



UNITED NATION

الأمم المتحدة

UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

Office of the Spokesperson

Date: 1 February 2006

PRESS BRIEFING

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen,

Statement of UNMIS on the issue raised in Sudan Vision report “UN, Sudan, Haiti Operations embezzled Scandal”

Following the report of the Sudanese English Daily “Sudan Vision” in its today’s edition “UN, Sudan, Haiti Operations embezzled Scandal” UNMIS would like to state the following: Two staff members of UNMIS have been asked to report to the UN Headquarter in New York for administrative reasons, in order to assist in preparing answers by the UN Headquarter management to finalize a draft internal audit report on procurement.

The Mission has not received any report so far. There are no disciplinary measures taken against the two staff members who have been put on leave from UNMIS with full pay.

ACTIVITIES OF UNMIS AND ITS SENIOR LEADERSHIP

SRSB

-SRSB Jan Pronk is back to Khartoum from a two-day visit to Juba. During his visit, the SRSB met with the President of the Government of Southern Sudan, Mr. Salva Kiir, as well as with Mr. Riyak Machar, the Vic-President of the GoSS, Dr. Justin Yac, Minister of Cabinet Affairs, Mr. John Luc, Minister of Youth, Culture and Sports.

The SRSB discussed with the GoSS high officials the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The SRSB discussed with Mr. Salva Kiir the views reported in the Sudanese media that Mr. Kiir expressed recently on the process of implementation of the CPA. The SRSB indicated that he was not pleased with the fact that many key institutions provided for in the CPA are not operational. He reiterated the need for the parties to the CPA to ensure that all required Institutions are established and more importantly to start functioning. The SRSB stressed the need for the Oil Commission to meet as soon as possible to reach agreement on important issues to be discussed during the meeting of the Sudan Consortium which will convene in Paris on 9 and 10 March 2006, in particular the issue of ensuring transparency of domestic and external resources’ allocation.

The SRSG also discussed with the President of the GoSS the insecurity resulting from the LRA presence in Southern Sudan. They discussed in this regard different political and military scenarios to address this issue.

The SRSG will be in Abuja for a three-day visit starting from Friday 10 February. He will discuss with the AU mediation as well as with the parties and the international partners the ongoing talks. The SRSG will raise in particular the security issue, the deteriorating security situation on the ground and the talks in Abuja on the security cluster.

Human Rights

On 28 Jan, UNMIS conducted a training session on gender concepts and gender-based violence for 15 high-ranking police officers representing different organs of the Northern Sudanese Police. A gender training for mid-level Sudanese police officers will be conducted at the end of February. UNMIS was also requested by the Sudanese Police Training Coordinator to deliver three additional training sessions on gender issues for Khartoum police officers in the coming months.

Civil Affairs

On 28 Jan, UNMIS attended a preparatory workshop for a conference on "Peaceful Co-Existence between the Rezeigat, Dinka, and Misseriya tribes", organized by the Council for International People's Friendship. In addition to senior tribal representatives, participants included SPLM leaders, members of the National Assembly and State Legislative Councils, and State Ministers.

Following the preparatory workshop, a nine-member committee of representatives from the Misseriya, Dinka and Rezeigat tribes met on 29 Jan and agreed that the conference on "Peaceful Co-existence Among Bordering Tribes" will take place on 10 March in Aweil, Northern Al Ghazal. Over 1,200 representatives of the three tribes are expected to participate.

UNMIS Police:

UNMIS Police, in collaboration with Civil Affairs, Child Protection and Rule of Law, hosted a one-day seminar for senior police commanders in Khartoum to explain the mandate and role of the mission as it affects policing and police institutions.

Military Update

Strength

-Deployment of Military Observers and Force Protection Elements is in progress and as of now, the total Militray personnel stands at 5, 902, including 593 Military Observers

-The advance party of Kenyan TCC has arrived in RUMBEEK. Kenyan Force Protection Troops along with Logistic Units from China and Pakistan will be deployed in Wau Sector.

Activities

-The overall security situation in the mission area remains calm but potential security risks exist in few of the locations. A Joint Monitoring Team comprising UN, SAF and SPLA Observers have been deployed in HAMESH KORIEB to monitor the situation. The JMT patrol has confirmed that there is no BEJA militia in DURUN DURUN and TELKUK area. The Force Commander Lt Gen Jasbir Singh Lidder visited HAMESH KORIEB over the weekend and he reported that the SPLA is totally in control of the area.

-Next CJMC Meeting will be held on 02 February, Thursday in Juba and will be chaired by the new Force Commander, Lt Gen Jasbir Singh Lidder.

