Friday so our mandate has been extended with another half a year which is regular – it is always half a year until the period of six years is behind us. The Security Council discussed the situation in Darfur. I briefed them on that situation; there was no resolution this time. You understand that there are talks at the moment about a statement by the President of the Security Council. That is also a statement to be made by him after consultations with the other members of the Security Council. But there will be language also on Darfur and that is important. There is already language on Darfur in the statement by the Secretary-General – I think it has been circulated to you today. You will see that the Secretary-General has commended the government of national unity for its constitution, commended the parties also that they were able within a short period of about two months to negotiate a coalition government – that is good in itself despite the hiccups which there are which is, of course, very often the case if you have to build a coalition government. Maybe Sudan can be faster than Germany – which is also now trying to build a coalition government – Sudan did it in two months, maybe they need more than two months – you never know. In my country it always took five to six months. So you (Sudan) did not do very badly. But always, of course, something comes up. Anyway you were (Sudan) commended by the Secretary-General who, at the same time, did say that now is the task of the new government to speed up the solution of Darfur.

I have been very clear in my meeting with the Security Council. It was not a public meeting but an informal meeting. I asked members of the Security Council to be very outspoken and to tell all parties – and I made it clear that in particular that means SLM because they are a bit more difficult in the talks at the moment than the government – that there should be peace at

the end of the year and that parties can not be granted by the international community a longer period going into 2006. And my message also to the SLM is very strong: you can't make a choice anymore between shooting and talking. Shooting is now out of the question. And I am telling the international community that I need a credible strong pressure that would only allow the parties to talk and not to shoot because then you can't give any political support anymore to claims in talks. Whether that will result in a very strong statement remains to be seen but my message to the parties is: no shooting, only talking because betting on two horses is counter-productive and will not make peace – impossible. It is the view of a number of countries also definitely in the Security Council.

On that basis, with regards to Abuja, I can say the following: I am pleased with the fact that the sixth round has started. It started quite well with informal working groups – one on power sharing, one on wealth sharing, one on security. The information which I receive is that discussion with these working groups is in good quality; that's one positive thing. The second is that there was fighting in Darfur during the last couple of weeks and parties remained at the table, urged by the international community not to repeat their mistakes of last year when there was fighting in Darfur and parties ran away from the negotiations table – then you are in a vicious circle of course. Salim Salim urged the parties to stay at the table and they did. The third positive outcome is that so far parties did agree that insecurity issues, fighting issues, be in particular brought now to the agenda of a new meeting of the ceasefire commission in N'Djamena after the sixth round and everybody now wants it. You remember the last meeting of the ceasefire commission took place in N'Djamena in February and it was not a good meeting and that is why parties didn't want to have a meeting anymore. But now, parties want to have a meeting in order to put the insecurity issues on that agenda so that they will not, at the same time, harm the talks in Abuja. That is also a positive thing. Another positive thing: SLM is there; everybody is there. And also people from the northern part of Darfur, people from the Zaghawa are there and despite statements and despite rumors made by others, they do not want to be a separate faction – they are SLM; Zaghawa SLM, the Fur SLM talk together. That is important. That is the result, of course, of the consultations that is taking place of course between them and the au and the AU. They are not splitting and that is good in itself. Not all leaders are there. They have decided now in Abuja to continue until the 20<sup>th</sup> of October, which also will run for a while into Ramadhan, and then to adjourn. After that, there is the possibility that a conference of SLM can take place in Darfur. If they decide to have such a conference, we will assist and we will be there. And then, after that conference, another round (of talks)– hopefully a final round – can take place. I always call that the 'sandwich formula': you have a negotiation, then you have a conference and then you have again that negotiation. I came with that sandwich formula, you will remember, back from my talks in Darfur in August. It seems that parties now are agreeing to that formula – which is good. because then they can also reflect on the outcome of the sixth round and get their act together and have a good mandate for the resumed session of the seventh round. I am going to Abuja myself briefly on Friday morning in order to have some consultations and then I will return. At the moment we are there at a high level and my deputy, Zerihoun, is there in Abuja. I can only go there for a couple of days because I have to go back to New York – I was asked to come back next week in order to have a meeting with the Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the UNMIS. I will go together with my colleague Bill Swing, who is the SRSG in the DRC, because the General Assembly committee wants to have a meeting on the two biggest operations of the United Nations so far – a joint meeting. And after my return, I am planning to go to Abuja to be in the second part of the negotiations in Abuja in order to, if necessary, help a little bit like I did in the fifth

round. So the next couple of days are consultations with all parties – the government, of course, and also all SLM representatives.

