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## Office of the Spokesperson

*Below is a near verbatim transcript of the press conference by SRSG Jan Pronk held on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2006 at the UNMIS Press Briefing Room, Ramsis Building.*

**Spokesperson:** Thank you for coming and welcome to this press conference hosting Mr. Jan Pronk, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to Sudan.

Without further ado, I leave the floor to Mr. Jan Pronk.

**SRSG Pronk:** Thank you.

I was in Juba on Sunday before the last as you may have read in the newspapers, attending the memorial ceremony for John Garang. I was quite moved by the spirit in Juba. Of course there are many problems with the implementation of the CPA but it was so clear that everybody was united in the spirit of John Garang. Church leaders, the SPLM leadership and the people who were present- and I think the whole of the city was at the memorial site. I don't think there was anybody left in Juba town itself. Of course in such a sad occasion you look backwards and you again mourn the death of a great leader.

It was also clear, and I got the same message from our representative whom we had sent to the memorial ceremony here in Khartoum - I had asked Mr. Ibrahim Ndiaye, the Chief of Security, to represent me here in Khartoum - that people were looking forward and that they get some strength from the spirit of John Garang.

To quote myself when I made a very brief introduction at the service, "John Garang was a person who had a vision and leaders need a vision. Secondly, he was a leader who always stayed with the people; he didn't alienate himself on the people and he took care that the people stayed close to him. To that extent, he was a real populist leader at the same time. And thirdly, he didn't give up; and there were of course many problems in the south but the spirit of John Garang also has to be seen as part of his legacy, his heritage - don't give up despite the problems which there are.

It was very clear from the speeches made by Rebecca Garang and also by Salva Kiir and others that the CPA is John Garang's legacy and that people put so much of their own confidence in that specific agreement. It did put an end to the war and the message from Juba is that it has to be implemented in letter and spirit and in full.

It is important to remind ourselves because the longer the period after the signature of such an agreement, the more you are going to take a distance from that agreement on the grounds that that is a thing of the past. It is not a thing of the past but is a thing of

the future and the future of Sudan will depend on the implementation of the CPA. That is what many people mourning in Khartoum and in Juba really did express and I very much hope that the political leadership in Khartoum will still carry out the implementation of the CPA in that spirit and with the required speed, inspiring the people that indeed the implementation of the CPA is being taken as seriously as its negotiators did. If you do so, then you can also give a very good example to the DPA. Make the implementation of the DPA as serious an effort as its negotiations. I will come back to that but let us still stay on the south for a second.

I am visiting also of course regularly places in the south where we are trying to expand our activities. I told you last time something about our activities on disarmament in Malakal, Akok and Akobo. I went to Torit a couple of days ago. I had never been in Torit before. Torit is one of those cities which had been occupied time and again by successive waves of military and rebels. You have such cities which, during a long war, are either in the hands of the one or the other party.

In Torit , you see the scars of the war - no reconstruction yet; it is a very poor region. If you walk in the market, you don't see many food items. I am always going to markets when I am visiting places in Sudan. But if you may compare the market in Torit with, for instance, the markets in Kassala or the markets in Darfur-to your surprise-you'll see that the market in Torit is poor peoples' market where there is not much choice and you don't see much of locally produced food. It is important to ensure that this changes after the CPA, to show to people that there is development, there is reconstruction so that the scars of the war are gradually being blurred and that people know that with regards to access to medication, access to food and access to water – three major issues – that there is improvement.

On the way back by car from Torit to Juba we stopped in the village of Lirya which may be well known to you. It was so poor. We met hundreds of people over there and all were saying: please we don't have hospitals; sir, we don't have food; sir, we don't have water. It is heartbreaking in itself. And we have to carry out what's needed to help – not the government in the south, but also the international community. I am pressing my own people and also New York and donor countries to speedup the implementation of the phase after the signing of the CPA. It is important for the people and it is also important for when the people will have to take their own decisions later at the elections and the referendum if it is worthwhile to continue on the two-system, one country approach or if it would be better to go for separation. We have to remind everybody because, listening to the speeches in Juba (and I will come back to that) there were many statements which were apportioning the blame of the slow implementation of the CPA to Khartoum. I don't think that is justified; I think that the authorities in the South and the authorities in the North have to share the blame for the slow implementation. But people made that conclusion and we have to take into account that they may want a separate State. I said before that would be, in my view, very risky. That is the reason why the UN works – and also on the basis of the mandate which was given to us – to make unity attractive. But unity can not be made attractive if there is no progress.

