

**The United Nations Mission In Sudan****Date: 27 July 2005****Office of the Spokesperson****PRESS BRIEFING**

Following is a near-verbatim transcript of today's weekly briefing (12:30PM) by Radhia Achouri, Spokesperson for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan:

Good afternoon ladies and Gentlemen. Welcome everybody and I would like especially to send a very warm welcome to the colleagues and friends from the Khartoum Monitor who are back in the media scene. We are very glad to have you back. We wish you the best of luck. And we also welcome Juba Post. We hope that we are going to be reading them very soon. I hope that their situation is going to be resolved as soon as possible. You are quite valuable to the media scene in Sudan and for us in the United Nations. So without further ado, I am going to start my briefing for today. I hope that I am not too fast for my colleague the interpreter and I just ask for his indulgence with me but I am going to go as slow as possible.

UN Security Council

For a starter, some information about the Security Council.

The Security Council as some of you know held a meeting last Friday 22 July on the situation in Sudan. SRSG Jan Pronk provided the Council with a comprehensive briefing on the subject: progress made towards the implementation of the CPA; update on UNMIS troops deployment; ongoing peace processes between the GoS and the NDA as well as the Abuja talks; the situation in Darfur; challenges to be met in order to make peace, stability and development irreversible in Sudan, including funding needs. The full statement of the SRSG is available in the room. We've already sent you the statement by e-mail.

SRSG activities

- The SRSG met on Monday 25 July with Minister Mustafa. During this meeting, held regularly on a biweekly basis, the SRSG discussed with the Acting Foreign Affairs Minister the follow up to the Secretary-General June report on Darfur; the forthcoming sixth round of the Abuja Talks and the Abyei Boundary Commission's report.

- The same day, the SRSG met with Mr. Kuol Deng KUOL, Chief of the Ngok Dinka. He also met yesterday, also at their request with representatives of the Misseriya. The meetings were an opportunity for the SRSG to hear directly from the parties their respective views on the Abyei Boundary Commission's report. During the discussions, the SRSG urged the parties to discuss the issue peacefully and to avoid resorting to violence.

-Still on the same topic, the SRSG left this morning Khartoum to Abyei for a two days visit. The objective is to further familiarize himself with the issues surrounding the Abyei report. The SRSG is expected back in Khartoum tomorrow afternoon.

- Finally on the SRSG activities, he will be traveling to South and North Darfur States for a three days trip from 31 July to 2 August. The main objective of the trip is for the SRSG to meet with the SLA commanders on the ground and to discuss with them the next round of the Abuja talks.

On the military deployment and related activities, Col. Vikram Taneja will update you after my briefing.

Darfur

Tuning to the situation in Darfur, we have the following:

-Armed clashes between the GoS forces and the SLA were reported to take place on 24 July around the Shanguil Tobay area (North Darfur) The AU is investigating the incident.

- An armed ambush of GoS military on 23 July allegedly by the SLA on the Nyala/Ai Fasher road was also reported. Five GoS troops were allegedly killed. The AU is investigating the incident. On both incidents, we have not yet received information from the AU on the nature and origin of the clashes. So we hope that these are only isolated incidents. We will keep informed as soon as we get solid information on the issue.

- As for the security situation in general in Darfur, some banditry acts, including by the rebels groups, were reported to take place. Armed banditry persists in the three states of Darfur, including killing of civilians, attacks and looting of commercial trucks and INGOs and their passengers.

- In the South, we received reports that Gumba IDP Camp in Juba was attacked by elements suspected to be from the LRA on 25 July 05. Our latest information indicates that eight people have been killed including 3 women and 2 children. UNMIS has responded to the request of the SAF and SPLM officials to assist in investigation of the incident by providing professional expertise from particularly from the UNMIS civilian Police.

Humanitarian

-WFP reports that it is still experiencing a serious funding shortfall for its emergency operation covering the south, east and transitional areas of Sudan. Currently (as of 19 July) the operation has US\$169 million of the US\$302 million it needs. The shortfall is 44 per cent, or US\$132 million. Numbers of returnees are expected to increase after the rainy season ends, in September-October.

-WFP's Humanitarian Air Service continues to face severe funding shortfalls, forcing it to cancel deliveries of non-food items in June. This is despite the start of the rainy season when demand for air deliveries increases. The funding shortfalls have also stopped WFP activating a fourth helicopter in Darfur. The shortfall remains critical at US\$15 million out of total requirements of US\$24 million. The operation urgently needs an initial US\$5 million to ensure air services continue through the rainy season in Sudan.