In New York, we did have discussions also about a number of other issues concerning Sudan. I will not go into detail but you should know that there were discussions about the presence of the African Union in Darfur and I have strongly urged all members of the Security Council to have a long-run view on the presence of an external force for years at an adequate level to make planning also for the period after a peace agreement. You may think it is far-fetched but if you will have a peace agreement at the end of this year, then we need troops in order to make it possible gradually for IDPs to return home and to guarantee their safety back home. You can not do that with 6,000 troops, you need more. So I have urged the members of the Security Council to plan ahead already now for next year. You have to finance it, for instance – where is the money, where are the troops coming from – you have to think about it loud.

Another issue which I urged the members of the Security Council really to put in their agenda intensively is the situation around the LRA in the south. We each time have piecemeal discussions about this and a common view of the Security Council as a whole and the countries in the region – Sudan, Uganda, DRC – a common view on how to deal with it in an adequate fashion, not only militarily but also talking - because they have demands (the LRA) – is necessary. That is also important for Sudan of course to find a solution.

From New York I went to Washington to have a meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. You know there is each year a huge gathering. And I had proposed that on the margins of that meeting there would be a meeting on Sudan – the first meeting on Sudan after the constitution, the new government and the peace agreement – so that the government of Sudan, united, could present its views on the economic future of the country; the developmental future. The meeting took place on Saturday. There were quite a number of ministers coming from other countries. The Minister of Finance of this country and also the state minister of finance were there and made a good presentation to the international community and also stated by the IMF the concepts, details of economic good governance in the future which is extremely important. And the final decision was that now the consortium has been established. There will be a consortium meeting twice a year of international partners and the World Bank and IMF with Sudan (both parties, GNU and GOSS) to assess the economic situation, to assess the soundness of domestic economic policies here on the basis of benchmarks and criteria, and to organize pledges from the international community in order to make it possible to implement the assessed policy and to reach the economic targets of the country. That is a breakthrough. Consortia always did help developing countries very well in the past and we will now also have a consortium for Sudan.

The first meeting will very probably be held in January, possibly in Paris because the World Bank has also a second headquarter in Paris. It may also be in another city because there was also an idea to organize it together, back-to-back, with the meeting which has been scheduled for Afghanistan in the beginning of next year. If you do that together back-to-back, then you will have a higher attendance of donor and partner countries in that meeting. The outcome of the meeting was very positive; there will be a consortium and that will guarantee that there is a very serious international joint effort of making the resources available to Sudan provided, of course, that the domestic resources are being dealt with adequately and in a transparent manner – no secret funds, no channeling away oil income for other funds, for instance, and making money available for poor people and also for the regions to be developed.

I think it is good to mention to you that yesterday there was another meeting of the CJMC in Juba. Parties have agreed to make known, which is necessary according to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, where they are with their troops – to disclose their whereabouts, how many and where. SPLA and also the government made known already which of their forces will be in the JIUs. The government made know all of them and the SPLA a substantive part of it. So they will come with further information very soon. And that is important because the establishment of the JIU is an important element of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The SPLA also has already agreed that they would no longer wish to assemble all their troops in assembly regions – that is difficult and costs a lot of money – but they will have them registered where they are at the moment. This is a very pragmatic approach and on that basis, the JIUs can be established and also disarmament can be organized - which is a good pragmatic new step.

The CJMC is also preparing a report for the Ceasefire Political Commission (CPC). I hope that the CPC, which is a political committee which now officially has been established, will meet very soon. I will have a meeting, which is a courtesy call, this afternoon for the first time with the new Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Lam Akol, and I will make use, of course, of the opportunity of having that courtesy call to inform him also about our wish to have the first meeting of the CPC very soon so that the outcome of the military committee can be discussed in a political fashion. It is very important because there are political developments which are not yet on the agenda of institutions. I mention in particular Abyei. The situation in Abyei is tense. There are more and more troops coming from the south and the north in Abyei and this is a source of concern because, firstly, their movements ought to have been notified to the United Nations in advance. That has not been the case and we told them that is a violation of the ceasefire. Moreover the build-up itself always makes great tension on both sides. And that is a reason for concern. Also the situation on the ground with the parties who live there – the Dinka, the Misseiriya, is very tense at the moment. I also have been informed that there is a kind of an SSDF (South Sudan Defense Force) build-up, because IDPs coming from Khartoum are being conscribed and they think that they are brought into SPLA but it turns out then that they are in SSDF. That is a matter of concern also because I hope that SSDF increased activity is not going to create another problem with the Abyei situation, which is already difficult enough. We are very alert. We now have our Zambian troops also in Abyei, which is good, not only some monitors but also protection forces, in order to help ease the situation. It is difficult also for our troops over there because the weather was extremely bad and the situation of our troops is, at the moment, a bit difficult because many tents were blown away because of a storm of new proportions in Abyei. I understand that such a storm had not happened in the past in the collective memory of many people over there.