If I may quote one of you whom I am always reading in the *Khartoum Monitor*, Alfred Taban, "Unity has to be unity in equality and the spirit of the CPA is not the spirit of unity of a driver and his horse (because the driver and his horse are united of

course but in inequality)” If the people in the South have the impression that the unity of Sudan is the unity of the driver in the North and the horse in the South, then they may revolt. Such a horse may revolt against its driver. That is why it is necessary to go for reconstruction and development, poverty eradication and equality in decision-making in power.

I take a step to the east. Very briefly, I told you last time during my press conference what we had decided (withdrawal of UNMIS). We have started implementing the decisions. All Military Observers have left Kassala – around 30 of them - and are now back in Khartoum or on their way to the south. Some are in the south to carry out their monitoring activities. What we do have at the moment in Kassala is the military protection team. They have to build down their tented camps outside the town of Kassala. They have started to do so and we are closing also our office and it will take place between the first week of August and the 15<sup>th</sup> of November. So we have kept our promise; we are leaving and we also are keeping our promise with regards to humanitarian and development assistance which is taking place and we will step down from the regions of the east in the next period.

Let me go to the situation in Darfur. There are many hand-outs for you on that table. Some are available in both English and Arabic and some will be made available soon in Arabic. You the report of the Secretary-General on Darfur which is very well known and I will say something about it, which he did submit to the Security Council. Number two, I think you also have received this document which is a document in English which is a comparison of security incidents in Darfur between the first 7 months of 2005 and the first 7 months of this year (I am going to say something about that) together with a shorter document which is also in Arabic and is a document on security in Darfur in the month July. I can tell you that this document is a chapter of our Monthly Report which we have presented to the Security Council through our office in New York.

Let me very briefly say something about insecurity in Darfur during these first seven months of this year as compared to last year. I am not going to read through the document but you find all these statistics, figures and trends and percentages in the document itself.

What is the conclusion? The conclusion is that during the first 7 months of this year, there are major surprises. There is a significant increase in insecurity; a worsening of the security situation as compared to the first seven months of last year. There are a number of indicators and you will find them in the document and I am not going to mention all of them. But, for instance, the number of armed clashes during that period is the double of the number last year – twice as high. So there is a 100% increase. You can of course make a distinction on the types of clashes. Clashes between the factions; clashes between the government and the rebel groups; clashes between militia, all these categories are included. I mention one example: attacks amongst the actors increased by 75% - quite a significant increase. All that together - read it publish and re-publish it – all that together did result in an increase in displaced people with 40,000 more than last year.

Another indicator: attacks on the international community. For instance on the United Nations; on International Non-Governmental Organizations; on the African Union.

Together, it is 140% higher now than last year. It is not a bit more but 140% higher which is two and a half times higher as last year. For the United Nations, we have better figures – attacks on us were less by 10% but that means that on the others they were much higher. Why less on us, because we were moving less. I had issued so many instructions that we should stay in cities or in camps – you remember el-Geneina, for instance - that means that we were less prone to be attacked. That is not fair because that means that others had to do the job and NGOs, for instance, who have their own security system.

The number of attacks on NGOs was 75% higher than last year. I give you an example: 30 cars had been hijacked last year, 90 this year. This was all during the last phase of the talks on Darfur. It was all after the deadline which we had set of the 31<sup>st</sup> of December last year. They only needed a couple of months to make peace in a document. But that period has been used by the parties by attacking each other more, by attacking the people more, by attacking the international agencies more and by attacking the African Union more.

Of course we know there has been criticism on the African Union. I have always said that is not fair. The African Union has not been given adequate resources to meet the problems. And listen to the figures: the number of attacks on the African Union was 900% higher than in the first 7 months of last year. So if you would have had 100 attacks on the African Union last year, you would have 1,000 – 900% higher. It is unbelievable in a period supposed to be closer to peace.

Can I also just repeat what was said by my colleague in another press briefing two days ago that the number of victims from NGOs and other humanitarian workers has never been as high. We had 7 dead people in the last two months. It is unbelievable. People who work to the benefit of the people who are the victims have themselves become the victims. And the NGOs are very, very seriously worried about this. This can not continue.

