

**Situation in Abyei**  
**Statement by Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi**  
**Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sudan**

**Khartoum, 16 May 2008.** The Special Representative of the Secretary-General is very concerned about the security situation in Abyei, following recent clashes between members of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army. As a result of the fighting, thousands of civilians have fled the area.

The Special Representative welcomes the agreement to end the fighting which was reached between the two parties earlier yesterday at a meeting of the Area Joint Military Committee under the chairmanship of UNMIS. He hopes that the agreement will bring to an end the violence in this volatile area, and calls on both sides to respect all its provisions, including an immediate cease-fire and the removal of other armed groups from Abyei town. He further urges the parties to ensure that civilians and civilian installations are fully protected.

This latest development in Abyei, whose complex problems represent one of the most difficult challenges facing the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan, underscores the importance of fully implementing the Abyei Protocol. As a first step, the parties need to establish an interim administration to ensure the delivery of much needed basic services to the community and to act as an effective mechanism for resolving differences and preventing potential conflicts. Ends

**For further information, please contact the Spokesperson Office**

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