One more thing: there was a meeting in el-Geneina which had been organized by units of the United Nations in the framework of what we have to do – talking about governance, talking about policies towards IDPs – the meeting took place on the issue of the rights of the IDPs and other legal and human rights issues. It was a symposium of three days which had been organized by us and had been financed by another country like always is the case. It was public and made known to the government and such a symposium had also taken place in formal training sessions in other cities. National security entered our meeting on the third day, violating United Nations rules and practices and arrested Sudanese participants in the meeting. We protested loudly and clearly. These people in the meantime have been released but I will officially protest to the government. And I will mention that already to the Minister of Foreign Affairs today that our meeting was being disturbed by national security. They do

not have the right at all to enter our meetings. It is a United Nations meeting and that is completely in conflict with the general rules of the United Nations presence in a country. Even if there is not yet a Status of Forces Agreement (a SOFA), this is a flagrant violation of relations between the United Nations and a country and I will urge a strong protest to the government – this ought not to be repeated and, of course, I will inform the Security Council about this because I consider this quite serious.

I could say more but I think it is better to stop. I am here for all other issues you would like to raise as well.

## Q & A

**Q:** You have proposed to the Security Council for support of the AMIS. Does this support mean adding non-African troops?

You stated that there are forces coming from north and the south coming to the Abyei region. Are these organised forces?

**SRSB Pronk:** There are at the moment, I think, nearly 6,000 African troops. Phase II means 7,000 and they are heading towards that. In the plan of the AU, they speak about Phase III which goes to 12,000. Phase III is the phase after the peace agreement to facilitate return. That may be quick. I know how difficult it is in Abuja but imagine we have peace at the end of the year and that always was my objective, then we should start a return policy. Of course people wouldn't be returning on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January – definitely not - it will take time. But it should be made possible for the first people to return. And then you have to make safety in the places they go to. So you need these 12,000 people soon, very soon. And you have to discuss it now – that the AU has to bring them in – and that means money and troops. They have to organise the troops and the international community has to organise the money. So I am asking the big countries to make available the money soon. I see that there are problems at the moment. There are problems in some countries to make money available – in Europe in particular. The Americans have done a lot and Europeans could do more, to say so, and the same is true for humanitarian assistance. And I add to this – and I say this very carefully – we need the people; we need troops wherever they come from, in order to create safety on the ground. I hope it will be possible to have the African Union troops. If they can do it, you can not just turn your back to Darfur – we have to create safety on the ground for people who are returning home. And that is the obligation of the UN and the AU to find the solutions for it. I can not go further than that but I am telling the Security Council and the AU: you have said A now you have to say B and C. Why making peace while people can not return home?

Now on your second question – I don't know exactly. The point is that we and the UN – and that is a reason for concern, of course I don't blame the parties because that is difficult – we do not know exactly where the troops are. And if you don't have a base-line scenario where all the troops are, you don't know where they go – because you don't know where they came from. But you can not monitor their movements. We see at a certain moment troops arriving in Abyei – more government troops, more SPLM troops. They take positions. We don't say you are not allowed to do that – definitely not. But the parties have to inform the UN in advance that they go somewhere. Otherwise we can't monitor that they go, when they go, how big they are, etc. and then we can not do our job as monitors in the beginning. They

don't inform us. In particular, the SPLM is not informing us adequately at the moment so we are telling them that that is a ceasefire violation. Is it a serious ceasefire violation? I don't know. Anyway it is formally a ceasefire violation – whether it is serious depends on what they are doing there and what they are going to do. But already the movement without informing us in advance is already a ceasefire violation. The fact that they have not yet disclosed where they are before moving is also a ceasefire violation – we have to make that very clear, and we are making that clear to the parties. We can not change it but we make that clear and I have to report on this to the Security Council. You have a ceasefire; you have a peace agreement; it is your own text, you have to live up to your own text. And if you don't live up to your own text we tell you that you have to do it and if you don't do it we have to report – it is the only possibility that we have.