I don't know whom I should address. Sometimes you have to address the bandits but I don't know who the bandits are. Sometimes you have to address leaders in camps and we are doing that very seriously at the moment. We have sent a mission to Zalengei and we had a very tough message to the leaders of the IDP camps in Zalengei: "You better behave otherwise we can not continue giving assistance". Killing of people over there is totally to be condemned whether they are humanitarian workers in the service of NGOs or in the service of UNICEF or in the service of NGOs doesn't make any difference. These people are working to the benefit of the people in the camps and they have to be trusted and all these rumors which are being orchestrated are a crime. That was an orchestration when rumors was spread that the water was being polluted – it is a crime that rumor. I am drinking the water from the well and always going to the well pumping the water myself. People, NGOs, WES, UNICEF, they are to provide the water for the people in the camps and it is safe water and can be drunk by everybody. It is a crime to spread such rumors which results in uncertainty amongst people which then results in the killing of humanitarian workers. I am repeating the message here and there are other rumours which I don't want to repeat – these are not acceptable. As it is also not acceptable that in those clashes this month so many civilians in Darfur died. During this period, 7 months this year, the number of people according to our reports (which are always underestimated because we do not count

the rumours) but the confirmed reports show that last year, 248, say 250 people died in Darfur and this year 1665 – four times higher. So during the period people were negotiating or postponing to reach an agreement, passing the deadline just talking and talking and talking, four times as many people, Darfurians, died as in the first seven months of last year.

It is good to have these figures and the trends and I added to this the chapter which I just mentioned of our report which we submitted to the Security Council. I am not going to read it for you but if you read it, you will see that July was a bad month in terms of security and we have documented everything that took place in July. And that means that the spirit of the DPA is not yet being implemented on the ground because there is much insecurity.

We are three months after the signature of the DPA – the 5<sup>th</sup> of May and now the beginning of August. I can only say, witness this also, that the first three months have not been positive. We saw these ongoing incidents of insecurity; we saw the non-signature of the agreement by quite a number of rebels; we saw splits in the opposition; we saw also troops who had not signed and started to fight like the NRF (National Redemption Front), for instance. So the first three months have not been positive. We should not sketch a more rosy picture than it has been.

Let's put the three months behind us. The beginning of August, three months later, Mini Minnawi has been inaugurated as the Special Assistant of the President here. That's the number four high ranking post in the country. I was present during the inauguration; I was listening to the President and I was listening to Mini Minnawi. He was inaugurated also as the head of the transitional government to be established, of course, in Darfur. I must say it was a serious, dignified ceremony. I was listening to the speeches and these speeches by both the President and by Mini Minnawi were a commitment to peace.

I want to take it very seriously. Yesterday I had a meeting, together with my colleague the Special Representative of the African Union Mr. Kingibe, with Mr. Minnawi in his new capacity and we were discussing the future and we committed ourselves to the cooperation of the United Nations and the African Union with him and with his colleagues in his new capacity in order to implement the DPA. And we requested him in his new capacity also to see to it that the government and also his own wing of the movement would do likewise.

I had similar meetings yesterday also with Mr. Khalifa (Majzoub Alkahlifa, Presidential Advisor) with whom I had many talks during the negotiations. And yesterday also we received the plan of the government, as was promised by President Bashir to Secretary-General Kofi Annan in Banjul. He promised the first week of August to submit the plan of the government of Sudan with regards to the involvement of the United Nations in the implementation of the DPA. The plan has not been made public. I supposed it is going to be made public. It is not for us of course to do so, but I am pleased we have it. I am studying it today and have submitted it yesterday evening to the Secretary-General and the plan will also be studied later. We will comment on it later but after having seriously studied the plan.

I am also pleased, although there was some delay, that we got also the plan of the government to disarm the Janjaweed. We have unified our comments with the comments of the African Union and some of the countries which are in the CFC and we are now discussing those comments with the government so that a second version of that plan can meet the approval of the international community in order to start the disarmament and demobilization of the Janjaweed. It is very important that it takes place.

When I was two weeks ago in Nyala, I had a very good meeting with the governor. In South Darfur things go quite well – there are no attacks. However, as I said, there are many attacks among Arab militia but, a point for today, there is a lot of activity of Janjaweed around the camps. Around Kalma, there is an increase of Janjaweed harassing and raping women, spreading terror around the camps. These people have to be stopped; they have to be disarmed. The African Union CFC is paralyzed at the moment but I hope it will get better after the meeting of the Joint Commission which took place last Thursday in Addis, has to organize, according to the DPA, demilitarized zone, verify them and then to get the weapons and the armed people outside of those demilitarized zones. That includes in particular the Janjaweed. That plan is important and has to be implemented.

I was last week also in el-Geneina and had discussions. People in the camps want to go back home not to stay there but to cultivate the land. Which is good for Darfur. But they are being harassed by Arab nomads, Janjaweed, who have occupied their villages out of which they have chased away the people and who tell them, “We will kill whoever wants to return”. And they have set some examples and have killed some people, raped women and beaten up many others. Indeed there are many people who were carrying out atrocities in the past and seem to have a strategy. “People, we chased you away, so stay away; don’t return,” and they say so also. I have called that cleansing in the past. These people have to be stopped. It is not a government policy to support them but now they have to stop these people so that IDPs can return.

