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Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General

PRESS STATEMENT

Khartoum, Nairobi, New York, 31 December 2004: The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, Jan Pronk, welcomes the initialing today in Naivasha, Kenya, by the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army of the final Protocols. These Protocols constitute, together with the Protocols that have been already signed, the comprehensive North-South Peace Agreement. The Special Representative commends the parties for honoring the commitment they undertook before the international community to finalize the Comprehensive Peace Agreement by the end of the year 2004.

Jan Pronk looks forward to participating in the signing ceremony of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement which will take place in Nairobi on 9 January 2005. He congratulates the negotiating parties for their resolve to put an end to a conflict that drained for more than two decades the resources of the country and inflicted an unbearable suffering on its people.

The Special Representative commends the IGAD mediation for its success in assisting the parties in their long and difficult search for peace. He hopes that the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement will inaugurate a new era for the Sudan and its people. He looks forward to working closely with the parties during the implementation phase of the Peace Agreement. Every effort should be made to ensure the success of this historical Peace Agreement. On behalf of the United Nations, the Special Representative calls upon all Sudanese to support this endeavor and to expand the prospects of peace to the whole country.