SECURITY

Darfur

The Security situation in Darfur remains volatile, particularly in West and South Darfur. Banditry activities are reported to be in the increase. Attacks by armed militia on villages are also reported, particularly in the Jebel Marra area. A clash between the SLA and GoS forces were reported in Nertiti. On the humanitarian aspects of the situation in Darfur, my colleague Dawn briefed you already on Monday 30 June.

Lastly; I have just had an announcement from my colleagues from UNICEF. They have put an invitation in the shelf in the room that they will be celebrating the International Day on Zero Tolerance against Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting. That will be on 6th February and the venue is Sharja Hall and the contact person is Ms. Samira Amin. In the invitation you have her contact numbers. The program will include official statements, launch of the UNICEF official report on Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting, a representation of the national efforts to end Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting and performance (I would imagine they are art performances) and there will also be an exhibition on the theme. So please feel free to get in touch with my colleague Samira Amin and she will fill you in on any missing information.

This is it for my briefing today and I will now take your questions.

Q & A

Q: The first question is about the forces in Hamesh Koreib. You have told us that it has been reported that the SPLA forces are totally in control of the area. What are the guarantees that the two forces, i.e. the SAF and the SPLA, will not clash again? It was reported a few days ago that the SAF entered Hamesh Koreib and threatened the SPLA presence there. I just learnt this morning that the SPLA has been given some extension. What therefore do you think will be the guarantee to protect or defend this extension if it is an agreement?

My second question is about the Kenyan forces in Rumbek. What is the total number of the forces there?

Lastly and back in Khartoum; a few days ago it has been reported that some armed groups in Khartoum threatened some SPLA members – some former members of the SSDF who defected to the SPLA. I read in some newspapers that four of them were attacked. I don't

know whether or not the UN know something about that and what is the response of the UNMIS because such activities within the national capital may lead in one way or other to a destabilization of the implementation of the CPA because it is within the national capital where members of the international community are present monitoring the implementation of the CPA. Thank you.

Spokesperson: I think I will start with the easiest thing which I think was your second question on the Kenyan forces. I don't have the figures actually with me but I will ask my military colleagues and I will come back to you with that.

On Hamesh Koreib as I reported, and I think that you were present right from the beginning of my briefing, we already have deployed UN observers to Hamesh Koreib and we conducted a patrol with the SPLA and the Sudan Armed Forces. That, I think, should be enough guarantees that there should be no more clashes. The situation that you are describing is not really described accurately. It was not a clash between the SAF and the SPLM as we reported to you – my colleagues did that in fact and I was not present at the time – but I saw what they reported to you and what the SRSG himself explained in his last two press briefings on this with the media and he raised the issue of Hamesh Koreib. Actually, the SPLA conducted itself in quite an exemplary way in containing the situation and refraining from any reaction when some members of the Popular Defence Force moved into Hamesh Koreib. By the way, the reports that were released that the SAF moved in with tanks were proved to be false. There was no such thing. There were elements from the PDF and the UNMIS actually intervened with the two parties and the situation has been contained ever since. So we do not expect the SPLA and the SAF to be clashing. Yes, as you did mention, there seems to have been a gentleman's agreement but we were not notified officially by the parties on it but there seems to have been a gentleman's agreement between the SPLA and the SAF to extend the deadline that was initially set for the 9th of January for the SPLA withdrawal from that area of the east for another month. You asked for guarantees; there are patrols and we are working together with the SAF and with the SPLA and we are patrolling the area together. That should be enough guarantees.

You had also another question on Khartoum. I saw something about the situation that you described – the arrest, I think, or something of this nature of some elements that are part of the Paulino Matipp SSDF in Khartoum area. However, I do not have the details on that particular situation and more importantly I don't have the details of what UNMIS might have done about that particular situation but, in general, let me be very clear, Khartoum is not our area of deployment. It is not part of our mandate from a military perspective. The dealings between the two parties to the CPA with any armed group is their business alone and not the business of UNMIS. However, I will follow on the issue and will come back to you if I have anything to add to what I have said already.

Q: My question is about the deployment of the SAF from the south to the north as stipulated in the CPA. What do you have about the deployment from the south to the north and if that is not done, what say does the UN have regarding the violation of the CPA?

Spokesperson: Again, I don't have figures about redeployment – I think you are talking about redeployment of SAF from the south to the north, right? As I informed you many times and I have to check again if there has been any development, the government of Sudan has told us that they redeployed a certain number of forces from the south to the north and we have been in the process of checking the information to assess the accuracy of the figures.