All those issues and many others have to be part of an overall and integrated plan to be carried out together with the United Nations, the African Union and the government and the movements who have signed the agreement and also the other movements. I repeat what I said before: the text of the DPA is in itself quite good. I call again on AbdulWahid, on Shafi and on all the other people who are splitting themselves away -so that we have a kind of a jigsaw puzzle at a certain moment- to take the agreement seriously and to join in its implementation in the interest of the people for whom they are fighting.

Three months after, I have the indication that talks are taking place and that talks are taking place also between the government and the Mini Minnawi and the representatives of various groups. I am in favor. I don’t have much inside-information and if I would have it I wouldn’t give it, but I am in favor of talks in order to get people on board. We are also talking and when we have contacts with, for instance movements that did not sign, we do so not because we are on their side; not because we are anti-DAP but, on the contrary, because we want the DPA to be a success and we want them to join it. It is important that the government in particular tries to re-establish contact with AbdulWahid and his splinter movements with the assistance of Vice-President Kiir. It is positive. I understand also that other governments, for

instance President Wade of Senegal, has offered his good offices. It is positive. Let us use all these well-meant activities in order to get more support for the DPA so that it can be implemented and so that we can get rid of all these insecurity incidents that put at risk the lives of so many people. We are monitoring and we are helping.

Also in the framework of two other important follow-up procedures after the signature of the DPA, the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue which yet has to start and I hope it can start now in preparations in August. Everything is in place but the African Union is in the lead. There are also the reconstruction activities. I'm referring to the Joint Assessment Mission (JAM). Experts have been sent to Darfur. They can only work if there is security; they can not go everywhere; they can only work if there some progress in the implementation and again the role of the CFC is very important; and they should work in an inclusive fashion. That means to the benefit of all people in Darfur and not only those who feel themselves aligned with parties who did sign, in particular.

It was a long story, I am sorry. It may have given rise to many questions now and it may also have answered many of your questions. Anyway I am available for questions but I took a bit more time because I am going on leave for a couple of weeks and during this time, the leadership of this Mission will be in the hands of my excellent two deputies, Manuel da Silva and Taye Zerihoun.

## Q & A

**Q:** SLM-Minnawi has announced that only people from his movement can actually be nominated to any of the posts outlined by the DPA. What is your reaction to that? Does it discourage others from signing on?

Second question; has the world forgotten about Darfur? It has definitely dropped from the world's agenda. Is it that the peace deal, as you put it as only on paper, has given them the excuse that this is over, finished?

**SRSB Pronk:** I have got the impression that he is not against the inclusive approach. He got also, as you and I know from the press, a message from President Bush. I think the main message from Washington was to be inclusive and to bring on board his former allies. I had the impression during my discussions that he wanted to do so.

I would make a distinction myself between people who belong to a group which did not sign but is behaving and people belonging to a group who didn't sign and is fighting. So I make a distinction between AbdulWahid and his splinter movements and the NRF. And I can very well imagine that people who started fighting again after the signing of the peace agreement are not welcome but the people who only took the

political decision not to sign but are behaving also are more-or-less complying with all the previous agreements - we should be honest and make that decision.

I have condemned the NRF for their attack on Hamrat el-Sheikh and for their ongoing attacks and we are monitoring. I have been told this morning from my own staff (but it has to be confirmed) that the NRF now is moving its troops to South Darfur and that an armed convoy of the NRF was seen moving into South Darfur. That would very much be deplorable because in South Darfur, with the exception of the two points that I mentioned, there is quite as far as the war is concerned. We have to condemn it (NRF move towards South Darfur). But as far as AbdulWahid, el-Shafi and the others are concerned, please, please, welcome them. I got the impression that Minnawi is willing to make that distinction.

**Q:** The actual question was that Mini Minnawi made his position very clear that only he can nominate to these posts. Doesn't that discourage people like the Freewill to come on board?

**SRSB Pronk:** I gave an answer to this in my well-known diplomatic fashion.

I would like to read the text of the DPA and what it does say about the right to nominate and the right to appoint on the basis of a nomination, because that is important. I understand that both the government and the Minnawi faction are in agreement that they should not complete all positions very soon and that both are willing to keep positions open for others in order to attract them to join and that is wise. But I can't speak for them because that is their policy and not our policy. That is why I have to be so cautious.