And I am concerned about Abyei because it is difficult over there. You know it and I am not going to go into detail, but I am concerned about the situation at the moment. So we have to monitor it with our own monitors. We don't want to have too many military over there because it can be a source of conflict. At the same time, of course, there are also tribes which have quite a difficulty in living together. And we have to do everything to avoid violence between the tribes – the Misseiriya and the Dinka – and between leaders of tribes or whatsoever.

**Q:** Given that the SPLM took no major post in the government other than the foreign ministry, do you think this is a real coalition government? Are you disappointed as many people have expressed disappointment at the southern participation?

Also regarding Darfur and the resumption of hostilities and Minni Arkoi is in Darfur leading those hostilities and the fact that the talks haven't even started talking yet, do you still think that it is likely that there (inaudible) – how likely is that now?

**SRSB Pronk:** There is a coalition government and the fact that there is a coalition government is a breakthrough. It could have failed, the coalition talks could have failed but they didn't fail – and that is important. I really hope that all persons who have been appointed accept their appointments because I understand that there are some hesitations and some have already resigned – I think there is a problem. Maybe not a big problem because you can find somebody else, somebody who is a second or a third choice. But and that is never good.

I know some people are disappointed. It is not for me – I am only UN. Disappointment is a political value for parties and not for onlookers. I am very pleased that there is a political process going on at the moment. People are having different views and they bring their different views into a political process and they don't fight. If they are disappointed or they don't agree they don't shoot. They express their political view and they clearly have the right to express their political views, they are not oppressed when they are expressing their political views – that is all positive. Parties are learning the political trade in Sudan – and that is difficult. As long as that is a political process and not a national security process which makes it impossible for people to speak out sometimes – as long as it is a political process, that is positive. You can never satisfy everybody. You have to find a compromise and in every compromise there are some people who are disappointed and there are some people who say, well, the outcome is very good for us. Outsiders should shy away from passing a judgement on all this. I know there is one position about which some people are disappointed and that is the outcome of the position on energy. I understand that Mr. Kiir made a statement in anticipation of that possibility a week ago explaining to people that who is going to have a

position in the cabinet is not decisive. What is decisive is what is in the peace agreement. And that is 50% of the revenues are for the south and 50% are for the north. Nothing will change that – that is the issue. Also a new minister, wherever the person is coming from, will have to live up to that particular CPA provision. Moreover, the organisation of decision-making in the government implies also committees whereby the Ministry of Energy and other ministries which are also dealing with energy, are working together. It is a common decision-making process and I understand that also the Presidency is involved in that situation. That is another guarantee. I understand also that there was a kind of gentleman's agreement – but I don't know the details, gentlemen's agreements never have details known to others – but I understand that there was a gentleman's agreement between the SPLM and the NCP. So on the whole, that is how politics work, that is how coalition talks work out – and SPLM got many seats which they did ask for. You never get what you want – that is never the case in any coalition government in any coalition talks in any country. That is part of the process. And the real assessment will have to wait until we see that indeed on the basis of the CPA there is some oil exploration resulting on revenue also for the south.

That is why I had also these talks in Washington. It is extremely important that in the framework of IMF, the World Bank and the consortium, there is full transparency about the oil revenues – not only about taxation revenues or international assistance but also about oil revenues. That is in the interest of both parties and the international community that there are guarantees with the help of good reports – IMF public expenditure reports; guarantees that oil money is going also to the North and that 50% is also going to the south. That is the important thing. Both parties agree on that. Both parties also agree that this is a task for the consortium and the IMF to judge and that is in itself quite positive.

That was a long answer to your first question but it was quite an important question.