- In Darfur, WFP is now operating in some 301 locations – more than double the number it was reaching in December last year. The number rose from 134 in December to 301 in June. The largest increase in locations reached is in North Darfur, which rose from 37 in December, to 115 locations in June. In June, WFP fed some 2.1 million people in Darfur.

- Over the past two weeks, IOM has assisted 8,156 IDPs to relocate from Abu Shouk camp to Al Salaam camp. IOM provided 10 trucks and buses, 12 escorts and medical assistance for the operation. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) had already relocated about 13,000 individuals (3,350 families) to the new camp since the operation began on 29 June 2005. Besides providing transportation assistance, IOM is also responsible for ensuring newly arrived IDPs are registered on the IDP database for Abu Shouk camp. Col. Taneja, the floor is yours.

Col. Taneja: Thank you Radhia.

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. I wish to highlight that the 27th of July is M+125 that is a hundred and twenty-five days after the UN Security Council Resolution 1590 authorizing the United Nations Mission in Sudan.

As far as the current deployment status is concerned, we have a total of a hundred and forty-four staff officers which are deployed basically in Khartoum, the Force Headquarters and in Juba. We have about a hundred and forty-five Military Observers who are in the field carrying out limited monitoring and verification activity in all the sectors and we have about nine hundred and fifty Troop Contributing Countries' personnel, making it to a grand total of about twelve hundred and fifty, all ranks, currently in the mission.

Before talking of future deployments as we emphasized as per the Deployment Plan, I would like to briefly give you some of the activities which are taking place.

Our Military Observers are moving in all the six sectors and the RCHq. Sector I is as you know Juba, II Wau, III Malakal, IV Kadugli, V Damazin, VI Abyei and our Redeployment Coordination Headquarters in Kassala in eastern Sudan. They are developing contacts with the community, the GoS and SPLM authorities and also the aid agencies in the area. They will be, shortly once we have our full structures in place, they will be carrying out physical verification of ceasefire violations.

In addition to this, we had the Force Commander of the military visiting Juba last week for the CJMC meeting. The meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere. It was the sixth meeting and issues relating to forwarding data and other details which were asked for by the CJMC were discussed. Other issues related to de-mining activities in southern Sudan were also highlighted. Besides Juba, the Force Commander also visited two proposed team sites that the United Nations will be occupying. One is Torit, the other is Maridi. Once again, in both these places he met officials from both the parties including the humanitarian community and the local population and told them the task that the UNMIS will be performing in southern Sudan once the complete mission is on the ground.

In addition to this, I would also like to highlight one unique case where the United Nations is conducting training for both the SPLM and Sudan Armed Forces engineers on the

construction of bailey bridges. We are carrying out this training keeping in view that once the de-mining of the road from Juba to Yei is complete, we intend launching a bridge and we also wish to do so by involving both parties in performing this task with the UN providing all the support and assistance.

Now coming a little into the future deployments that we envisage, August is going to be a month where we are going to see the induction of a large body of troops from the various nations. In the case of Juba, we expect in the middle of August the deployment of the Sector Headquarters including a limited infantry compliment. In Sector II by the end of the month we will see the Kenyan Sector Hqs. and infantry compliment deploying. Similarly in Sector III we will see the balance of the engineers of the Indian Troop Contributing Country deploying. They will be initially coming into el-Obeid and then moving forward to Malakal and on to the sites ahead. One is Bentieu, the other is Paluoch.

In the case of the Nuba Mountains we will have the Egyptians who are already there with their engineer elements building up limited Force Protection and their headquarters.

Similarly in Damazeen we will have the Pakistan induction commencing in late August with the arrival of the engineers who will be carrying out preparation of the camp-site for the future deployment in September of the infantry and Sector Headquarter.

As far as Abyei is concerned, we intend to deploy the Zambians by the end of August. Already instructions have been issued through DPKO and we hope to see the Sector Headquarters and the advance elements getting in by the end of the month.

In the case of Kassala, as you are aware, we were already operational way back at least a month ago – that is around M+60 and nearly 65 days before.

That is the future projections as far as the deployments are concerned. I would also like to mention that as we anticipated, Sudan is a great challenge as far as deployment of forces is concerned. It is a vast area, underdeveloped in southern Sudan and coupled with the rainy season which we are now going through, the deployments, definitely, have been delayed.

Added to this has been a delay on the part of some of the Troop Contributing Countries in their own national clearances and procurement actions but nevertheless consequent to DPKO and the SRSg's visit to New York, we are trying every bit to get the Troop Contributing Countries to deploy in time in Sudan as per schedule.