So make a distinction between the right of nomination and the right of appointment and see it also as a matter of phases.

To your second question; no, Darfur is not forgotten; definitely not. But I understand very well that the Security Council now is devoting 95% of its time to Lebanon. And we all, of course, when you read newspapers or watch television, want to know what is happening in Lebanon.

I join my voice with that of the Secretary-General who has condemned attacks on civilians in Lebanon. Of course you have to condemn all attacks on all civilians also in Israel but the suffering at the moment of Arab people in particular in Lebanon is outrageous. I am in complete agreement with the Secretary-General, and he is doing his utmost and the people in Sudan have to understand that he is doing his utmost, to have as soon as possible a ceasefire which will protect those innocent civilians. That is the most important thing and then you can talk politics. To postpone a ceasefire in order to strengthen positions is, of course, not in the interest of the protection of the people and that is why it is so important to have such a ceasefire as soon as possible. And for all people in Sudan, it is important that our neighbors in Lebanon are being spared.

At the same time, the Security Council has received the report and there will be a briefing. I was told that the briefing by the Secretary-General himself will be decided by the Security Council as soon as they have time, given all their attention for



Lebanon. I think that is fair enough as long as people here in Sudan really take their own plan very seriously.

I have also been told that the members of the Security Council want to live up to their promise which they made when they came here in June namely, “We want to have a consultation with the government”; “We will not invade; we will not send troops when the government does not agree”.

I call on members of the government to be honest and not to tell fairy tails to their own people in this country that the United Nations wants to invade. The United Nations has promised; the Secretary-General has promised; the chair of the Security Council has promised; I have promised everything will take place in consultations – no, even more – only in agreement with the government. So please don’t tell fairy tales to your own people that the United Nations does not have a secret agenda.

That is the background of the time; not forgetting the people but keeping the promise that it is being done in consultation and in agreement with the government over here and all the people. Also extremist groups in this country who want to attack the United Nations listening to fairytales should understand that the United Nations is your friend and not your enemy. That is why it is being done so seriously and meticulously at the moment.

**Q:** Don’t you think that Minnawi’s appointment actually could be [*indiscernible*] to the peace process because it is going to leave no space for AbdulWahid to [*indiscernible*]?

What is the sense of carrying out a joint assessment mission when the Darfur conflict is worse than it has been in the past year?

**SRSG Pronk:** At a certain moment people have to take a decision in order to create a new situation. I think it was also you or one of your colleagues who asked me the question a couple of weeks ago whether it was wise to sign the DPA in the present setting without the others. At a certain moment you have to change a situation rather than continuously postpone and delay – and I tried to explain that. It is a choice, and this choice was not made by us. It is a domestic affair.

I understand the desire of the parties who had to create a new situation and not only to have uncertainty. They could have done something else. What is wise can only be seen later on with hindsight. If it would imply that you close the door to others, it is not wise. That is why I was trying to give a cautious answer to your colleague and I mentioned something of my talks with both the government and Minnawi in which I made a plea to not close the door to the others and make it clear to the others that they are still welcome and have been reserved seats. It is their decision and the perception of that decision is of course important. It should be an inclusive process. It should remain or become an inclusive process – whatever words you would like to use. And that also is my call to Mini Minnawi, and in one of the first times in my life, I join with President Bush: make it inclusive; reach out to the others, that is the call for the next stage.

On the assessment mission; yes, that is our decision. And you can say it is totally insecure and we wait. And that is why I mentioned three conditions: security, progress and inclusiveness.

As soon as these conditions can be met somewhere in Darfur, we go. In South Darfur, it can be met. I was also in Nyala two weeks ago and I met the *Wali* and Mini Minnawi's SLM delegation over there. And we had a good meeting over there. We discussed indeed also the JAM. There is security in a number of areas and they can work there. They are willing to talk also with representatives of AbdulWahid in the Jebel Marra. By the way, the representatives of AbdulWahid should also be willing to talk and should not exclude themselves, because then you get a stalemate. That is one of the impressions which we got from AbdulWahid in Asmara. So wherever it is possible to be inclusive and secure, we can show to the people that we are taking the DPA seriously. We want to do reconstruction; we want to help. It maybe perhaps a device through which we will take away some of the reasons of people to continue to fight; it may also be an indirect measure to create more security – that is a choice.

But at the moment, the JAM mission is not going to el-Geneina. But it can go to South Darfur. That is the situation.

**Q:** Despite the many attacks that threaten security in Darfur, the United Nations still does not wish to publicize any of the names of the suspects listed for the crimes in Darfur as stipulated by UNSC Resolution 1591. Isn't it time to proceed to implement the resolution?