The second question; I think we have to be very careful on the fighting in Darfur. I have not yet seen the AU report – the AU is always a bit late but they are also very careful. I very much deplore that there was fighting and the attack on Sheiriyia is definitely a bad development. It was not the only one; it followed Malam in August and then some fighting where also the government was involved and then Sheiriyia. What happened in Sheiriyia – I want to see the report. There are statements that the Zaghawa wing led by Manni Minnawi was responsible. There are also statements that the commander who says that he is SLA with his 30 people that took Sheiriyia is not known – information coming from SLA itself – and that he must be a rogue commander. That is one option which is possible and is being claimed. There are also statements that it was a group of people which are belonging more or less to those who are directly controlled by Minni Minnawi. You have to be very careful apportioning blame to a specific group because that may not be helpful. I need to know more of the facts. I hear different information. So I have to rely on the findings by the AU and they are not yet there. I know, anyway, that people belonging to what is wrongly being called the Minni Minnawi group – because they do not want to be called like that in Abuja –they say, we keep the ceasefire; we are part of the overall SLA presence here. Of course everybody knows there are conflicts of opinion between AbdelWahid (SLM/A Chairman) and Minni Minnawi (the SLM/A Secretary-General). When these conflicts of opinion do themselves not result into fighting on the ground or only sometimes in incidents, and when they do not result into a worsening of the talks in Abuja, then, again, it is a normal political process.

But I wait for the outcome of that statement which undoubtedly is going to be made available to the N'djamena talks on the ceasefire in October.

**Q:** The question was, given that there is fighting where Mr. Manni is in Darfur and not in Abuja, how likely is your assessment ...

**SRSB Pronk:** Likely. I think it is still possible to have a peace agreement. It is not a minute possibility; it is a very concrete possibility. Again, the talks in Abuja are not bad at the moment – I did give you that information – it is going in the right direction. They are not divided in Abuja. The situation is much better than people are saying so it is still possible. Can I say it is not unlikely – to use that word. At the same time, we need to carry out a lot of pressure and that was why I was asking for very strong pressure coming from the Security Council on all parties and particular on the SLM. That is why I said, no shooting – only talking – to stick to that and to make peace possible before the end of the New Year is not lost. It is not unlikely.

I agree that it would be very important for Minni Minnawi at a certain moment also to be there. He doesn't have to be there right from the beginning – his people are there. But he will also have to show up. At the same time, my own experience is that – and you know that I was quite involved in the 5<sup>th</sup> round of negotiations – in those negotiations the talks are not always with the leaders. At the other side of the table you do not always have Minni Minnawi and AbdelWahid, you also have their representatives they do the negotiations and then they get instructions from the leaders. So it works. It did work very well in the fifth round. So presence throughout is not necessary but presence at a certain moment is definitely required in order to avoid a situation whereby the leader of a group can easily say, well I don't agree with the outcome. So he has, at a certain moment, to also be present. And there is pressure also on Minni Minnawi to come to Abuja.

**Q:** My first question is related to the hostilities which have been reported in Chad. What information do you have on the fighting taking place in Chad, who are involved – there have been reports that perhaps the Sudanese military was involved and heavy artillery was also used – how much is it to you about Chad getting dragged into the conflict further?

The second question is that talks are continuing in Nigeria and people are fighting on the ground in Darfur. Is your optimism somehow based on the belief that the people who are fighting on the ground will then respect any agreement that is being reached in Abuja? Because if they do reach an agreement in Abuja, then why would these people go on fighting as talks are going on?

**SRSB Pronk:** I am very much concerned about what is going on in Chad. It is quite not my direct area of work as it is another country, but I am very much concerned. For Chad, of course, it is a big worry that there is always something going on in West Darfur that is affecting their territory, and the other way around is exactly the same – it has also major consequences for the situation in western Darfur and that means also in Darfur. It is still of course the case that rebels who are fighting the government in Chad are finding a refuge in western Darfur and also the other way around. That has been the situation throughout. There have been periods when it flares up and there are periods when it goes down. Now we are seeing it flaring up. And I understand that there was quite a fighting going on with heavy artillery and also many casualties and many people were also being caught and imprisoned.

There are always talks about the involvement of a government supporting the rebels in another country. That has been the case, Chad-Sudan, also mutual accusations. Like is also the case for Sudan and Eritrea. As long as there is no concrete evidence, I can't say anything



