



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit, Communication & Public Information Office

TRANSCRIPT

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Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Ms. Hilde F. Johnson

&

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Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator

Mr. Toby Lanzer

Juba Conference Room
UNMISS Topping Site
Juba

Opening Remarks by SRSF Hilde F. Johnson

Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

It is a great pleasure to see you here today.

Since this is my first press conference of 2013, I would like to first thank you for your support over the past year, and to say that I look forward to continuing our relationship over the coming year.

I would also like to introduce the new UNMISS Force Commander, Major General Delali Johnson Sakyi of Ghana. Major General Sakyi has more than 34 years of military command and staff experience at national and international levels, with significant experience in UN peacekeeping missions. His experience in conflict and post-conflict environments is a significant asset to both the Mission and South Sudan.

South Sudan has become one and a half years old. I think we can all agree that it has been a tough start. Virtually all energy has been “sucked into” the relationship with Sudan. The tensions and delays in the process have prevented South Sudan from focusing on building

their new nation. Many security challenges have also consumed a lot of energy and resources. The new Republic has been put to the test the past few months. We got a new reminder of these challenges yesterday, with yet another alleged bombardment in the border areas of Unity State.

Despite all these challenges, progress has been made in several areas. Let me highlight three:

- A democratic foundation of the new and independent country has been put in place through core legislation on political parties and elections, and the establishment of their institutions. UNMISS and its UN partners have supported this process.
- A major transformation of the police, the SSNPS, is well underway with our support. The UN has assisted with registration of all police officers in the country, a total of 46,427, which now will allow a weeding out of any ghost police. A number of Generals in the police have been relieved of their posts and a new standard for the whole service can now be set.
- A National DDR Council has been established, and a DDR programme is now in the final stages of development. All security organs have been deeply involved in the process, and this will allow a transformation also of the Army and the other security institutions to take place. The UN is supporting the process, and will assist in its implementation.

These are three positive achievements. However, there are other developments that are of serious concern.

Security challenges

A disturbing trend is evident by recent violence and incidences in Wau, Yei and Rumbek, the clashes in Pibor, cattle raids in the Tri-State area, and most recently, the deadly attacks in Walgak payam, Akobo County on February 8.

UNMISS strongly condemns the attack in Walgak and we call on all communities, their leaders, and the authorities, the Government of South Sudan and that of Jonglei State to put an end to such deadly violence. We also call for maximum restraint to prevent the occurrence of additional attacks. The cycle of violence has to end. As Head of Mission I am going to Walgak early next week to meet local authorities and the community on the ground. The UN humanitarian agencies are also facilitating humanitarian assistance to those affected.

These events now threaten to reverse the efforts that have been made to achieve peace and stability in the state. Everything must now be done to prevent a destabilization of Jonglei. The Mission stands ready to support such efforts. We are presently working with authorities to retrieve the stolen cattle, to return of abducted women and children, and to develop plans for mitigating measures to prevent a cycle of retaliatory attacks. We are also providing support for engagement with the communities in the areas concerned, including through logistical assistance. UNMISS further urges the Government of South Sudan to identify and bring the perpetrators to justice.

An integrated UN team, along with representatives of the Government, was deployed to Walgak payam on Monday, 11 February to support local authorities and to ascertain facts about the deadly cattle raid. The team are also interviewing survivors at a field hospital.

Protection of civilians remains central to South Sudan's stability and, thus, a core priority of UNMISS mandate. We continue to update - and implement - contingency plans, deploy integrated civilian-military assessment missions across the country, and redeploy our police and military to areas where they are most needed. In areas most at risk we have contingents permanently deployed, and they are being reinforced with more troops when a threat is detected. During the first year of the Mission we conducted around 3000 flights to and within Jonglei alone in support of the peace process and in protection of civilians.

But there are also limits to what we can do, and where we can operate. Threats from cattle raids are particularly challenging. Despite these challenges, however, we have been protecting civilians under imminent threat. Let me give you the two most recent examples:

During the violence in Wau in December, UNMISS protected more than five thousand civilians in our camp. Likewise, in Pibor earlier this month, three thousand civilians sought refuge in UNMISS bases, and were protected there for days. Without these interventions, many hundreds of lives – maybe more, would have been at risk.

The main responsibility for the protection of civilians still remains with the Government and its national security forces, the SPLA and the South Sudan National Police Service. It is, after all, first and foremost their responsibility to provide security to the citizens of their country.