So that, broadly, is the military deployment and activities. Should anyone have any questions now or later once Radhia winds up, I will try and answer.

Spokesperson: Thank you very much Colonel. The floor now is open for questions.

Q: About the clashes in Darfur. All of your bullet points you've written "reported," "reported," "reported," why is it so?

Spokesperson: Maybe it is my bad English but but when I say 'it is being reported', it means that is been reported to us.

Q: within the UN?

Spokesperson: Yes, within the UN among other sources. For instance, activities in Darfur – particularly when we are reporting activities from Darfur – the main source of information to us is the African Union. So it is not our first hand report because we are not mandated to investigate incidents that take place in Darfur particularly when it comes to clashes between.

However, besides the African Union, there are other sources, obviously. Agencies can also give us information on that and you would understand that security is a paramount factor for agencies so we are very keen to know what is going on on the ground. We monitor – it does not mean we investigate. But we monitor the security situation for the purposes of our own activities to make sure that the agencies and the NGOs operating there are operating in an area that is not risky or if it is risky we declare it a ‘No go’ area and so on.

Q: Thinking about this instance in particular, what are the key things you will be looking at when you get the information to decide whether this is a serious incident or whether it is an incident in isolation?

Spokesperson: Well first of all, we need to know who engaged this and for what purpose. Because, as we described it in our last report to the Security Council, we did say that the number of incidents have decreased quite significantly particularly when it comes to direct clashes between the government and the rebel groups. Of course for us we take it from the political standpoint as a good indicator that there are good prospects for the Abuja talks to end somewhere where we want it to end.

Now it is also from experience that we know that because of internal problems of the rebel groups, sometimes you have just isolated incidents because one commander on the ground decided to do something without resorting to his chain of command.

So what we are trying to look at is if it is actually just an isolated incident or two isolated incidents initiated by some individuals at their own initiative or it is a more serious issue and that there would be a resurgence of clashes between the rebels *per se* as groups and as political entities and as a rebellion against the government. That would be another thing.

Nevertheless, regardless of what kind of incident, this is serious enough because they just signed the Declaration of Principles, we had quite a more or less calm period recently, we had – we thought we had – all reasons to hope that the next round of Abuja talks is going to be quite decisive. And these incidents, send a bad signal to the people, the Darfurians, or to everybody who is following the process of negotiations or part of it..

Q: A final question about the no-fly zone in Darfur. What exactly are the rules for that no-fly zone? Does the government accept that in this raid they flew helicopters in what they call reconnaissance and then separately there was a helicopter crash? Is that a de facto violation of the no-fly zone or did they actually allow some flight?

Spokesperson: I would wait for the AU report because we can not speculate that the two are linked – the incident of the crash and what happened there.

Q: I am just talking of what the rules are for the no-fly zone. There is some lee-way for some flights within the no-fly zone – is that right?

Spokesperson: Well that is for the Sanctions Committee to establish because you know what is in the resolution 1592 in particular when it comes to military activities and as soon as there is a report from the African Union that is solid on what is going on, of course the Security Council is going to be informed and it is up to the Sanctions Committee in New York to decide how to deal with it.

Q: Are some flights legitimate in Darfur or the no flight Zone in Darfur mean no flights?

Spokesperson: That is not really my understanding but I have to check that from the legal perspective. I do understand that the Government of Sudan had already made it clear that it still wanted to preserve the right to send helicopters for reconnaissance and instruction purposes. Not to bomb or to engage into military or hostile activities but for other purposes but I have to seek clarification from the legal point of view of the interpretation of that particular clause.

Q: I have three questions. My first question is on the call by the US Secretary of State during her last visit to Sudan to bring forward the date for the next round of talks in Abuja. What is your position on this and are there efforts being made to do so? What is the UNMIS position on this and are there any moves to implement this proposal?

The UNMIS had made an initiative for talks between the government and the armed groups in eastern Sudan. How far has this gone?

There is a lot of debate going on over the interpretation of the Abyei Boundary Commission report. Interpretations vary from party to party. On the government side, the reaction was that the President of the Republic said that the committee of experts that prepared the report had transcended its mandate. On the other hand, there are clashes between the Ngok and Toj Dinkas of the area. The United Nations has now adopted dialogue with these parties under the chairmanship of Mr. Jan Pronk. There are some who say that this issue will be a time bomb - a first bomb that will explode as a result of the peace agreement. In your view as the UN, how can this issue be overcome?