about it. I only know that at the top level, the presidents get along and that the governments want to work together. But in both these countries there are, in my terminology to the Security Council a couple of months ago, 'forces in the dark'. And I strongly urge government to control their own forces. If there would be an involvement, very often these involvements are at the low level – people who are not agreeing with the leaderships in their own countries. I can not exclude that as a possibility. I think it is not improbable that it is taking place. Like there are also talks – still I don't have any proof – that there are still forces in the dark which support, in one way or other, the LRA. I am definitely certain it is not the government, not President Bashir or whatever, but there are factions. They have to be controlled and it is greatly adding a complication to talks. At the same time, I do not believe everything that is being said. But in general, parties who are not at the negotiations table in Abuja will not see any reason very quickly to stop fighting when there will be a peace agreement. We are aiming at a peace agreement between the government and JEM and SLM. That is Abuja. NMRD is not there; the bandits are not there; possible splits of SLM are not there; the militia are not there; *Janjaweed* are not there; and I have never said that the peace agreement is a final thing. I have said very often it is a necessary condition to further the peace, and then others have to be informed. At a certain moment there will also have to be talks with the NMRD. I have said a couple of times at a certain moment you also will have to talk with the militia of some tribes who are not themselves at the table. At a certain moment you have to bring in civil society. Bandits, criminals, have to be stopped. If you have peace in Darfur, then you could use the forces which at the moment are being constrained by the ceasefire agreement so far and also the agreement with the UN, to stop the criminals. I am making a distinction here between bandits and political factions – other factions who are not at the table but with whom we will have to talk after the peace agreement.

An alternative which has been brought about also is to bring other forces to the talks but that has not been accepted by the parties for reasons which I respect – like also in the south: you had meetings of the SPLM and the government knowing that there were others (other forces), left for a next phase.

**Q:** You are now making a distinction between the bandits, the criminals and SLM/A. A few weeks ago we were bringing them together when they were carrying out cattle rustling. Why now do we separate against the SLM/A aren't the bandits and the looters and the criminals when previously we had effectively got to the point a few weeks ago when you were frustrated with the SLA and you were saying you guys are being provocative and aggressive and are acting as bandits and looters and we will treat you as such?

**SRSG Pronk:** I want to be consistent and if I have not been completely clear then I apologise. I did not mean, in August to brand SLA as criminals. I did say: you should not go into criminal activities. And they had ceasefire violations and I did say, I think, that they should not have a situation whereby some groups are not considered SLA anymore who are still under their control – I'm strongly against that – that is what I meant. I am still saying that that is definitely against any spirit of any agreement. So when SLA is telling me that this is a rogue commander who has been with us perhaps and is now a criminal, I note it but I do not say, okay you don't have any responsibility for it. I am saying two things to them in my talks. First thing: you have to try to get these persons under control – you have the responsibility also. If you don't do it, you are suspect. And secondly, you have the responsibility because he did belong to you and you didn't discipline him. You let him go. When you start something, you also are responsible for its escalation, so you have a responsibility. You are not a criminal, but you started something, you are responsible. Those are my two points. I must add

to this that there are also groups who never were part of a political movement and who are now abusing the situation. You see it in so many civil wars and this is a civil war where warlords are just coming out in order to start for themselves because they see a living for themselves. That is also the case – it is very complicated.

**Q:** The investigation into the events that led to the death of Dr. John Garang was supposed to end on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September. Recently, we learnt that it has been postponed and pushed to the 16<sup>th</sup> of September. In your talks here you said you wanted the investigations to be completed as soon as possible and the result is given to the people in transparency. Were you informed, as the UN, and were you given the reasons why the investigations have stopped and were you involved in that particular process?

You also talked about the LRA. Two weeks ago and even last Friday, the LRA killed many people in southern Sudan. This is an issue of concern. Have you asked the GoS and the SPLM who it is that provided the LRA with the motor boat that helped them cross from the eastern bank to the western banks where they killed people in Lanya and Loka between Juba and Yei?

There was a petition written by southern Sudanese in the diaspora to the UN Secretary-general regarding the dispute over the ministerial positions – especially the Ministry of Mining and Energy. And to the best of my belief, I saw a copy which was also addressed to you as the SRSG in Sudan. Did you receive that copy? And if you did receive it, what have you done so far about it as the representative of the UN Secretary-General in the Sudan? And I believe if you were to do something, you would have interfered and at least the Ministry of Energy and Mining would have not gone to the National Congress party. To me, that is a deliberate violation of the provisions of the CPA, particularly the wealth-sharing portfolios. Thank you very much and waiting for your comments on these questions.

**SRSG Pronk:** Thank you. I have not been informed by the government about the reasons why the investigations will take more time but I got that information when I was in New York. But I will ask the government to give me some information. We are not involved. We are not part of the investigation committee but we were requested some specific assistance and we are giving it but we are not members of the committee. I have not been given the information. For me, because that also was your question, I did say very clearly in August that it is good for Sudan if the investigation is thorough, transparent and quick. It is not quick; it is not fully transparent; I think it is quite thorough but I will have to get the information and I hope that it will result in a good outcome which is transparent to all members of the Sudanese society and will not lead to other questions which are not necessary in the present situation.