Again, maybe one of my colleagues can help me to get somebody from the military to address these issues.

Q: What is the current situation in the Abuja talks? The JEM delegation has said that the government is not committed to the talks and has threatened to withdraw from the talks because the government is still bent on the military option. At the same time, Amin Hassan Omar of the government delegation, stated also that the rebel movements are not committed to the talks and that the talks may stop at any time. This may be a clear signal of the escalation in Darfur.

What role can the UN play in this issue and in pressuring the two sides to the Abuja talks in order to make of this round the final one?

Spokesperson: I had mentioned that Mr. Pronk will be traveling to Abuja from Friday 10th February and that he will spend there 3 days during which he will talk with the AU mediators and the Parties to the talks especially on the security situation.

Taking into consideration the situation on the ground, there is a deterioration in the security situation on the ground and especially with regard to fighting between the rebel movements and the government.

On exchange accusations on lack of commitment and so on, we had clearly said – and Mr. Jan Pronk had stated the UN position publicly – that more pressure is required and among these pressures are the activation of the sanctions dictated by the Security Council against persons who hamper peace and stability in Darfur. He had requested the Security Council and the Security Council to consider the report of the panel of experts established by virtue of resolution 1591. Mr. Jan Pronk had also pointed out that the strategy laid down by the Security Council has not succeeded to date.

What else can we do but put pressure? But pressure alone is not enough. What is required is more commitment from all the parties to the talks. The parties are ultimately responsible for reaching an agreement and putting an end to the suffering of the people in Darfur. They have to prove that they are up to the responsibilities they have taken up on themselves.

Mr. Pronk had also told the Security Council that if the parties to the Abuja talks do not reach soon a solution and a final agreement, then the Security Council has to look at alternatives.

Once more, responsibility for the political process is that of the AU mediators. We as the UN do not have a direct role in dealing with the negotiations process and you are aware that we have no peacekeeping role on the ground in Darfur.

Q: Now the (*indiscernible*) In Gereida (*indiscernible*) attack on SLM-Minnawi for abducting 5 *sheikhs* from the ... tribe. Members of this committee have presented protests to the UN, the AU and the Government of Southern Darfur demanding the immediate release of the abducted and threatening to take some other measures if this is not done. Reports say that the UN and the AU did not manage to secure the release of the abducted while further reports say that the abducted have been killed (*indiscernible*) The governor pledged to pay 50% of the cost (*indiscernible*).

Do you have a bigger role to play on the issue or not?

Spokesperson: The situation is as follows: the AU went in to mediate and we came in to support their efforts for the release of the abducted.

Your question is double-pronged and I have answered one part of it. Even if we do intervene with our good offices, we can not impose on someone to release another. We do not have, as I said, the mandate that gives us the right to do so in Darfur and you are aware of that. The AU does not have the mandate to forcefully intervene for their release. We can only use our good offices and mediate between the rebels and tribes. In fact I do not know all the details of this issue. The AU may definitely have more details than we do because they are in the leading role in this issue.

As for possibilities of transcending the situation, you do know that we have condemned, even at the levels of the Secretary-General himself, the recent attacks by the SLA on government positions – this is what we do at the political level. We can not however intervene on the ground as you do know that we don't have the mandate to intervene directly to address insecurity in Darfur.

On the tribes, it is the primary responsibility of the Sudanese government at the local levels and at the central level, to convince the tribes that they can't take matters in their own hands and that there are laws that have to be respected. If everybody who is attacked decides to take matters in their own hands, the issue of Darfur will not end.

The rebel groups, the SLM has to respect its commitments and halt all such activities as those you mentioned. They must their elements on the ground.

Col. Parminder Panu has joined us and he will address your queries on Military issues. There were some questions asked about the Kenyan troops and also the issue related to the redeployment of the SAF from the south to the north.

Col. Panu: Good afternoon everybody.

Regarding the deployment of Kenyan troops, firstly the Kenyan troops are to deploy 1 battalion to Sector II that is Wau, Rumbek and Aweil. We are supposed to deploy about 920 which exclude the staff officers and at the moment we have only the advanced party deployed which are 130 troops. The balance is yet to come and is waiting for their equipment to come on the ground first. These convoys are moving by road and as to now these convoys reached Wau and the locations to which these troops are to be deployed. This will be followed by the deployment of personnel.

The next question, I understand, is that you want to know the figures of the redeployment of SAF forces from south of line 1/1/56 to the north. I will tell you that tomorrow the CJMC is meeting and we have figures already given from the last CJMC meeting which was a fortnight ago. Tomorrow in the CJMC we hope to hear from the parties about their figures. however as far as procedures are concerned, the parties are supposed to declare 78 hours ahead of time of their intent to move the troops so that the Military Observers on the ground can verify the movements. But it is not always being done so. (*indiscernible*).

