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Office of the Spokesperson

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U.N. Welcomes SPLA Pullout of Hamishkorieb, Eastern Sudan

Khartoum on 12 June 2006 -- The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has pulled out of Hamishkorieb in Eastern Sudan amid ceremonies that were attended by senior officials and have included a military parade, speeches and large gatherings of local population.

The United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) has monitored the operation as per its mandate under Security Council Resolution 1590 (2005).

The handing over of the area by SPLA to the Civilian Administration of the Kassala State was celebrated at a ceremony attended by Sudanese Government, SPLA officials and senior representatives of UNMIS.

Government and SPLA officials have addressed attendants of the ceremony, hailing this landmark step in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and vowing to carry on implementation of the agreement effectively and in goodwill.

The Special Representative of the United Nations' Secretary-General in Sudan, Jan Pronk, welcomed the redeployment and expressed hope that the forthcoming peace talks on Eastern Sudan begin with the necessary momentum to reach without delay a mutually acceptable outcome that could bring to that region lasting peace and sustainable development.

“It is another milestone in making the CPA a reality, and we look forward to more of these landmark steps towards the full implementation of that historic peace accord that will ensure sustainable peace, stability and development for Sudan,” Pronk said.

The pullout, which was completed on 11 June, is part of the overall plan for the SPLA to vacate Eastern Sudan and redeploy to the South. The CPA had set a deadline for the SPLA to redeploy to the south of line 1-1-56 by 9 January 2006, but that deadline could not be met mainly due to lack of logistical resources available.

The SPLA has pulled out a battalion of 700 troops in 14 trucks. They have headed to Kassala as a first step before moving on to a southern location. Some SPLA troops have remained in Kotneb and Rassai in Eastern Sudan, and according to SPLA officials they will also be withdrawn to Kassala before the implementation of the redeployment of the SPLA to the south commences.

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