I raised the issue of the LRA myself as you would remember, and I am quite concerned they may be stronger than, in particular, what members of the SPLA always have -but the government did say it was strong. They are strong - if it is LRA which is carrying out all these attacks. The LRA also did make a statement that is not true and it is others (who are responsible for the attack). I am reading those statements – I recently got a statement by the LRA denying that they carried out that specific attack and I am trying to find out whether they were behind it because that statement was drafted in Oxford English which I never had seen from the LRA. So it is creating some suspicions as far as I am concerned. So I am trying to get some information through my military observers, through intelligence and through the questions which I am asking everywhere. I discussed the LRA issue with foreign minister

Betty Bigombe. We discussed this also in the CJMC yesterday and both parties, the government and the SPLA, were concerned and they promised (which is important) to secure the area in concert because it is extremely important now that the road to Juba from Yei will be made fully accessible. We are de-mining it gradually – very successfully – but we have to build bridges in order to make it possible to cross. I was very concerned that the LRA would carry attacks on the helicopters which were bringing in the bridges elements and I have postponed the bridge-building ten days ago until I would get full guarantee from the government and SPLA that they will secure, not only on-the-spot the places where the bridge is going to be built, but also the area as you can have attacks also with heavy weapons from the area. They have given me all the guarantees and we are now going to proceed.

That specific question, sir, you should never ask because then you know the answer that we don't know. So you heard what I said ten minutes ago that there are always factions in the dark – forces in the dark – who give assistance and such a question you should never then ask in the open because you know that is a naïve question.

On your third question – I must tell you that I never got a copy of the Letter to the Secretary-General. It may have been sent to me but I never did receive it. And if you say there was such a letter, then I will ask my staff to try to see if they sent it to me. I didn't get the letter but I understand it was a protest against the composition of the government of national unity coming from SPLM members in the diaspora – is that what you were saying?

**Q:** It was from ordinary citizens, refugees, in the Diaspora asking the UN to interfere.

**SRSB Pronk:** Then I would say – if I would have received the letter and I would have to reply – my reply would be: sir/ madam, your letter is wrongly addressed. You have to address such a political view, be it a protest or not, to your political leaders. The UN is not going to interfere. We didn't come here to interfere. We did come here on the request of the parties. The parties talk with each other, the parties negotiate with each other. The parties reach a result at a certain moment. For me it is important that the parties talk; for me it is important that the parties reach an agreement, a compromise or whatever; that they live up to their own agreement; that they don't violate their own agreement. That is my mandate. My mandate is not to discuss or to criticise the content of an agreement as long as the outcome of a new agreement is not in conflict with the outcome of the CPA and the composition of the government is not in conflict with the CPA. I want to underline that three times: the composition of the government is not in conflict with the CPA. What would be in conflict of the CPA is that the revenue of the oil resources will not be shared on a 50-50 basis between the parties. There is no reason, whatsoever, to assume that this composition of the government will not result in that implementation of the CPA. That is why I said in the beginning that Mr. Kiir himself made that assurance to his own constituency a week ago. That could be my answer to the question if I would have received it, but you can print that out already so that people get that answer through the press without sending a letter.

**Q:** First I would like to ask about the statements of Mr. Juan Mendez, the Special Advisor of the UN Secretary-General on Genocide. We are not debating on his statement made in the press conference a few days ago but I am asking about was it the proper time while the negotiations were going on in Abuja? Was it not sending some wrong signals to different parties and at the same time you were there at the Security Council and the issue of Sudan was being discussed? I am asking about the timing – was it good timing?

**SRSB Pronk:** I saw Mr. Mendez on the day of his departure before he had that press conference. He is the official envoy dealing with these questions and his visit to Sudan took place I think a year after his previous visit. His coming to this country in itself is quite good. If he would only advise the Secretary-General in his position sitting behind his desk without having talks here with me and the government, etc. then he would just be accused of being a bureaucrat who does not know what he is talking about. So it is good that he came. And then the timing – there is always something going on in Sudan so you never have good timing. And then the question, of course, is the statements themselves. I think he made statements completely within his mandate. I saw a record and I don't disagree at all with his statements and I think they are completely in accordance with what I said also myself regularly in meetings and I am pleased that he had a press conference because that made it possible for you and your colleagues to ask him questions otherwise it would be a kind of secret visit without any transparency which we always want Sudanese also to display to others. So I think that it was, on the whole, a good visit. And there are so many remarks and statements which are being seen and made in Abuja that this particular visit would not over-burden the minds of the people who are talking in Abuja.

