

**Statement of SRSB for Sudan Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi****Khartoum, 18 June 2008**

I was disappointed to read a statement attributed to U.S. Special Envoy Williamson by Reuters on 17 June 2008 in which he told the United Nations Security Council that “UNMIS (United Nations Mission in Sudan) had not lived up to its responsibilities” during the recent clashes in Abyei.

Mr. Williamson also reportedly stated that “Sudanese homes were burned to the ground and looting took place, despite the fact that UNMIS has a mission . . . to intervene to protect innocent people”.

I would refer Mr. Williamson to relevant Security Council Resolutions and the Secretary-General’s reports on Sudan for a better understanding of the UNMIS mandate and an appreciation of the challenging circumstances under which the brave men and women of the UN have had to serve in Sudan. It is important to note that whenever, despite our peace keeping efforts, large scale hostilities break out between the two parties, UNMIS has neither the capacity nor the mandate to militarily intervene or to provide law enforcement functions, which are the responsibility of the Government.

I am sure the statements attributed to Mr. Williamson’s views do not reflect the position of the U.S. Government. In the aftermath of the Abyei crisis, I have had the privilege of meeting U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative Wolf during the recent visit of the Security Council to the Sudan and U.S. Chargé d’Affaires in Khartoum Mr. Fernandez. Neither of the aforementioned officials raised this issue with me. On the contrary, both were very appreciative of the work being done by UNMIS.

Mr. Williamson’s reported remarks, accordingly, are unfortunate and misleading.