Spokesperson: I will start with the first question concerning what you mentioned about Ms. Rice's call for the date of the Abuja talks to be brought forward by two weeks. On our side, this issue falls under the purview of the African Union mediators. We know that, and you do know that the African Union had formally decided that the talks be held on the 24th of next month. So this issue is basically under the AU mandate – we do not have a position on either bringing forward or postponement of the talks. What we are interested in is that that these talks take place and keep up the momentum. More important than that is not only holding the talks at the time stated but also that the talks must be serious talks that will produce the fruits required. You are aware of the UN position. We have always been saying that we want this round of talks to be final and decisive and the Declaration of Principles signed between the parties gives us more reason to be optimistic that the parties are indeed serious in resolving outstanding issues in a decisive manner. This, in general, is our position.

On the talks over eastern Sudan and Mr. Pronk's talks, first of all the talks were essentially aimed at, as they say in English, "building bridges" between the UN and the rebel movements in eastern Sudan. We did not have much contact with them before. This is the second contact at the level of SRSG Pronk. Considering that there is no opening up in the crisis between the government and these movements as there were some incidents that we very much regret,

SRSR Pronk saw it fit that the talks continue and that he deepen his contacts with these rebel movements. He basically had a clear message to these movements – the same message he had presented the government, and that is that direct talks be held between the Eastern Front and the Government of Sudan and there were proposals that these direct talks be held next September.

I would request all of you to please understand that Mr. Pronk, or the UN through Pronk, will not play the role of mediator but will only help bring about a conducive climate or be a preliminary link, if you like, between the parties to enable them engage in talks. The role of mediator or facilitator in these talks will be given possibly to another institution or personality that definitely will not be the UN or Mr. Pronk. The parties will have to agree on who will facilitate these talks should they wish that a mediator be present.

As for your last question, it is a very difficult question. We agree that the issue is very vital and very important – the issue of not only the report but also of the demarcation of the boundaries of Abyei is a very complex issue. You do know the history of the area better than I do and you know that this issue was among the most difficult and most complex issues tabled before the negotiators in the Naivasha talks and that it was solved in a manner that was not final.

We at the UN can not comment about the manner in which the committee of experts of the ABC carried out their functions because the issue is beyond the framework of our mandate. Our only point of reference on the basis of which we base any stance is the CPA which had set out the functions and responsibilities of this committee and the nature of the results of its findings – be they resolutions that must be implemented or only recommendations. And it seems to me that the CPA was clear on this issue but, at the end, dialogue is what we call for. You talked of some confrontations – we hope that these confrontations will be limited in nature and in the reasons that led to them.

We hope that all will exercise self-restraint because in the end, any problem that comes up can only be resolved through dialogue. You know more than anyone else that even wars that extend 40 years or more can only be resolved through the negotiations table and that there is no victor in any violent confrontation. The issue requires dialogue, continued dialogue, foresightedness and setting national priorities and the priorities of the people in the top list of priorities.

Q: I wanted to ask a question on your deployment. So far you said now it is a hundred and twenty-five days after the mandate was issued and now a new government is almost being formed and then they will definitely have to go down to the south, and your presence is lacking there and they have problems in the south. Are you not going to be part and parcel of the causes retarding the peace process as you are not yet in place by this time and a new government will soon be appointed?

Col. Taneja: First I would like to inform you that in south Sudan in the Juba Sector and in Malakal, the Verification and Monitoring Team is still operational and it shall continue to remain operational until the time the UN monitoring mission does start.

You are aware that this monitoring mechanism has been operating in southern Sudan very well since 2002 and it has got its presence located in the Nile State also that is in Malakal

Indian Sector and the Juba Sector. So monitoring of any violation is definitely taking place but by the VMT.

As far as the UN mission deployment is concerned, I agree with you and I gave you the reasons as to why the deployments have been delayed. Primarily because of the TCCs having delayed because of certain logistic constraints and contracts not meeting the target lines and of course the tough rainy season.

But, notwithstanding, I would like to assure you like in the case of what happened near Juba yesterday, very close by. We had the UN go forward and carry out investigations, including the UN CivPol, with the local authorities. We don't know who is behind it but, nevertheless, it is our intention to quickly get on the ground and start the process which will definitely see complete UN presence everywhere. But we do have capability given the fact that the Verification and Monitoring Team is currently operating in the areas that we indicated.