Secondly; do you expect the government to respond to the comments of the United Nations, the African Union, the EU and the US over the government plan to disarm the Janjaweed or will it come up with a new plan?

**SRSB Pronk:** I don't want a new plan. I want the government to take seriously the comments of the international community and I have all reasons to expect that they will take it seriously in the present process.

Four names were made known to the Security Council by the Panel of Experts. The Security Council then should take action. It is not for the United Nations –Secretariat– to take action but the Security Council – they didn't. I don't know why. I only know that they sent a new delegation of the Panel of Experts which is now present in Darfur.

The United Nations administration should not be in a position to take action against people. That is not for us. That is for a political body which is the Security Council. I have always been in favor of the Security Council following up its own decisions and have been very cautious. I can not pass a judgment on that.

**Q:** Why has the United Nations image changed in the eyes of the displaced and homeless?

What is going to happen if the government of Sudan insists on its position towards the deployment to Darfur of United Nations forces?

What is the United Nations rule towards starting a conflict in the region?

**SRSG Pronk:** Everywhere where I go and where my colleagues go and where humanitarian of the United Nations are going, we are being told by IDPs, homeless people that they cherish the United Nations and the NGOs. Definitely that has not changed. The United Nations has, in Darfur, amongst the victims – and those are millions – the name of an independent and effective humanitarian organization.

There are some people who manipulate the people in the camps and that should stop – the rumor mongering. But the people themselves are in favor (of the UN). I see problems in the camps. Not anti-United Nations, but I see youth groups who are taking the law in their own hands. There are too many weapons and then you always find incidents in the camps which get the character of a city. There is criminality which is oriented towards each and every person who has more, and sometimes NGOs, who have computers, cars and money. It is not anti-United Nations but anti what is being felt as rich. I don't feel an anti-United Nations attitude.

In Darfur, amongst all the others, people in the cities for instance (and I have had many contacts with representatives of civil society, of tribes) we don't feel that there is an anti-United Nations attitude. We are careful but we don't feel there is hostility towards the United Nations. I don't feel that here in Khartoum either amongst the general public.

I do understand that at the moment, in many parts of Sudan, there is much disappointment that the United Nations is not protecting, not able to protect people in Lebanon and that is a very important feeling. I share that feeling; I am disappointed. But please understand and make a distinction between countries that in the Security Council take a decision (they are also United Nations) and the United Nations apparatus. All these people with Blue Helmets and in this building and around who carry out instructions – make that distinction. The political bodies of the United Nations are divided. They have to find a solution. The Secretariat staff, the military sent out by the United Nations to Lebanon, to Sudan, carry out a mandate. And the protection mandate which we have also here and like UNIFIL has also in Lebanon is limited and they have to work within these limitations which are a result of political decisions.

So people in Sudan should make that distinction and see the United Nations system as answering to political decisions and not stepping beyond its mandate or having a separate agenda. I know it is difficult to make that decision but please do so.

The government, so far, is sticking to its decision against the deployment of United Nations troops to Darfur. The government is also saying, "Please do a lot for the people in Darfur and step up your humanitarian and development or whatever activities". The plan of the Government which I referred to has not yet been made public. I am studying it and can not give you any information on the plan. I think that the government should do so itself.

But as long as the government does not change its position, we will abide by that position. I am not pre-positioning to go into Darfur with military. We are completely transparent and we will work on the basis of our present mandate and that is the

mandate which we got in July 2004 which is the one we are carrying out at the moment – humanitarian, human rights, political, civilian, some reconstruction as soon as possible, assistance to returns, but not military. But the present mandate already brings with it a huge deployment of the United Nations to Darfur and we will continue to do so as long as security makes it possible for us to carry out the job.

**Q:** The NRF has escalated military operations and claims to have seized all SLA-Minnawi held positions and is threatening more military operations. It is also calling for a separate deal with the government apart from the DPA. Do you expect such a new agreement or an annexure to the DPA carrying the demands of the NRF or those of the holdout groups?

The second question; Mr. Jan Pronk and Ambassador Kingibe said in their joint statement that there are claims that a military aircraft bombarded the area of [*indiscernible name of the area*] south of Kukul. They also say that the CFC will investigate. Has an investigation been carried out?

Thirdly; the NRF claims to have shot down an Antonov military aircraft. Has the United Nations investigated or has the African Union reported to the United Nations of its findings on the issue?