But we will support. UNMISS continues to help build up and support auxiliary police to augment their capacity to act as a stabilizing force in the hotspots of South Sudan. A 'Livestock Patrol Unit' is also established and close to 50 officers have now been trained by UN Police in Jonglei State to assist in combating inter-communal conflict and retrieve stolen cattle.

When security forces are deployed to Jonglei and other areas to stabilize the situation, it is essential that they protect civilians and respect human rights. When this does not happen, communities feel threatened - not protected. This undermines stability.

Human Rights issues

UNMISS is deeply disturbed by reports of threats, intimidation, harassment and attacks against journalists, civil society and human rights activists. Significant efforts must now be made by the Government to address this trend and to ensure that people can enjoy basic rights such as the freedom of expression.

It is therefore positive that South Sudan has agreed to become a pilot country for the UN Plan of Action on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity. UNMISS, UNESCO and OHCHR will work together with other national and international partners to support this process, aiming for a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers. We need to see this positive commitment be followed up in practice.

In the same vein we also urge the national authorities to expedite the investigation into the killing of Isaiah Abraham and bring the perpetrators to justice.

In his New Year's Message to the Nation the President said: *"There are those who are being threatened allegedly for using their voice, which sometimes are critical to the Government policies. They have experienced harassment, abuse and arbitrarily arrests. This is unacceptable. This is not what we fought for. Reneging on the principles of our struggle now is disrespecting the memory of our martyrs who fought and died for our freedom."*

The President pledged that he would take action against any indisciplined elements within the security organs, including the Army and pledged transformation of the police and the national security sector.

We therefore call for accountability for human rights violations committed by the security forces. SPLA-officers who committed violations and crimes during the civilian disarmament process last year need to be held to account. It is also important to obtain as soon as possible the result of the investigations announced by President Kiir into the circumstances of the killing of 13 people in Gumuruk Payam, Pibor County on 4 December. In the same vein, it is critical that the investigation announced by the President into the inter-ethnic violence that occurred over a year ago in Pibor Country is completed.

Similarly, in Western Bahr El Ghazal, we remain very concerned about the increasing number of prolonged arrests. At the highest levels, I have urged national and state authorities to make sure that all perpetrators are held to account and that due process is honoured. I also call on the Investigations Committee of the National Legislative Assembly to complete its work with urgency.

It was in the context of investigations into a case of a journalist feeling threatened that two UNMISS Staff members were detained and interrogated for several hours last month. Such acts are grave violations of the agreements the government has signed and the privileges and immunities of United Nations personnel. And we have protested accordingly. The Government must fully respect the human rights mandate of the Mission and enable our work. I have taken the issue up at the highest levels, and received these assurances from President Salva Kiir Mayardit.

In a recent statement the President called on all security organs of the country to stop these detentions. This is a clear instruction. We now need to see this be followed up by action.

South Sudan has just signed the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. This constitutes a significant step. UNMISS looks forward to the Government's full ratification of this treaty. I encourage the GRSS to fulfill its commitment to the accession and ratification of other key human rights instruments. The UN family will support this process and strengthen the Government's capacity to implement their commitments.

National Reconciliation

Ongoing violence and instability in parts of the country, including the recent events in Gaer, have deeper roots. Historical grievances continue to affect relations between

communities and individuals. Also new tensions emerge from old wounds. They need to be addressed.

That is why the UN welcomes the Government's initiative to launch a process of national reconciliation and healing. Such a process has great potential for nation-building in South Sudan, creating the space to deepen understanding, trust and respect. The leadership of the process and the approach that is taken will be decisive for its possibility to succeed. It is essential, therefore that the process is inclusive and broadly owned by all stakeholders.

The UN, including UNMISS will work closely with the all stakeholders in supporting the development of this reconciliation process. We will also continue to help build the capacity of the South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Commission, so that it can contribute effectively.

As South Sudan embarks on its journey of national reconciliation and healing, I would encourage the Government to look to the African continent for best practices and lessons learned. One example is also home grown, with the Holy Trinity Peace Village in Kuron, established by Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban. He was just awarded the 2013 Sergio Vieira de Mello Peace Prize, and I once again congratulate him.

Furthermore, the Constitutional Review Process is essential for national reconciliation in South Sudan. It can help address some of the key issues that fuel tension in the country, and find solutions that can promote long term stability.

That is why UNMISS is concerned about the serious delays in the process. We urge the National Legislature to now make sure that adequate time is provided so that broad nation wide consultations in South Sudan can happen. This includes consultations with a multitude of stakeholders and with the communities and the people down to the county level. And they need time.

