



UNMIS Press Release

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Comprehensive Peace Agreement at critical juncture – Secretary-General's report

The Secretary-General's report on the Sudan has been released and is to be presented later today to the United Nations Security Council in New York by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan, Ashraf Qazi.

In his report, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon notes that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) has reached "a critical juncture", with a little over two years of the interim period remaining. "While progress in its implementation needs to be recognized, daunting challenges still lie ahead", he writes. He further notes that key benchmarks, including census results, elections, border demarcation, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and preparations for referenda and popular consultations now need to be achieved within a tight time frame with very little flexibility for further delays.

The Secretary-General reports that the parties to the CPA have yet to present a convincing case for unity to the people of Southern Sudan. "I call upon the parties to use the remaining two years to explore all options available to make unity attractive," he says, pledging UN support, including in the electoral process.

Secretary-General Ban notes that insecurity continues to plague parts of the country where banditry, tribal clashes and militia activities remain a matter of grave concern. Also, while momentum in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme needs to be maintained, the parties should commence discussions on the proportional downsizing of forces on both sides.

On human rights, he notes that arbitrary arrests by the National Security Intelligence Services continue to be a major concern in the north and that restrictions on freedom of expression and the media, including daily press censorship, continued unabated. Meanwhile, in Southern Sudan, people are detained for prolonged periods without having access to legal assistance, including those facing the death penalty.

You can download the full report at UNMIS website: <http://www.unmis.org/english/documents.htm>

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