Q: My question is a follow-up to that of my colleague from the *Juba Post*. The UNMIS currently has only 1,200 of the 10,000 elements while the new government will be formed in about fifteen day's time. When will full deployment of these forces take place? Are you facing difficulties in deployment – you had talked of logistics problems and so on?

Mr. Jan Pronk mentioned earlier that the ABC report is final and binding to the parties while now you say something else. We want to know what exactly happened because Pronk's statement agrees with that of First Vice-president Garang while the government says the team of experts had transcended its mandate.

Col. Taneja: On your first question on the completion of the military deployment, I would like to mention that starting in August, the deployments will pick up momentum. I have given you the indications and all the sectors where troops from various countries will be arriving. We hope to complete the deployment of the entire mission that is a couple of ten thousand which includes 750 Military Observers by about middle of December. That is the target line we are working on and, hopefully, if we don't have any other hindrances or problems in our way we should see all of them operational and the mission will be declared fully operational as far as the United Nations Headquarters is concerned.

Spokesperson: Before I come to your question to me, I would like to add the following on the answer given by Colonel Taneja. The role of UNMIS, even through the military elements it has, and despite the shortage in numbers as mentioned by the colonel – we are fully aware of this – but our role is not only confined to this issue. We also exert intensive efforts in everything pertaining to the confidence-building processes and to consolidate trust between the parties to prevent violations from happening. This is among the activities we conduct and these activities help us to assist the parties to make the situation stable until our troop deployment is complete and to enable the parties themselves complete the implementation of the measures required.

Despite acknowledging this delay, it will however not have a major effect on the situation on the ground and we hope that deployment will be complete in place in the near future. I would also like to mention that Mr. Pronk had said he hoped that full deployment will take place by October this year. We are optimistic and we have mentioned the causes of this delay.

As for your other question, yes, there is no contradiction in our positions concerning Mr. Pronk's statement on the report in which he said that the ABC report is final and binding. There is no contradiction in that statement which had been issued by Jan Pronk in which he said the ABC report is final and binding. It is not a position we've chosen to adopt but I did mention that the statement was based on the CPA that recommended the formation of this committee and gave it the powers to issue final decisions on the boundaries of this particular area. This is what the parties agreed on and on the basis of this, we said that the report is final and binding but we still call for dialogue.

I would however like to clarify the following: please understand Mr. Pronk's role as it is. At this moment, Mr. Pronk's role is not that of mediator. I did mention in my briefing that his meetings with the Misseiriya and Ngok Dinka was at their request. These meetings were held upon request of the parties themselves and Mr. Pronk was of course very interested because he wanted to hear directly from the parties about their views and their positions on the report, the problems that they believe exist and their demands and expectations that they deem are legitimate but have not been addressed by the ABC report.

His role was only to listen to these groups and he, by the way, declared to them that the UN has nothing to do with the report and that it is the CPA that set out the mandate of this committee and that, in the end, the UN can only call upon them not to go violent on the basis of this issue and to talk about their problems not on the basis of the recommendations *per se* but on how to implement the ABC report.

We as the UN are not mandated to state or express doubts on the report. This is not part of our mandate. But with the view that the UN's activities will be affected by what is on the ground and since this report may change the situation on the ground, our concern is from this point of view.

You know that we are here to help the parties implement the provisions of the CPA and all they may agree on and implement will have a direct bearing on UNMIS activities. It is from this basis that the UN and Mr. Pronk's concerns come up on the Abyei issue.

Q: You described Pronk's role on the proposed dialogue between the Eastern Front and the GoS as that of a preliminary link and that it is up to the GoS and the Eastern Front to select an appropriate mediator. Meanwhile the Eastern Front says they will only engage GoS in talks with the United Nations as mediator. What are your comments?

It is clear that the LRA activities in the south pose a threat to security and stability. What are the urgent measures that UNMIS has in place to stop the LRA in order to guarantee safety of your military personnel in south Sudan?

Spokesperson: On the issue pertaining to eastern Sudan, UNMIS role and the role of Mr. Pronk, you hear of positions from here and there but in the long run all these processes are Sudanese –Sudanese processes. That one side should insist that a particular third party mediate is an issue we have heard more than once. Assuming the parties – that is the current and interim government and the movements – agree that the UN mediate, the issue may be looked into.

Our current role here is not to carry out a direct mediation between these parties. Our mandate here in Sudan is clear and specific but Mr. Pronk's interest to contact these groups

directly emanates from the following – and we did mention this before: that peace must be comprehensive. You can not have peace in the south and negotiate peace in the west while instability prevails in other areas. The concept of peace is a unified and comprehensive one. The UN can not carry out its role successfully in assisting the parties to consolidate a lasting and sustainable peace, including in the south, if there remains another front or region in the country threatening to remain instable in the short, medium or long term.