**SRSB Pronk:** There is quite some fighting going on in North Darfur and we get different information. The government says they control the situation while its NRF adversaries say that they control the situation. I don't know exactly who is gaining territory. I know that there is a lot going on in those areas and I also know that many inhabitants are already, for quite sometime, in the IDP camps and that also means that we do not carry out much activity over there. By the way, fighting also means that we do have less humanitarian access. If you see on this map, since April this year before the peace agreement; July this year after the peace agreement, there are many areas where we can't go. Before the peace agreement we could go to more areas than since the peace agreement. We do not know much in those areas.

The African Union has to investigate but the problem is, and I think we said this last time, that the African Union can not investigate on its own because, according to the DPA, investigations have to take place in a tripartite fashion – African Union, government, Mini Minnawi faction of the SLM. These investigations are hardly taking place because people –representatives of the parties- are not there. The African Union has its people but the others are not there. Moreover, if you assess something, you have to address something and you have to talk with the others. And the others are not welcome in the meetings so you see still a complete stalemate situation and that is one of my major worries that the most important instrument which we have for the short term (for the long term it is the DDD, for instance) is not functioning and that is, three months after the signing of the agreement, a very bad thing. As I said in the beginning, let us forget the first three months and make a fresh beginning.

Secondly; that also means that that specific bombardment by the plane could not be addressed and assessed by the African Union. We, the United Nations, report on the basis of information which we get. But if the information is not credible, we don't give the information. All information which we give in our reports is highly credible though not officially proven. So you can contest it but I am not giving information

just on the basis of rumor and hearsay. We are quite professional in the United Nations system so, as far as I am concerned, this bombing did take place.

Thirdly; on the NRF claim that they shot a plane, I don't think it is true. One plane, according to the information which I have, returned to el-Fasher. We think that that was the plane which was claimed to have been shot down by the NRF. It was damaged and the damage, the government (SAF) says, was a technical problem. We think that the damage was the result of shooting at the plane. I can not say more than that. A decision was taken to go to the site which, if there would have been a plane shot down, the plane would be there. That expedition still has to take place. Of course it should be an African Union-led expedition. That is the story.

But may I add to this that I condemn NRF attacks and I made the distinction between SLM-AbdulWahid and the NRF. AbdulWahid and his splinter groups behave, they don't attack; they only didn't sign and you can talk with them; NRF is attacking and counter-attacking because they are now in the middle of a fight which they started. It has to be condemned. Please make that distinction.

And that means that I am very much interested in getting AbdulWahid and all the other groups on board because they are behaving and not fighting and the claims which they have, in my view, could be taken very seriously into consideration in talks without changing the DPA. I have spoken in the past about additions to the DPA. Make the DPA richer.

I am not interested in claims by those who fight. I make that distinction again; take the claims of AbdulWahid and the others who are not fighting seriously. But to fight yourself to a negotiating table has to be condemned. That is what we did with the NMRD – you remember a year ago when they said they will fight themselves into the negotiations table – and the NRF is just demanding changes by embarking on a new war. That is not acceptable. I want to make that distinction.

**Q:** [*indiscernible. The question is on the Sudan government position against the deployment to Darfur of United Nations peacekeepers*].

**SRSG Pronk:** That is this report that you have in Arabic. The United Nations has said we want to come but we can only come if the government accepts. Please read the report and may I draw your attention to paragraph 141 where the Secretary-General is saying, "I appeal to the Sudanese authorities to ensure that the aims and the ideals of the United Nations are neither contorted nor misrepresented to suit political ends. For my part, I will continue to actively and pragmatically engage in serious discussions with the Government on all aspects of the United Nations' involvement in the Darfur crisis in order to find mutually acceptable solutions". That is the answer. He is transparent, that is what we want but not against your will. It should be mutually acceptable.

**Q:** I would like you to comment on the plans of the government to welcome United Nations troops to collaborate in the implementation of the DPA and the disarmament of the Janjaweed.

What would be your message to the people in darfur to assure them that something good is coming in the aftermath of the peace agreement?

In light of the plans of the government to disarm the Janjaweed, and the concerns for the lives of the IDPs and their returns, as you are the only person who has read the plan so far, has the plan come out because Minnawi has joined the Government of National Unity or was it there before Minnawi came in?

Don't you think that the plan is a drama for inviting in United Nations collaboration for disarming the Janjaweed?

**SRSB Pronk:** The plan is a strategy. That is what I understand. It is concrete and it contains deadlines and I want to take it very seriously as I do take plans of the government.

You have to answer that question, sir, but I do not know to which extent the plan which was presented to the United Nations is a plan resulting from consultations with Mini Minnawi – I don't know, or whether it is as a whole a result of consultations between the government and Mini Minnawi. You have to ask that question to the government and Mini Minnawi. I can not judge it. I have an official plan coming from the government and a member of the government who at the moment is the number four in the government. As soon as you are a member of the government you are responsible for everything which the government is presenting or doing – that is politics.

