



PRESS RELEASE

Abyei Protocol Area - 8 December 2009, “Dutch Ambassador inaugurates Police Barracks and handover over equipment in Abyei”

The Dutch Ambassador, Mr. Norbert Braakhuis, inaugurated the Abyei Police Force barracks in Abyei Town. He also announced that his government has donated an additional 3 million USD for equipment, such as transport means, to the Abyei Police. His Excellency the Dutch Ambassador was joined by representatives of the *Abyei Police Commander Colonel Luka Deng*, and the *Abyei Chief Administrator Brigadier Arop Moyak Monyoc*, respectively and by the *Country Director UNDP Mr. Claudio Caldarone*, and other police and Civil Administration officials.

“The Netherlands have been closely involved with the PCA arbitration from the very start”, said the Ambassador. “We see the award as very helpful, because it brings a clear solution to the issue of delimitation of Abyei area, and we welcome the firm commitment of both the GoNU and the SPLM to the award. But I also want to stress that the ruling, which is based itself on tribal law, underlines that traditional grazing and water rights will remain intact for all groups involved in the ruling. It is urgent that the ruling be implemented to the full, but it is equally urgent to sit down with the migrant communities to find ways to mitigate their concerns and help them forward”.

The police can play an important role in a peaceful implementation of the arbitration award, according to the Ambassador. Ambassador Braakhuis stated: *“The police is a key institution for promoting peaceful coexistence in the area. Policing remains a joint effort of both parties to the Abyei Protocol as long as Abyei has a special status under the Presidency.”* The Netherlands has provided the Abyei police with equipment needed to perform during this migration season and beyond. Ambassador Braakhuis: *“I trust they will use it to patrol along the migration routes, to protect the traditional rights of all population groups, migrants and residents alike, and to settle on the spot any incidents before they escalate into conflict or violence”.*

Construction of the police barracks and technical support are provided through the UNDP Support to the Abyei Civil Administration project in collaboration with UNMIS Police. The UNDP Country Director, Mr. Caldarone said *“I pleased to be here on this occasion, as this represents UNDP and the donor community’s continued commitment towards the people of Abyei”, while noting that “there is now a visible presence of police in Abyei town creating a sense of security and personal safety for communities in the area”.* The UNDP Country Director congratulated the Abyei Civil Administration and JIPU for their progress towards restoring civilian law and order in Abyei, and thanked the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for their continuing support.

The Abyei Civil Administration received the buildings with gratitude noting the importance of providing infrastructure and institutional support for the Abyei Police Force. The Police representative further noted that the Netherlands and UNDP continue to provide support to the efforts to bring durable peace to Abyei, and expressed optimism regarding further support.

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