By 9th of January 2006, 31% of the SAF were to be deployed north of line 1/1/56. The SAF gave us figures from the last CJMC meeting that they have redeployed 31%. ...

Spokesperson: For anybody who has any other question on military issues, please use the opportunity that Colonel Pannu is with us.

Q: A while ago you mentioned that there is coordination between the forces in southern Sudan, the DRC and I think those present in these regions in order to curb the activities of the LRA. What are the steps you have taken on this issue?

Spokesperson: I have not made such a statement and don't know where you got it from. We, in the UN system, share information with all other missions in the region, including MONUC, on issues on common concern. I had explained to *AlAyaam* daily the difference between our mandate and that of the mission in the DRC especially with regards to the LRA issue.

UNMIS mandate includes a Chapter VII provision for self-defense and protection of UN and humanitarian personnel and assets, and limited mandate for the protection of civilians. The mandate granted MONUC, the mission in the Congo, has more powers based on Chapter VII of the Charter and they can resort to the use of force in a more proactive manner not only in self-defense but also in pursuit of groups such as the LRA jointly with the Congolese armed forces. This is a big difference.

Q: How does the UN deal with the presence of the militias?

Spokesperson: We do not deal with militias and I had answered this question asked by your colleague from the Sudan Radio Service, I think.

Our role is with the Parties that are signatories to the CPA. If you read the CPA, the issue of all Other Armed Groups has to be addressed by the Parties to the CPA. Our role is to record and monitor the implementation of the parties obligations. We do help also in the context of DDR when these militias decide to join the DDR program. We can use good offices.

Again, we as the UN mission have no role in directly dealing with the militias. If Paulino Matib clashes with another faction, this is not part of our mandate but is to be addressed by the Parties to the CPA.

On Khartoum, I had mentioned that Khartoum is not part of our deployment area. We may come in to offer our good offices if requested by the Parties; but this does not mean that we have a direct role when it comes to the situation in Khartoum.

Q: What is the exact number of troops so far deployed in your areas of mandate to date?

When are you planning to complete this deployment of 10,000?

Col. Panu: At the moment we have 66% of our troops already deployed from the approximate strength of 10,000. This comes to about 5,902 forces including 590 Military Observers.

Spokesperson: I already mentioned this in the press briefing – may be you came late.

Q: I am going to comment on a new story today but first I would like to say two things: I tried to contact yesterday but couldn't succeed. Secondly; we highly commend the UN in conducting such an investigation in trying to clean up its house. This said, my question is: why do we have to hear about this report from abroad when it concerns something about Sudan?

Spokesperson: First of all on the issue that you said you tried to contact me and I was not available. I don't know when you did that but at some point I have to turn off my phone because some of your colleagues call me late and I can't take all calls.

Q: It was in the morning.

Spokesperson: Fine, but the way you reported it is as if you tried to call me and I, on purpose, did not answer your question which is not the case actually.

Why you heard it from abroad is very simple because the issue is not an UNMIS issue; it is a headquarters issue and the information unfortunately leaked from an internal report to the media for some reason. And as I reported to you today and I am saying it on record, we haven't seen the report as yet and we don't even know what is in it. So how am I going to report to you something that I don't know about?

What we know is that the two colleagues from UNMIS together with 6 other UN officials from other areas of peacekeeping have been called back to New York for administrative reasons – this is what they told us. So far, what we know also, is that they have been put on leave with full pay and so far we know also that there is no measure that has been taken, disciplinary or otherwise, against them. So far, again, we haven't seen the report so I would not be reporting to you something that I myself am not clear about. Later on, if there is anything, rest assured that we will keep you posted on it but it is a headquarters and not an UNMIS issue.

Q: It is about a peacekeeping operations and you are part of it.

Spokesperson: Yes, but the report is about procurement in many missions not only about UNMIS –and the authority over it is from headquarters.

Q: In any case you have two already ..., will this affect ...

Spokesperson: We are not prejudging anything. As I told you, we don't know what is in the report; as I told you there are no disciplinary measures so far taken. There are only on leave to address some questions and to help headquarters address some questions in the audit report. I am not precluding or prejudging anything; I don't know and it is not my place to assume anything and I would invite everybody not to assume anything because there is no ground so far to assume that there is any wrongdoing so far.

Q: One more question: what is the amount of the funding spent so far by UNMIS?