But I will study that particular plan and, undoubtedly, it will refer also to the plan which had been submitted already to disarm the Janjaweed which I took as a serious plan.

My message to the IDPs is that in the eyes of the United Nations, this is the most important issue because it is their most important fear. When I see people in camps, they have on yardstick when they speak about the DPA. Does it result in our safety by disarming or keeping the Janjaweed away from us? That is their main yardstick. So the message to the people is that this is also for us the main yardstick.

I am pleased that we have a plan which shows that the government is serious in keeping that deadline. They also will be, I suppose, serious in listening to our comments I suppose. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating. The whole thing still has to start.

**Q:** According to some understandings, there are escalations taking place in Darfur because people on the ground do not understand what is in the DPA. The United Nations'. What role does the United Nations have in explaining the DPA to the people on the ground so that things are well done and then the peace is durable?

Secondly; now that things are escalating and many people are dying compared to 7 months ago, what would the United Nations and the African Union do if the non-signatories to the DPA continue to fight for a re-negotiation?

Thirdly; the government has presented the plan to the United Nations and it has to be decided upon while Janjaweed are on the ground telling people not to return to their villages because they will be killed. What measures are you taking for people to return?

**SRSB Pronk:** We help the African Union in the dissemination of the DPA and using also some information methodology in order to inform the people. We have also our own discussion with our own people throughout Darfur. Presentations have been made in various places. We are using also staff of African Union Mission in Sudan and have made available many texts of the DPA to people also in Arabic. That is continuing also with the help of the donor community. We may also bring you some information about another publication we have that is the DPA monitor – you know that we have a CPA monitor each month to monitor the progress in the implementation of the CPA. We also have a United Nations publication each month to monitor the progress in the implementation of the DPA. It is a full, fair data about the present state of affairs. You will find it on our website – I know not all of you do have access to the website and Ms. Achouri can tell you how you can get the text if you don't have access to the website. Starting this month, the website will also be available in Arabic. So the last one was published 12 days ago and covers the whole month of July of the period of the DPA until the 31<sup>st</sup> of July and a translation is being made at the moment.

Secondly; on the re-negotiation, I answered that question. We have a good DPA. I did say “Don't start the process to re-negotiate; start the process to implement it, to broaden support and to add things to the text”. Add, first, a quick disarmament of the Janjaweed; add a strong security support for the people – whether United Nations or the African Union, as strong as possible; add money for compensation, a lot; add money for reconstruction through the JAM process. It is enriching the implementation. There are more possibilities. Don't take away something from that agreement, add something. Then you don't re-negotiate but continue talking and you can do so. For instance in the DDDC and that means that all those institutions like the DDDC have to invite everybody willing not to fight to the talk. And to give them access in order to further enrich the text.

By the way, I want to make one comment in passing. I did say that it is necessary also to add security by security guarantees. At the moment it is the African Union. I answered to your question that maybe the United Nations can come later but never against the will of the government. But as long as the United Nations is not there, there should be good security guarantees – the African Union. I gave you some information in the previous press conference about the outcome of the Brussels conference and I said that we think that there is enough money until the end of this year. I have to correct myself here in this press conference: the latest information, after having studied all the statement by all the donor countries in Brussels, is that there is not enough money for the African Union to stay until the end of the year. Many think, also in the governments of the western countries who made available money for the African Union, that they can stay now until the end of this year. That is a misconception. There is not enough money for the African Union to stay and that is extremely risky. If the African Union would have to leave because they can't pay their soldiers anymore (that is what it is all about), and then the United Nations is not been allowed to come and will not come, then you have a void in between. So it is

very necessary that we make clear to the capitals of the countries who are financing the African Union that they should go an extra mile and continue to make the African Union present here to protect the people.

Your third point; we don't have forces and we can't rescue people; we can't protect people. I can protect with words but not with weapons because we are not there.

I have asked the African Union, and they are listening at the moment, to consider the possibility of some re-allocation of their forces so that the hot spots could be protected better. And they are studying my proposal. There are a number of hot spots where Janjaweed are a greater risk for the people than elsewhere but, sir, it will be a stop-gate measure because Janjaweed and nomads on camel and horseback easily go to another place and start their activities elsewhere.

**Spokesperson Radhia:** Thank you everybody and I would like to remind you that we would be resuming our regular press briefings next Wednesday but we will send you an advisory on this.

Thank you very much SRSG.