



UNMIS

## Office of the Spokesperson

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### THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL IN SUDAN JAN PRONK APPEALS TO SLM/A TO STOP ATTACKS ON HUMANITARIAN WORKERS IN NORTH DARFUR

Over the past few weeks, aid workers operating for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and U.N. agencies have come under continuous attacks and harassment by armed groups in the area of Shangil Tobayi, Tawilla and Kutum in North Darfur. Several reports indicate that many of these attacks have been waged by SLA factions. Armed robbery and hijackings have endangered humanitarian workers assisting over 450,000 vulnerable people living in the area. Moreover, credible information point to the use of hijacked vehicles for military purposes by these armed groups. This is unacceptable and contrary to International Humanitarian Law.

The **SRSJ Jan Pronk** appeals to the SLM/A to take all necessary steps to assure the safety of humanitarian personnel and property in areas under their control and the consistent implementation of agreements. Unless these attacks and harassment stop immediately, the U.N. and its partners will be obliged to suspend all relief assistance to this particular area till effective safety for humanitarian personnel and assets is guaranteed. The U.N. will hold responsible the armed groups, including those related to the SLA, and their leaders, for the failure to assist the vulnerable populations under their control.

For further information please contact Mr. Bahaa Elkoussy, Deputy Spokesperson, UNMIS. Tel. 0912396539; (249)018706029; e-mail: elkoussy@un.org