UNMISS is leading the coordination of international partners to support the process. And we are all ready to assist on multiple fronts. The Constitutional Review process is a great opportunity for nation building, and for strengthening the national identity of all South Sudanese. This opportunity should not be missed.

As Head of UNMISS, I am determined, through our commitment and close cooperation with the people of South Sudan and its Government, to do better -- throughout 2013.

Thank you very much.

Opening Remarks by DSRSG/RC/HC Toby Lanzer

Thank you and it is good to see everyone here.

My name is Toby Lanzer as introduced. I am the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) here. I have several hats: I am also sort of the team captain of the UN agencies working in the development sphere that is known as the Resident Coordinator. I am also the Humanitarian Coordinator. So what I am going to talk to you about today touches on all of those areas, in particular the development and the

humanitarian. I will be very happy afterwards, I am sure we will have the chance to exchange views and to take your questions.

One of the things I would like to mention is that I have here for only six months and it would be presumptuous of me to pretend to be an expert. I haven't been following events here for too long. However, during the last six months I have really been privileged to be able to visit all of the ten states of this new country and I have also been able to get up to Abyei. I think one of the things that strikes me here is the tremendous resilience of the people of South Sudan and this is not to be underestimated. It is really something that I believe is not only helping the vast majority of the population survive but it is really helping people try to drive things forward within an overall context which is pretty challenging, as we have just heard, and within an overall economic context of austerity.

What the UN is trying to do, to a large extent, has been described to you by the SRSG focusing very much on stabilization, focusing very much on helping the state put in place the key and core aspects of whatever a state needs – the main institutions, the legislative apparatus, and so forth, and to do that not only here in the centre in Juba but also in all of the ten states. To make sure that services are decentralised; to make sure that the government is a government for the people, of the people and close to the people. This is one of the reasons why we in the United Nations have attached particular importance to being in all ten states and we have significant presence outside Juba.

Just to give you an example, the United Nations agencies have got about half of their staff outside Juba. This is quite unusual. Usually things tend to crystallise in the capital itself.

As a team, what we are trying to achieve here when we look at the development area is actually outlined in this very brief document called the United Nations Development Assistance Framework where there are really five things we are working on.

One is to help the government put in place the core governance and civil service functions that any state requires; one is to reduce chronic food insecurity and all of you would have heard, I think in early December, the President of the country announce his aim of making South Sudan food secure by the end of 2014. By the way, that is not a pipedream – it is a goal and it is a goal that is achievable and I can go into that in more detail later.

The third area where we are working very closely with the government is to put in place key service delivery systems – whether it is education, whether it is health services.

The fourth is to work closely with communities to make sure that we can prevent and reduce violence.

The fifth is to do what every state does – and we are doing this very much as a team – we are working on the key aspects of justice and the key aspects of rule of law. The other day, somebody said to me, “What is rule of law? How do you define it?” Rule of law is rather really simple to define: it means that everyone, no matter who you are, is equal before the law. That is the bottom line and that is what we are working very closely on with the government, with the various institutions throughout the country.

As I think many of you know, the United Nations here is made up of various components, various parts of the United Nations Secretariat – whether it is the Department of

Peacekeeping Operations, whether it is the UN agencies working here such as UNICEF, WHO, we have really got a very broad set of different United Nations actors and we are trying to get everybody to work as a coherent team and I think there is some exciting news with regards to what everybody has been up to and I just thought it would be helpful today to give you a couple of ideas of what we were doing over the last year and what we are planning to do this year.

I am just going to rattle through this and there is no particular order but you may be interested to know that **FAO** the Food and Agriculture Organisation, has recently been up in Abyei. Within Abyei, they have vaccinated 47,000 cattle. In addition to that, FAO has put throughout the country 500 Farmer Field Schools. What does that mean? That is an opportunity for farmers, for communities to get together and compare notes on how it is going. And how it has been going in terms of the harvest or the recent harvest was a lot better than the harvest in 2011. That is a fact. There still is a food deficit in South Sudan but it is less of a deficit than we had in 2011. So the trend is quite positive.

WFP, I am sure you all know, is providing food aid to 2.3 million people. But it isn't just doing that. It is actually doing something very exciting: it is building what we call "feeder roads". These are roads that connect communities either to each other or connect communities to key markets. It is a tremendous thing to go and see and I will be happy to take any of you, as I am sure WFP would. Just to give you an idea, in Aweil recently, WFP, using the food that it has as an asset, mobilised a community of 3,000 people and that community can build one kilometre of road every day.