What is important – and all the parties have to understand this – is that there is no alternative to direct dialogue between the parties. We thank all for their trust in the UN but, at the end, these problems can not be resolved (even should we assume that the UN, AU, the IGAD or any other party act as mediator) in the end, and you have a good example of the Nairobi talks which were only resolved through direct, closed talks between Taha and John Garang without the presence of any mediator or observer or any other person. And this is what all have to understand.

The current problem – and we hope all will be able to overcome this obstacle – is the problem of an absence of trust. But in the end, as Mr. Pronk has been saying over and over again, “should there have been trust, there would not have been reason for negotiations in the first place.” His message has always “been first of all, understand and agree on the principles of negotiations. Then, all parties should be prepared with specific and clear agenda and come to negotiations on the basis of goodwill and commitment to arrive at solutions to specific problems and to take into consideration the interests of those people who they claim to represent”.

As for your other question on the LRA and so forth, the Colonel will answer that for you but, in general terms, we said and asserted in more than one occasion that the LRA constitutes one of the major obstacles to stability in south Sudan. I would like only to remind you at the moment that the basic role with regards to resolving the issue of the LRA is a prerogative of the GoS and the SPLM and the Government of South Sudan once it is formed.

This is stipulated in the CPA and our role is clear on the issue. As for protection of UN personnel, our mandate is clear on that under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Should we be under direct attack, we have the right to defend ourselves against any person or element be they from Sudan or otherwise. This is the mandate granted to us by the Security Council.

For further details, I refer you to the colonel ...

Col. Taneja: Further to what Radhia just said, in fact this question came up once earlier when I was sitting with her on the podium in this press briefing. Like she said, it is something which has to be dealt by the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan. In addition to this should, while we are carrying out our tasks of verification and monitoring, our freedom of movement or our access to certain areas where we are supposed to go as per the UN Security Council mandate to support the implementation of the CPA, we will take appropriate action to ensure that we are able to perform our task. And should there be a situation on the ground wherein the Lords Resistance Army resists or interferes with our carrying out of our task which is mandated to us – authorized to us, we will take suitable action. And I can assure you that the UNMIS is adequately and suitably armed to deal with the threat posed by the LRA in southern Sudan. But I would not like to preempt as to what measures. It will be the situation on the ground which will dictate, the commander on the spot and the decision he takes and also the fact that our intention is not to be trigger-happy but our

intention is to try and tell whoever the armed group or this Lords Resistance Army is concerned, that we intend carrying out our task as per the mandate. But should they decide to escalate the situation and try and take on the United Nations Mission, we will reply back appropriately. That is all.

Spokesperson: Any other questions? Yes, please.

Q: Back to the Abyei issue; the United Nations or UNMIS is mandated to safeguard the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and, as such, can look into the procedural shortfalls of the ABC. The ABC itself admits its failure to delineate the border as per its mandate and consequently delineated the border from their own volition. UNMIS could therefore have compelled the experts to stick and not deviate from their mandate in carrying out their duties.

Secondly; it is being said that the monitoring team in Juba is only enough for monitoring operations until the United Nations fully deploys. It is clear from their presence in Juba that they are not up to their current mandate especially in light of returns which may spark tensions and consequent lapses in security which they may not be able to control. There are reports of massive returns and so deployment of these troops must be speeded up.

Spokesperson: First of all on what you said about the ABC report, I would like to confirm again that the UN is not at all in a position to comment on the contents of the said report because we were a party to neither the setup of the committee nor its establishment or functions. The only thing that concerns us in the work of this committee is, as I said, that its findings will reflect on our duties because we do have a mandate, as I mentioned, to carry out specific functions in this region and should the shape of this area change then it definitely will reflect on the activities of the UN and its deployment there.

On what you said of UNMIS' ability to compel the experts to adhere to a certain issue, this is totally not within the jurisdiction of the UN. Please look again at the provisions of the CPA and you will note that the UN has nothing to do at all with the issue.

As I said, we are only concerned with the outcome of this report should it be implemented because this will reflect on our field activities in the region. The parties therefore have to look into what they agreed on. The parties exist, the CPA exists, and they should therefore look into what they agreed upon.

On what you said about the LRA and so forth and the elements deployed there, I would like to repeat that the main responsibility for resolving security issues in these regions lies on the shoulders of the Government of Sudan, the SPLM and the Government of South Sudan once formed.

