



UNMIS

Press Conference

07 July 2011

Press Conference by SRSO Haile Menkerios on the end of the Mission

- Opening Remarks -

SRSO Haile Menkerios: Ladies and Gentlemen, members of the press corps, thank you for coming here today for this final press conference on the UN's work in support of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. I will make a few brief opening remarks, and the floor will then be opened to your questions.

In two days, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement Interim Period, started six years ago to bring to an end one of the deadliest and longest conflict in Africa, will come to a close. A lot of ground has been covered by the peace process since 2005. Overall, the Government of Sudan and the Sudan's People Liberation Movement must be commended for having largely succeeded in implementing the CPA, and for the progress they have made in establishing the foundations for long term peace and stability between North and South Sudan.

Most of the key CPA benchmarks have been implemented. The power-sharing agreement that guided the partnership of the two parties for the past six years was largely respected. A Government of National Unity and Parliament with SPLM representation was established in Khartoum and the Government of Southern Sudan was created with a Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly and other Southern institutions in Juba. Similarly, the oil revenue sharing agreement, allowing the Government of Southern Sudan to rapidly develop its institutional capacities throughout the ten states of the southern region, was by and large respected. The democratic transformation provisions of the CPA began with the legal reforms conducted by Parliament and the holding of the national general elections in April 2010. More efforts will definitely be needed on that front in the future, both in the North and in the South.

The ceasefire agreement was one of the most successful chapters of the CPA. Until a few weeks ago and despite several incidents which escalated into significant violence, the parties succeeded, through the ceasefire agreement mechanisms, to resolve their differences and avoid a return to war. Unfortunately, this success was overturned in April this year in Abyei. Today though, new interim security arrangements have again been agreed upon for the Abyei territory pending the final resolution of the dispute over its final settlement, and a new UN mission is being deployed to restore security and allow the return of IDPs. The resolve displayed by the Government of Sudan and the SPLM leadership to carry on working together despite this crisis must be highlighted. Both parties have clearly demonstrated that from now on, no unilateral action, no provocation could bring them back to war, and their remaining disputes shall be resolved through dialogue. This commitment must be commended and internationally supported.

Similarly, the commitment to CPA implementation displayed by the Government of Sudan in particular, to ultimately support the holding of a peaceful and successful Southern Sudan self-determination referendum in January 2011 will need to be remembered as a critical element of the

CPA's success. For the first time in the history of Sudan, its Southern citizens were given the opportunity to express their views on the future of their region. They were able to do so through a process which was unanimously recognized as free, fair and credible, and which will lead in less than 48hrs to the birth of a new nation. Once again, I wish to commend both parties for the leadership they have provided on this particular issue. It is this leadership which has by and large permitted this remarkable achievement and generally brought the CPA to a successful conclusion.

Not all provisions of the CPA have been successfully implemented. Even though very significant progress has been made in the past few weeks in the post-referendum negotiations facilitated by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) led by President Mbeki, the Abyei dispute is not resolved as mentioned earlier, the border is not demarcated and the popular consultations destined to inform further governance reforms in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile and consolidate the peace process in the two States, have not been concluded.

Worse, a new conflict has started in early June in Southern Kordofan with extremely worrying consequences for the civilian population. I can only urge the Government of Sudan and the SPLM-North to display the same leadership that allowed the end of the North-South war, to rapidly end this new confrontation, cease hostilities and resolve all pending disputes through dialogue. As in the past, the United Nations stands ready to assist the parties in resolving their differences and implementing new agreements they now must find.

The end of the CPA Interim Period brings the end of UNMIS, as the Mission had been created to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Its liquidation will start on 10 July. UN engagement in Sudan will however continue. The United Nations will continue its support to the Government of Sudan, the Government of South Sudan and to the people of Sudan as a whole through its Agencies, Funds and Programmes, a new Mission in South Sudan and a new Mission in Abyei.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the leadership of both parties and all other Sudanese partners who have assisted the Mission in fulfilling its mandate during the past six years, and who have supported me in the discharge of my duties, since April 2010. I also want to thank all national and international United Nations colleagues for their dedication and commitment to support the successful implementation of the CPA. Some strong foundations have now been laid for peace and stability to prevail between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan, and UNMIS played a significant role in this endeavour. Let me conclude by wishing both Governments all the best in their future relations, and most importantly by wishing the people of Sudan and of South Sudan the peace and prosperity they deserve after so many years of conflict. Thank you.

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