Another example of what we are doing: we all know of the maternal health situation in the country. **UNFPA** is very engaged on that. It has established the very fast teaching college for midwives here.

WHO just last week in Bor in Jonglei State inaugurated a maternity ward that 100,000 women in Jonglei will have access to. That is a significant contribution to the welfare and health of women of child-bearing age in particular in Jonglei State.

UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, has worked very closely with **UNESCO** and the Ministry of Education. And let me give you an example of how sometimes people look at numbers here and they say, "It just isn't working". The other day I was on the phone with quite a prominent person outside the country. The person said to me, "One million kids are on to school," and I said, "Yes, that is true. But in 2003 there were only 300,000 kids who were in school. Today, thanks to the Ministry of Education and the work of UNESCO, UNICEF and other donors involved, there are 1.8 million kids in school in South Sudan". There is a long way to go; there are still one million children who do not have access to school. There is a long way to go but this is a road along which there has been considerable progress.

In terms of capacity building, I just wanted to mention what the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** is doing. It, with the generosity of neighbouring countries such as Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, has been able to bring civil servants from those countries and placed them inside key ministries – in particular the Ministry of Finance – inside all ten state capitals ... to do what? To accompany the work of the South Sudanese ministries in particular in public financial management but also on key issues

such as urban planning, such as agriculture, such as planning water systems inside the state capitals and this is what we want to take down to the county level.

Just a couple of other examples that I want to share with you. I think we have all heard of the terrible situation inside South Kordofan and Blue Nile. The Special Representative made reference to what we have heard is another incident in the northern part of Unity state in the past 24 hours or so. I think we are aware that what is happening in some of these areas in Sudan is resulting in people seeking safe haven in South Sudan. We have now got almost 75,000 people seeking safe haven in Unity State. They are in and around an area called Yida and we have got over 125,000 people in Maban County of Upper Nile State. This is where the **UNHCR** is showing its leadership working closely with NGOs to make sure of two things: not only that the refugees are welcomed, protected and assisted but also that the relationship between the refugees – who by the way come with their own cattle – do not disturb the environment and they do not have a difficult relationship with the host communities. There, I think, the Government of South Sudan has worked assiduously with the host communities to make sure the refugees are welcome and that we are able to look after them.

I could go on and on but I think, as the SRSR has mentioned, there are some big moments coming up. She has referred to them and I think I would, from my perspective, underline the census – a very important moment for the country. We know that in the not-to-far distant horizon we will have elections in this country and we will be working on those. I think together what the UN is trying to do here is to really enhance the chance for peace, to avoid any slippage backwards. We know that there are hotspots, there are things that flare up all over the place but overall what we are trying to do is to make sure that South Sudan, its institutions, its people are on a more solid footing and that you can move forward to become what we all hope is a just and prosperous nation.

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Q & A

Radio Miraya: My question goes to the SRSR Hilde Johnson. Communities in Akobo in Jonglei State are concerned that the early warning mechanism appears not to be working in preventing attacks. An example is the cattle raid last weekend. You mentioned Wau as an example where UNMISS has protected civilians. The question still remains: what was the type of mechanism that UNMISS used in protecting those civilians and also to make sure that the communities and the SPLA are aware of such imminent attacks in the future? This is because the government has recently accuses UNMISS of not protecting civilians and being slow in response in protecting civilians under imminent threat of attack and UNMISS has neither accepted nor denied these accusations.

My other question goes to Toby Lanzer. There are reports of a fresh influx of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo into Morobo County in Central Equatoria State some few days ago and local authorities are putting the number in the thousands. This is the second influx since last year and it happens when the first group that came in is not

yet settled what plans does the UN have with regards such an influx of refugees to the country?

Bloomberg News: You have mentioned that two UN employees were detained last month. I was just wondering whether you could give a little more detail – were these human rights officers, what was the reason for their detention, how long were they held, who detained them ... was it NSS or the police – anything on that?

I also wanted to ask about the investigations into the downing of the UN helicopter. That was more than two months ago now and I don't think we have received any information about the conclusions on that. I wonder if you have got any information on that.

SRS G H. Johnson: First question on early warning – we have had very extensive discussions and preparedness with the government on early warning. In what we have established as the Joint Implementation Mechanism which is chaired by the Vice-President and co-chaired by me, with all the relevant ministers present including Defence, Security, Interior, etc. we have had extensive discussions of mapping of hotspots where in the dry season it was likely to occur - violence, cattle raids, etc. We have discussed preparedness for that, exactly which locations and how the Government would respond to that and how we can support. As I mentioned in my introduction, we can not be everywhere all the time. It is the Government's own responsibility and we have an early warning mechanism that we have worked out and we are sharing early warning with the Government. This is working as a system.

