

NOTE TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
(through Ms. Malcorra)

DPI Weekly Press Review

This week's press review focuses on your visit to Abu Dhabi for the Ascent event on climate change and then to Juba to promote peace talks in South Sudan. The review also examines coverage of the abduction of more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls, and the United Nations reaction in particular.

Your active involvement in the Ascent was closely followed by the media this week, resulting in prominent news headlines, particularly within the immediate region, as well as some compelling visual images illustrating your personal commitment to the cause.

During your travels the Department of Public Information was able to widely disseminate several photos of you active in the field, whether at the Shams solar power plant in the United Arab Emirates, or meeting with displaced children in South Sudan.

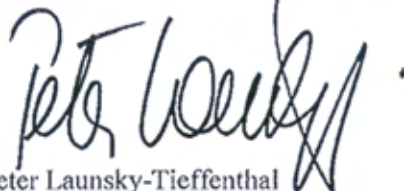
These images, further distributed by external news agencies, reinforce your key messages and help you to make an additional impact in the global conversation on major issues.

Turning to Nigeria, coverage of the plight of the kidnapped girls continues to increase. The concerns you expressed to President Goodluck Jonathan were widely reported, and there was some pick-up of your decision to dispatch an envoy.

Social media responded particularly strongly. A Tweet containing your statement is already the UN's second most popular Tweet of 2014.

Your press stakeout here on Monday afternoon offers an opportunity for you to outline in person the depth of your feelings on the issue and the level of attention the UN is giving the case – and the broader issue of the treatment of women and girls worldwide.

Thank you.



Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal
9 May 2014

cc: The Deputy Secretary-General / Mr. Amdur / Ms. Amos / Mr. Dujarric / Mr. Feltman / Ms. Haq / Mr. Kim /
Mr. Ladsous / Mr. Orr

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PRESS REVIEW

Friday, 9 May 2014

Produced by News and Media Division, Department of Public Information

ABU DHABI ASCENT: 'LOSE NO TIME IN TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE'

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's participation in the Abu Dhabi Ascent event drew keen interest from the media, with a wide array of outlets – from France's **Libération** to Lebanon's **Al-Hayat** and Istanbul's **Cihan** news agency – giving prominence to his calls for swift action. "UN's Ban urges climate action ahead of New York summit," proclaimed a **Reuters** headline echoed by Russian news agency **Rosbalt** ("Ban urges to lose no time in tackling climate change") and **Prensa Latina** ("From Abu Dhabi, Ban Ki-moon urges climate change awareness"), among many others. Ban's climate change-flavoured op-ed in **The Guardian** (UK) also resonated widely, including through pick-up by **The Nation** of Pakistan and news aggregator websites **World News Network**, **Nets247.com** and **AllVoices.com**.

According to the **French Tribune**, Ban urged stakeholders to treat climate change seriously before it becomes too late. The **Delhi Daily News** in India flagged his invitation "to join a race to the top" in finding climate change solutions, an angle also stressed by Dubai's **Zawa**. Dubai's **Gulf News** drew attention to Ban's point that the Ascent was not a "talk-shop," while **UPI** highlighted his call for persuasive political arguments to change government attitudes. South African website **News Tonight Africa** emphasized that Ban "raised his voice on the important issue of climate change, to bring attention of world leaders on saving the planet." Many outlets brought up the upcoming UN forum on climate change, with **AP** noting that "Ban's September meeting" was designed to secure a deal for rich and poor nations. In India's **Business Standard**, Rajendra Shende, chairman of the Terre policy centre, described the Ascent as a "litmus test" for the September summit and stressed that in Abu Dhabi, Ban was making "yet another earnest crusade" to spark life in climate negotiations. **The National** (UAE) ran a lengthy article based on an interview the Secretary-General gave that focused on climate change.