We as the UN, as we mentioned, we currently do have a shortage in the elements deployed there but, assuming that we had enough elements, this, first of all, does not necessarily mean that the LRA or other movements do not exist. Secondly, even in dealing with these movements, our roles and functions are limited by virtue of, I think, the paragraph before the last, of Resolution 1590 that stipulates that we resort to Chapter VII in specific and limited instances and this also covers the LRA. As I said, the number of our troops is not that relevant in this issue and what is important is that the parties tackle the problem decisively. As far as I know, meetings and consultations continue between the Armed Forces of Sudan

and the SPLA on how to address the LRA issue. And on this issue, the parties do implement what they agreed upon in the CPA.

Q: I did not mention the LRA. What I mean is there may be possibilities of clashes between any other Sudanese factions such as the Ngok Dinkas and others in Abyei, in Juba or clashes in any other area.

Spokesperson: Yes, but such issues fall in the domain of those parties that represent sovereignty in those areas. If it is in territory controlled by the Government of Sudan then it is the government's responsibility and is the responsibility of the SPLM should it happen in territory under their domain. Security issues are primarily their responsibility.

I would like to remind that the mandate granted us by virtue of resolution 1590 only gives us the mandate to interfere under Chapter VII to protect civilians who are under imminent threat of danger should there be an absence of any security authority in that area or in the event such an authority is unwilling to grant such a protection – only. This means that the main, basic and primary responsibility falls on the parties representing sovereign authority in the region and our role is, in comparison, only secondary in this regard.

Okay; I am going to take only three more questions – the Sudan Vision, then the Khartoum Monitor and then AlRai AlAam.

Q: Your first appeal was for 1.5 billion. It has not been covered. Then you increased the appeal for another 260 million. What is the idea behind this as not more than 60% of your first appeal has been covered and now you are appealing for more?

Spokesperson: Well it might sound like a good question but actually you know why we increased it. It is not like we just go and sit down and we decide to increase figures.

You know that the work plan – you are talking about the work plan, right? - the work plan, immediately after we put it together, we said once we launched it that the work plan was going to be reviewed regularly based on, first of all, the progress that we made on the ground in implementing the projects that we highlighted in the work plan. Two, we said that we are going to review it also based on the actual needs as they arise because it is a work in progress. It could be decreased; it could be increased based on what is taking place.

On your second question, you are absolutely right but – I told you about the speech Pronk made in the Security Council meeting and please do read that one.

From our side, there is no opportunity, there is no podium, there is no fora that we don't use to remind the donor countries of their obligations that they actually pledged. Everybody has the moral duty particularly if they keep talking about Sudan, I mean, you talk about Sudan you do something for Sudan. So it is a moral obligation for every single entity in the international community but it is more so when it comes to donor countries who are in a position to assist and to help and more so in the case of the countries that pledged actually to provide assistance.

So we increased the figure, yes, but not arbitrarily and if you wish, I have the work plan and can give you a copy and you would understand why we increased it. But we keep banging on

every single door and trying to mobilize the interests of these countries to do something about it. Hopefully it will be successful because we still have some money in the pipeline.

On that particular topic, yes, you are absolutely right. We have the actual money recorded against the work plan as it stood at 1.5 billion dollars, we have only 42% of the total requirements and I have the detailed contributions by country, by sector and so forth. Please feel free to get in touch with me and I can give it to you.

But we keep mobilizing financial support and again I will call on you, the media to highlight this. Everybody is interested in peace but peace goes hand in hand with development and with relief and actually what we reported on Darfur is a case for this particular instance – the mortality survey for instance. The preliminary results make it clear that the humanitarian assistance that was very successful in Darfur really made the situation change quite significantly. And that would be the situation all over Sudan if the money is there – you don't put the money there would be no progress. One of the root causes of conflicts here is the lack of resources; poverty and frustrations they cause. Why would you expect peace in a place where people remain poor? What is in it for them if you talk to them about peace and there is no perspective for development or benefit? And that is the message that we hope you would help us disseminating.

Q: What about the oil money now?

Spokesperson: Well, the oil money, it is part of the equation, we have factored it in – very much so.

Q: How much will be spent in the south, for instance?

Spokesperson: I don't have an estimate but it is very clear what they are supposed to do with that money. And you know that we spoke about the establishment of a consortium that will be monitoring the usage of the whole money. So we would like to see that that money is going to be directed to the people and not for other purposes. It has been already taken care of.

Q: How can you factor it in if you don't know how much it is?