With regard to the specific situation in Walgak, two things are important: one – there was a detection that something could happen and we had some information that something could happen but in a vast area. We did not have early warning intelligence or knowledge about where any attack could happen. With the event of last fall, we had air reces that went daily. After the shutdown of the helicopter, we are having restrictions on how low we can fly – 3,000 ft. is the minimum. This gives us much less capacity to monitor from the air any movement of people. So we are in a situation now that new aviation procedures that are put in place are restricting our air possibility to monitor the developments. We have to be above 3,000 ft. and we can't almost detect a crowd of 1,000 attackers at that level. It is much more difficult for us to go down. We also don't have attack helicopters in the Mission. These can fly very low and can be able to do that but with the aviation restrictions we are now having, we do not have the same opportunity so we couldn't detect what happened on 8th February, unfortunately. There were SPLA in the area but they were fewer than could stop the attack and a number was killed as well, as we know, unfortunately, and we do express our condolences to all the affected families and communities.

On the second issue on the human rights officers that were detained, these were human rights officers. There was a Press Release that went out on this a little earlier that gives some more information but I can repeat it. They were detained for about five hours. They were investigating one particular case of a journalist that felt that he was under threat and they wanted to corroborate that information. As they were making inquiries to corroborate this information in the military intelligence location, including with security personnel, they were then held back for a number of hours where they were also interrogated. So it was a military intelligence facility, not National Security and not

Police. We have, of course, raised this with all concerned and as I said in my intervention, with the President as well.

On the investigations into the UN helicopter shooting and downing, we have three processes ongoing at the same time. The Government has established its own high-level national investigations committee supported by a technical committee. Investigations are underway. There is a second internal investigation in the SPLA into this incidence. As far as I know, that is the most advanced and is close to completion. Then there is a third investigation process which is the Board of Inquiry by the United Nations. This is an independent inquiry – a high-level one. They have just completed their interviews in Juba and with staff in South Sudan and with the SPLA and they are now in New York. As for the timelines, we have been informed that the investigations by the government's high-level committee should be done within around three months' time; as regards the UN Board of Inquiry, that is likely to come not very far away a few weeks from now. So that is the information on the helicopter incident.

It goes without saying that we have nothing to do with the process of investigations because they are investigating us, among other things.

Thank you.

DSRSG Lanzer: On the *Radio Miraya* question about the reporting of refugees arrivals from the DRC, I think this is a case which we see in different parts of the country in different times and what we do is that we send teams in there to do an assessment to try to get a better handle on the numbers involved, the types of needs of the people who are arriving, why they are arriving; and then we also get in touch with our offices in the country of origin.

I haven't got news on the assessment on this stage so there is not much I can share with you right now.

New Nation: My first question goes to Ms. Hilde Johnson. What does the UN initiative involve and how efficient will it be in protecting journalists from harassment?

My other question is to Toby. How is the donor response to the 2013 Consolidated Appeal for South Sudan and how much has so far been raised?

The Citizen: My question to Ms. Hilde Johnson, according to your assessment, how many people have died in the recent attacks in Walgak and who are those involved in the attack?

South Sudan Television: My question goes to Mr. Toby Lanzer. You talked briefly about food security. More than 10 people have died in the Greater Kapoeta area. What is the role of the UN there?

Radio Miraya: My question goes to Toby Lanzer. You said that the government and the UN [*indiscernible*]. I would like to know, at the political level, what is the UN doing to ensure that Sudan stops attacking South Sudan?

Hilde Johnson: Firstly on the UN Action Plan and the Media Initiative, we are having our first meetings with the Minister of Information and his team on this. We sat with him yesterday and he will, together with his team, develop a plan and we then, on our side, will support those efforts with a number of partners. This is going to be thrashed out by

them but there are some criteria that are very clear in the Action Plan of course related to respecting freedom of expression, no impunity for those harassing journalists, other types of clear principles like that.

UNESCO and the OHCHR is also involved.

On that basis, we will then be able to advise, provide technical support, but also to continue to monitor the situation.

Will this help? There is a statement that is quite strong now that is important and a basis for progress. Of course this commitment has to be shared beyond the Minister of Information and so what is critical is that the whole of the government also is involved and engaged. It is when we can see that all different, relevant ministries and institutions are involved that we can also count on change happening but I think it is important that two things have happened. One: that they have signed up to this. Two: also that the President has come up with a very strong message on the same issue. That should provide some hope for progress and actions being taken going forward.