**Q:** He also said, I think, in many other reports and statements that where there is an AU presence especially in IDP camps in Darfur, then there is more protection especially on women and children. But at the same time we see that the AU is moving very slowly in the deployment of its forces and even you said that if there is a peace agreement we will need some kind of other forces.

**SRSB Pronk:** He is right and I think he is repeating what I said in many occasions that where they are, they are doing a good job. Where they are not, the situation is still not very safe – the logic consequence is that they should be everywhere. That is why I am asking also for them to be in places where IDPs are returning to. And I said something very clearly that if they can do it, anyway, there has to be a military presence. I don't go further. So it is an incentive to them to do the job everywhere and an incentive for the American and the Europeans to make it possible for them to do the job and to talk with them. I can't go further at this moment but as soon as there are new developments, I can give you more information.

**Q:** You were in New York. Were you able to get any more commitments for the 2005 Work Plan?

**SRSB Pronk:** Yes, I would say it is increasing. It is not going fast enough but now we are above the billion. The original Work Plan was 1.5 billion so we are over two-thirds which is not good enough, but it is higher than what has been asked than all other appeals of the UN in other countries – Afghanistan, Niger, etc. So to that extent, I am never satisfied. But in this particular instance, I am satisfied and you can not say that Sudan is falling below the line of attention. And the fact that we now did create that consortium is a guarantee also for the long run. But I did, indeed, tell the governments that I need, for instance, food aid. Because it is only two-thirds of what we require. And the fuel crisis is increasing which means that the cost of food transportation is higher, which means less food. And we made a strong appeal on donors – we didn't get an answer, but I made that together with the Americans – that developmental money would also go into the construction of roads in the south because the transportation of food and also of regular consumption goods by air is making the prices sky-high at the moment. So if you would have better roads – road construction is a very important element of development to take place for the south – you could have lower prices and you could use the developmental money and also the domestic money better than now is the case.

That appeal has been made and I foresee that some countries, including the EU for instance, are going to spend some money also on road construction.

**Q:** Did you have any contact with the new government of national unity concerning the IDP situation in Khartoum?

**SRSG Pronk:** Not me personally because I was away. Thank you for your question – you know we brought it on the agenda again in January. We have now established a regular forum for discussions – the humanitarian units of the UN and also donor countries with a group on the Sudanese side led by the *Wali* (Governor). The last two meetings took place in this month, in September, and in the last meeting the *Wali* has now declared that there is an end to demolitions and an end to the relocations.

Let me just say that I was pleased with the statement. I was not pleased with the relocations – you know that and the *Wali* knows that very clearly. I am pleased with the fact there is an end to the demolitions. We will monitor that, of course, and I think it is partly due to the consultative mechanism which has been established. The UN has been very vocal on this and I am also pleased that the governments of western countries now have come in.

Thank you

**Spokesperson:** Mr. Pronk has to go but I would like for you to stay because we have some housekeeping issues and a couple of announcements.

The first thing, of course is that we have some documentation for you in the room and I hope that we had enough copies. The second thing is that I would like to announce, and I would like for you to pass on the information to your colleagues in your respective newspapers, that we will be having a football game between our peacekeepers and the kids who are sponsored and taken care by “Bridge of Hope”. They are street-kids and their ages range between 13-17 years. The game will take place tomorrow at 5:00p.m. and the venue is the Khartoum American School. So if you can pass on this information to your colleagues in your respective newspapers who are interested in the coverage of sports activities, they will be more than welcome as you will be yourselves because beyond a game of football, first, this is our first contact with the civil society and we chose the youth of Sudan. It is also an opportunity for us to reach out to the local community.

So hopefully I will see some of you at the game. We are having some surprises for the kids who are going to be playing with us so good luck to everybody.

Now some housekeeping things. I am having quite difficult times sending e-mails to many of you. Please get in touch with my assistant Ms. Hiba to correct your e-mail addresses. We can't read your handwriting can not read all your handwriting all that clearly.

The other item is about accreditation. You know that we have just renewed our mandate and you know that your accreditation card has the date of our mandate. So please get in touch with my assistant also so we could renew your accreditation cards. We have everything ready for you, just come by. My assistant, Hiba, is there so please get in touch with her.

This is what I have for you today and thank you very much. I will see you next Wednesday.