Spokesperson: I really don't know. I have to talk to our people from budget. So we could check again what was the amount of money allocated to UNMIS and then know how much money has been spent.

Q: Yes; because there is no great difference between the allocation and actual expenditure.

Spokesperson: I don't want to dwell much on these figures but since you asked the question how much money has been spent, I will ask my colleagues from administration and come back to you.

Q: There are some financial difficulties going around in the country. The Oslo Conference of last year has given you 1 billion dollars. What is the latest on these pledges? Are there any developments or not?

Spokesperson: Again I would like to remind that we have now two press briefings, one on humanitarian issues, and the ones I hold. Please address these questions to my colleague from OCHA.

As far as I know about the situation, yes we do still have financial difficulties particularly when it comes to the south. It has always been a problem but we have been experiencing delays. Not as much as because the donors are not necessarily willing to pay but the problem is that for their own bureaucratic reasons, even when they make pledges, between the time they make pledges to the time they actually give us the money it's quite a long period. And it has to do with lots of things – it has to do with budgetary processes, parliamentary processes to release the money, budget cycles and so on. But some of them, yes you can say that, do not meet their commitments for reasons not necessarily bureaucratic.

I have to add to this also that yes there is a problem from the international community meeting its obligations towards southern Sudan. There is also an obligation of the Sudanese themselves to also start investing using their domestic resources for the good of the people. It is not only international money but also domestic money. We take the criticism of the international community for not honoring its obligations but we add to it also that there is a need for the Sudanese themselves to invest for the development of southern Sudan and the rest of Sudan for that matter.

Q: You said that you haven't received anything yet for the Work Plan 2006 but we understood from Mr. Jan Pronk last time that for the first six months the pledges are covered and also this kind of fund from Norway and so on. He is not worried about the first six months ...

Spokesperson: We are not worried as far as the pledges are concerned. In terms of cash flow, that is another story. But at least when you have pledges it is fine because you know how much you are expecting and follow it up but you are in complete uncertainty when nobody told you how much they are going to provide for the remainder of the plan.

Again, I would reiterate, if you need further information on actual figures please get in touch with my colleague Dawn.

Q: You are saying that the Kenyan troops have left or they ... is it going to be by land directly from Kenya to Wau or through Juba to Wau?

Col. Panu: The deployment of troops takes place in two parts: the equipment is normally shipped by road – it is the equipment that is coming by road. The personnel are going to be flown in. so they are two separate.

Q: How safe then is the road according to how you establish it – to the final destination of the troops?

Col. Panu: The road has been cleared.

Q: Does it mean that the road from Western Equatoria to Western Bahr-el-Ghazal is totally immune of the practice of landmines?

Col. Panu: Well, we are talking about movement of troops and movement of Contingent Owned Equipment. The Contingent Owned Equipment is contracted and the movement is undertaken by certain contractors and they are the ones who are responsible to deliver at the end. While the civilian convoys are moving. Briefly speaking, it is the contractor who is moving the equipment so it is not that we impose on ourselves how the civilians would want to move. There are lots of places where civilian vehicles are moving in any case – it is just an ordinary contracted movement.

Q: I am asking this question because last year but one in Nairobi, one of the SPLA commanders said that the area between Tombura and Wau is heavily mined – so far the most heavily mined area in southern Sudan. And the people who were involved in planting the mines all died in the war and the mines are there. It is very unfortunate indeed. I am asking how safe is the road from Western Equatoria to Western Bahr-el-Ghazal.

Col. Panu: You will never get a clear answer. I will give you an example: even when the roads are cleared, sometimes it was seen that (*indiscernible*) some mines have possibly been planted after that. To say that this road is clear today and will remain so tomorrow is a question because you can never give a guarantee for the future. And demining is such an affair that you clear the road and according to the technical specifications declare the road clear. But if a mine is later found then investigations take place and the (*indisecernible*). So to that extent, nobody gives the guarantee for the future.

Q: We have been talking about the insecurity caused by Other Armed Groups in the national capital which is not part of your mandate. Reports also coming in from the south say that there are some intruders from western Sudan entering Bahr-el-Ghazal with guns and disturbing people there. I am sure that southern Sudan is entirely within your mandate. So are you aware of such issues?

Col. Panu: As far as our mandate is concerned, I think our colleague has already said that our mandate is to deal with the parties to the CPA. If there is an internal disturbance, we are not the authority to comment on this disturbance because we are basically dealing with the Parties and their forces and we can best comment on that.

Spokesperson: No other questions?

Thank you very much and we will see you next Wednesday if we don't have anything in between. Have a nice weekend.