



## UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

**Press Release No. 00016****Press statement of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sudan  
On the occasion of International Day for the elimination of Violence against Women  
Khartoum, 28 November 2005**

On the occasion of the International Day for the elimination of Violence against Women, observed worldwide on 25 November of each year, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan, Jan Pronk, expresses the United Nations' solidarity with the women of Sudan, particularly those who have been victimized by conflicts in the country.

This day an opportunity to scale up efforts to make what has been so far achieved internationally to promote the status of women worldwide, including at the Beijing Conference and the last World Summit, a reality for Sudanese women. This refers not only to outlawing violence against women, but to all gender-specific issues that require a change of mindset and pro-active policies to grant women universal rights.

The Special Representative is pleased to acknowledge that the Government of National Unity recognized the importance of gender equality and the status of women in the Interim National Constitution of the Republic of the Sudan.

The Special Representative acknowledges the concrete steps the GNU has started to bring national laws into conformity with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Interim National Constitution. This process is crucial in order to make the new Sudan a reality, where women could play the role that they are entitled to. He remains concerned that gender-based violence continues to be part of the daily reality of women in Darfur and elsewhere in Sudan. He deplores that impunity continues to prevail for these crimes, including rape of Darfurian women and girls. However, gender-based violence is only one of the numerous facets of gender-related problems that need to be addressed. Actions needed include a special focus on poverty alleviation targeting women, concrete empowerment of women and a fair share in political decision-making. Women should not be regarded as victims only. They are also actors themselves, participating in processes of peace-building, and reconstruction and development activities. They have should have a say in all what concerns their country and its future.

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