On the question on who was involved in the attack and how many, at the moment the verification is very difficult. Many of the bodies have been buried and the information we are gathering is patchy. We cannot do anything but, at this point in time, refer to the reports that we have received from local authorities and from the communities that have been subject to the attack and survivors that we are now interviewing in the field hospital. It is premature for us to say anything at this point in time because we are gathering information. That will determine when we have more information from more survivors and we have more systematic mapping and verification of it that we will be able to get back with more concrete responses to your questions. At this point in time, it is actually too early for us. This also includes the numbers.

On the last question on South Sudan, Sudan, this is a question that best can be answered by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Haile Menkerios. He is responsible for Sudan, South Sudan relations. He is at this point in time in New York and monitoring the situation carefully. I spoke to him on the phone yesterday evening. We are in a situation where the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) is leading. What we are doing on our side is reporting on incidences on our area of responsibility of the Mission to the Security Council. But these reports are going from the Secretary-General to the Security Council and hence we are not in a position ourselves to comment on Sudan or to, in any way, have any further assessment of the situation. That has to be done by the Special Envoy.

Toby Lanzer: Thank you very much. Very briefly, if I may, there are a couple of questions addressed to me. The first was on Kapoeta. We had a team there earlier this week and, I am sorry to say yet again, that we are still waiting for the result of the assessment but I will have it later today. It has been brought to our attention and we are aware of the situation that is evolving in Kapoeta and we are taking a look at that.

Regarding the Consolidated Appeal, this is the combined work of 114 non-governmental organisations and UN agencies working together here in the Republic of South Sudan. This appeal was launched at the end of November last year and I issued a letter to all of the relevant parts of different donor countries throughout the world in early December.

So far, the response has been about 185 million US dollars out of a target of 1.16 billion US dollars – so we are roughly 15 percent funded for the Appeal.

Now what does that mean? What it means is that we are struggling to continue all of the emergency operations that we had envisaged, in particular the response to the refugee situation in Upper Nile State, in Unity, but more so, I would say, to continue the response in a timely fashion to the 2.3 million people throughout South Sudan whom we have evaluated as being food insecure.

Third very important point is we all know that there is a dry season and there is a rainy season and we all know that during the rainy season about 60% of the country becomes particularly difficult to access. So what we want to do during the dry season and before the end of May is to preposition emergency relief throughout the country. This is something that is being developed; we have what is known as Core Pipelines whereby we preposition relief items in over 20 locations in the key states that become particularly difficult to reach once the rains hit. At the moment, I have actually just come from a meeting where I have looked at each of the core pipelines and there is only one that is well-funded and where we will be able to manage to preposition the items that are required. That means six are not.

I am therefore making an appeal to all the members of the donor community – whether they are present here in Juba or outside the country – to engage as quickly as possible so that we can provide the assistance and protection that is urgently needed today but also make sure that we will continue to do so during the rainy season.

In that vein, let me just mention two other points. One is I will be continuing to reach out to donor capitals – I will be going to Seoul, to Tokyo and to Canberra over the course of the next week to advocate, on behalf of the people of South Sudan, to make sure that all of us together are in a position to provide the support to the institutions of the state but also to reach populations who are in need ... whether it is for humanitarian assistance or development cooperation.

The other thing is we need to be realistic that this is a particularly challenging environment at the moment because donors are under their own austerity. There are very, very few economically wealthy countries at the moment that are growing in economic terms that have more money to give. It really is a period of austerity not only in South Sudan but also in key donor countries.

The second thing is there is strong competition for scarce resources. I said to somebody at the end of January that maybe 2013 will be the year of the S. And “S” means Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, and the Sahel. We have very strong competition. These are five Ss and what I am going to be doing is continuing to advocate that we are in a position to provide assistance both in the development realm and the humanitarian sphere here, but also to make sure that by the end of this year, out of those countries I just mentioned, let’s hope and let’s work to make sure that South Sudan is stable.

Gurtong Trust: My first question is to Toby Lanzer. World activists have expressed fears that the census may not take place as scheduled due to the situation on the ground – the economic, political, security situations, among others. Could you explain what measures you are going to put in place to ensure that this process takes place on time?

There has been an expression by the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs that the funding that was released for the activities of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) was only for February. Are there new plans in place to ensure that UNHAS continues its activities?