Spokesperson: No, no. I'm the one who does not know how much it is. But the figures are there. I could get the information. You also consider directing your question to the World Bank who are also involved in this issue. And they have lots of things set up to make sure that there is transparency, there is equity and good use of the money for public interest.

Q: My question is regarding de-mining in the southern parts. Colonel has said that Juba-Yei road is complete. What are the plans the UN has laid down regarding de-mining within towns for example Juba and other places where IDPs are coming from and settling into so that people are not harmed? If these plans are laid, then when exactly will they be implemented?

My second question is, logistics and other constraints are becoming an obstacle to deployment. What are their substitutes?

The third question is that the LRA are becoming a headache after peace is achieved. The SPLA once said that the LRA are carrying out their activities within government-controlled areas. What is the role of UN to tell the government to make the LRA stop their activities?

Col. Taneja: Okay, your first question is on de-mining.

As far as de-mining is concerned, I want to just draw your attention to the fact that if you look at the map, kindly see how large the Sudan is. Sudan is the largest country in the whole of Africa and given the length and breadth, you will appreciate that with the type of de-mining resources that are available, it is going to be a very, very long and tedious process to carry out complete de-mining of the area that we want. I would like to mention the fact that the UN Mine Action Services, which is the lead agency for all de-mining activities as far as the UN is concerned, has also had problems in the past until very recent of getting permission from various authorities both from the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A while carrying out movement from one side to the other side – what we call “cross-line movement”. That needs to be understood by all.

The third thing I would like to mention is the rainy season, movement in the Sudan is very difficult. I am sure you will appreciate that no real, worthwhile de-mining can be carried out until the end of September, early October. You will find that the de-mining activities will be very, very limited and minimal.

As far as our priorities are concerned, definitely we have to look at the long-term requirement of Sudan. but definitely in the initial stages our priorities are going to be to get the 10,000 soldiers and military observers on the ground so those roads and those axis and lines of communications in Sudan will support the UNMIS deployment whether it is the military deployment, CivPol deployment or other activity, will definitely take priority. But we are looking towards the long term and as far as Sudan is concerned it has a mine-action mechanism at the national level and they have a mechanism both for southern Sudan and for the north and I am sure when all work in harmony and in cooperation, it will be able to achieve results. But it is going to be time-consuming.

I would also like to add here that five de-mining companies, military de-mining companies, are being deployed as part of the mission. The mission, as you see, is not just protection forces. More than the protection forces in Sudan are going to be the logistics units – engineers which are going to build something which they are not going to carry away but building for Sudan; they are going to be the medical which are going to treat people; they are going to be the de-miners who are going to open the lines for communications; there is going to be aviation which is going to move people from place A to place B. That is the larger component of the military vis-à-vis the protection forces are concerned. That is as far as de-mining.

Q: There is a good experience of the de-mining process in the Nuba Mountains. Could you transport this experience to southern Sudan?

Col. Taneja: Yes. The de-mining process that has been going on in the Nuba Mountains has been done by the United Nations Mine Action Services. It is UN Mine Action Services, the same organization, and it has its headquarters in Khartoum and it is operating in the Nuba Mountains definitely because we had the Joint Military Committee there which has achieved a lot of results.

Spokesperson: Just on de-mining again, we have the UNMAS office – that is the United Nations Mine Action Services – they are the best to inform you on this. I think also that they issue a a bulletin on their activities in Sudan. So I will try to get in touch with them so they could circulate this bulletin to you because it has got lots of updates. But for an overall overview of de-mining activities they are your best counterpart in asking them these detailed questions.

As the Colonel said, ongoing activities are in progress and we are really making quite substantial progress there and we will keep you informed. The other thing that I wanted to add in terms of prioritizing the issue of de-mining, you would have to also be aware of the fact that although deployment is a priority for sure, however that goes hand in hand in terms of priority with the humanitarian activities because, as you said, returns of lots of people is expected along the roads and the military – at least our part – is going to be clearing the roads for itself but also for humanitarian purposes because the two go hand in hand. Among other things, we will be – and the Colonel can correct me – also securing the humanitarian corridors. So we have to open them and we have to secure them also. So it is all equal in priority.

Just the last thing on LRA again. LRA is a topic that comes up again and again. What do we say to the Government and SPLM/A, they committed themselves to tackle these issues. Some elements and some groups including the LRA is their responsibility as they decided it will be so. So we are reminding them that they have all interests in expediting their work and their joint action in order to address these issues and to make sure that this threat is no more.

Thank you.