Reuters: I want to ask a bit more about the human rights detentions. What has Military Intelligence with that issue? Why were they involved and not national security? Where were they actually detained ... where were they arrested? I understand that this had happened a couple of weeks ago so why has it not been mentioned earlier – why has it taken two or three weeks to come up?

And for details of the attack around Jau, was this inside South Sudan and within the UN purview of responsibility?

AFP: This is for the SRSG. Given the restrictions on access, increasing threats against UNMISS staff and increasingly repressive tactics by the state security services and also failures by the government to swear in things like the Jonglei Committee [*indiscernible*], does UNMISS consider its method of engagement with the government on human rights abuse successful?

On the Wau detainees, could you provide the number of people and, obviously not names, but who they are – like politicians and civil society?

On Jonglei, there are some criticisms that UNMISS doesn't seem to be doing regular patrols and has relatively very few troops in an area that is pretty much unstable ...

Hilde Johnson: ... in Jonglei the whole state or in some areas of Jonglei?

AFP: In Jonglei hotspots – in previous cattle-raiding sites. How do you respond to that?

Lastly, how do you respond to criticism that UNMISS is consistently slow to investigate incidents of violence despite its Chapter VII mandate and it seems to be increasingly denied access to places such as Wau, Rumbek and Pibor by the government.

Hilde Johnson: First, on the issue of the aerial bombardment, we have received reports from the SPLA and Unity State authorities that Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) aerial bombardment took place in Dar and Jau yesterday on February 14. The reports we received was about 17:00 hours in Dar and 18:30 hours in Jau.

We have looked at the two places and they are located in what is seen by the AUHIP as a contested area and this means that we are not in a position to verify the aerial bombardment and go to the site because then it is outside our area of operations. This, of course, is a process that the two parties are discussing under the auspices of the AUHIP. Those are outside our mandate.

The second question which is related to the human rights detentions, there are three things: one is that they were going to the SPLA military facilities themselves to ask questions and that is where they were held. They were invited by a Military Intelligence Officer to meet him there and they went there. He was not being investigated himself.

Secondly with regards to publication of this, this has been published by *Radio Miraya* before and there has been a press statement issued for quite a while ago related to the

freedom of expression and where we again underlined the unacceptability of this detention – so that has been out there.

Thirdly, we are repeating the message today.

I need to take one by one a number of questions from the *AFP*, first with regards to the question on whether the implementation of our human rights mandate is successful or not, I guess for a situation in South Sudan where there are significant human rights challenges - the country is one and a half years old – the test of our success needs to be measured against the minels that we are walking and we are at the very beginning of a long, long journey. I think that is what I can say.

In terms of the Wau situation, we have been able to access now detainees but we haven't been able to access all, I think, yet but we are successfully meeting them. Our human rights officers now have access.

However, we just have numbers still from the reports we have received from different actors on the ground. Those reports go beyond the hundreds of which there is around about 70 civilians and around 30 security forces that are detained. According to the information we have received, they have been transferred to the prison in Wau – so they are no longer in custody of National Security; some are in police custody.

The composition of the civilians is there are politicians, legislators, as far as we know, and there are a number of civilians that were involved allegedly. Again, investigations are about to be completed and we don't know the contents of them but they are told to be having involved in inciting violence and they are being investigated as ringleaders. That is what the reports of the government say. But, of course, we do not know what the case is basically. There are different types of civilians and whether they are civil society activists, I am not familiar, but we will need to get back on that – I'm just looking at Richard ...

Richard Bennet [*Director, UNMISS Human Rights Section, speaking from the audience*]: Very few. But there were at least nine journalists ...

Hilde Johnson: So there has been journalists and media workers as well, thank you.

I have raised these issues very strongly at the highest levels. We have therefore not only access to them but we are also going to see a court process start very quickly under the auspices of the Chief Justice who, as I said, will send the judges as soon as possible.

We have appealed for due process to be followed and accountability to be delivered upon so that any perpetrators face justice.

When it comes to Jonglei and deployments, I think this is worth a separate briefing because this has to do with only one thing and that is logistics. We have a situation where Jonglei, during the rainy season for eight or nine months of the year, has significant problems with accessibility. Basically it is flooded in the most critical hotspots and we can only access the areas by air.

To illustrate my point, we have three major deployments to Jonglei in all the three communities – we have in Bor, we have in Pibor and we have in Akobo – that is in the Dinka Bor area, the Murle area and the Lou Nuer area. The presence is significant in peacekeeping terms. It is more than a company and we have contingency plans to fly in a

very large number – nine companies out of a total of 15 – to support any incident in Jonglei of scale. These contingency plans are there and the troops are ready to fly in a 24 hour basis.

Having stronger presence on the ground than a company plus or a company and a half, will imply a logistical effort that is not possible under the rainy season. We are now in the dry season so we are now reviewing our deployment plans and we are likely to shift a little bit due to the incidences that have now occurred.

I can illustrate the point with just saying that in Pibor County we had deployment in Likuangole and in Pibor town. We are not able to keep more than two companies running at the same time. It is not logistically possible with the helicopter capacity that we have. So that is the reason. We, of course, would like to have more presence but we can not manage logistically to cater for that presence. This has to do with aviation rules, it has to do with the requests of the Troop Contributing Countries for supplies and we are now of course considering redeployment both in the Gumuruk area as well as into areas where the attack happened. We are considering those and will revert when we have found more plans.

So those were the main issues.

There was a question about access. Access is not related as much to Chapter VII, Chapter VII is protection under imminent threat, so that isn't a tool we can use. But we are calling for access and this I also did in Wau, beyond Raja for example into Timsaha and into Kitkit and other areas. And we have seen that we have now been able to access these areas but we need to have more regular access to be able to cater for our mandate. So we are working there.

In Rumbek and Pibor, there hasn't been a problem with access at all.

Maybe Toby you wanted to say something on that as well and there were a couple of questions for you too.

Toby Lanzer: Let me just carry on, if I may, on the question of Pibor. I actually went there last week and I went to Gumuruk and I spent a couple of nights in the area but let me say a couple of things that might surprise you.

The first is: actually what I saw in Pibor was a town which is clearly been affected by continued instability over the last few months but I actually had been in Pibor six months ago just after I arrived here and I had been there a couple of years ago when I was working in Darfur. I had the chance to go there just for a day when I was accompanying a high level visitor including to Juba. I think Pibor has consistently been a place where there have been challenges, as we all know. Actually what I found in Pibor last week when I went there was a rather good relationship between the local community and the peacekeepers, as I have found in other areas – I also went up to Akobo and there I saw the peacekeepers working closely with the local community and they had a very good relationship. And I have seen that in Bor, as well.

The other thing is that although one would like to think that UNMISS is a very large peacekeeping mission and that it is well endowed with equipment, it really depends on what we are comparing it to and the logistics challenges in South Sudan, as we all know, can not be overstated. What we have seen during the last rainy season was rains that have

lasted far much longer than anticipated and then the case of Jonglei right now it is the case where the roads are still wet in many parts of that state.

So I think the challenges facing UNMISS and by the way the entire humanitarian enterprise whether it is NGOs or UN agencies, are very stark here. That leads me to the point about UNHAS.

Yes, UNHAS was on the verge at the end of January of having to close down its service because the donor contributions on which UNHAS relies has not come forth as quickly as we had hoped. You are right to point to the support that UNHAS received from the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and I just want to recognise the efforts of the Minister himself but also of his team to reach out to the donor community and to impress upon them as the World Food Programme (WFP) and I have been doing, that UNHAS is a very important component of the entire aid operation – it is what moves aid around the country and it is what moves aid workers in particular to all of their destinations around the country.

So the financing situation right now is a little more stable but it is tenuous. Just yesterday we had the allocation of the Common Humanitarian Fund and, thanks to the generosity of several countries including countries such as Norway, the UK and others, we are in a position to make some allocations which I think will keep the aid operations on a slightly more even keel at least until we reach upto March. But as I said earlier, the overall funding situation of the Consolidated Appeal is far from what I would like it to be.

On the question of the census, let me just say very quickly that this, again, is very much going to be a joint effort between UNMISS and various UN agencies – in particular UNFPA which is the focal point on the side of UN agencies working on census issues. It is a crucial issue, I want to underline that.

Having a proper census of the population in South Sudan will enable all of us to get a proper demographic profile of the country that will enable all of us, no matter what you do, to plan better, to programme better, to monitor results and measure results much better. So I think that carrying out the census is not only a high political priority in the sense that it paves the way as a prerequisite for the elections in accordance with the terms of the Transitional Constitution, but in terms of just moving forward, working, getting development programmes on a correct course, having a census is very, very important.

We will therefore be engaged as much as we can in the course of this year. Actually this morning I was with the Chairperson of the National Bureau of Statistics who is spearheading the effort on the side of the government. We were talking on only one topic: the census.

Spokesperson, a.i., Kouider Zerrouk: If there are no further questions, I would like to thank you very much for attending. We have copies of the remarks over there and they will also be sent to you by email.

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