Numerous outlets made broad use of photos, including images of Ban addressing the conference and visiting the Shams solar power plant. **AFP** used a dynamic photograph of Ban, microphone in hand, under the headline: "Delay on climate change action? We'll pay for that, says UN chief." **Voice of America** published a picture on its website of the Secretary-General at a press conference alongside the UAE Minister of State, while **Trust.org** (connected to **Reuters**) posting a shot depicting him delivering his address. To illustrate its headline, "UN Secretary-General on climate change: 'It's time to lead'," **Triple Pundit**, a business-oriented US website, ran a photo of Ban at a lectern.

Beyond mainstream media, the Ascent was closely followed by specialty outlets. In its coverage of the visit to the solar plant, the US' **Tech Times** underscored Ban's comments that governments must step up and be counted on climate change. According to the UK sustainable investment online magazine **Blue and Green Tomorrow**, Ban argued that no one can afford for 'business as usual' to continue.

SOUTH SUDAN

Less than three years after Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited South Sudan to celebrate its independence, Ban was making a one-day stop in Juba to "help put out a fire" that has been burning since December, according to **The Observer** (Kampala). "UN chief arrives in South Sudan for talks with officials," ran a news headline in Khartoum's **Republic of Sudan Radio** depicting the thrust of the coverage. Flagging to the leaders his message of resolution through dialogue, **AFP** underscored that Ban

flew in “to demand” an end to a brutal four-month-old civil war that has “sparked dire warnings of genocide and famine.” **AP** stressed that Ban said that President Salva Kiir and former Vice-President Riek Machar each told him that they planned to meet in Addis Ababa. According to a separate **AP** article, Machar told Ban that he would “try his best” to make it to Friday’s scheduled sit-down, but that he was “now in a very remote area.” While speculation continued about whether Machar would make it “out of his secret war bunker” (**NPR**), several outlets (**AFP**, **Christian Science Monitor**, **France 24**) conveyed that the two leaders would be coming together for talks after a “damning UN report.”

The **Sudan Tribune** reported that according to “senior diplomats,” Kiir and Machar would hold face-to-face meetings – however, the agenda was not detailed. Iran’s **FARS** news agency covered the story under the headline “UN Chief Lands in War-Torn South Sudan to Push for Peace.” **Reuters** pointed out that Ban’s visit was the second peace mission to South Sudan by “a major global figure” in less than a week, after that of US Secretary of State John Kerry. The **Turkish Press**, **The East African** (Nairobi), Senegal’s **Panapress** and **Deutsche Welle** were among numerous agencies reporting on Ban’s visit. In a commentary in the **Sudan Tribune**, Zechariah Manyok Biar noted that Kiir had pledged to Ban that he would meet Machar in Ethiopia, “if he will accept to meet me.”

A long list of outlets complemented their coverage with images of the Secretary-General on the ground. Above a photo of Ban sporting a UN cap and waving during his visit to an IDP camp in the UNMISS base in Juba, **Reuters** headlined its article: “UN chief in South Sudan, keeps up pressure for peace.” **The New York Times** ran a close-up of Ban holding a young girl while touring the camp atop a story reporting on his visit “to beseech officials and rebel leaders” to end the civil war. The **Daily Times** of Nigeria used a wider shot of the same picture, revealing Ban flanked by other children.

From suggestions to observations and finger-pointing

Commentaries were mostly found in regional media outlets, with some offering concrete proposals for moving forward. In an analysis by Peter Kagwanja in **The East African**, the chief executive of the Africa Policy Institute acknowledged “there is no silver bullet” to solve the crisis but a five-point peace agenda would likely to silence the guns, stop the slide into genocide and restore peace. In Uganda’s **Daily Monitor**, the UK’s African affairs minister Mark Simmonds advanced his view that inter-communal reconciliation issues must be addressed, including accountability for human rights abuses – lest the same tragic events occur over and over again.

Others took more partisan positions. An editorial in Nairobi’s **The Standard** reckoned that Kiir owed it to the South Sudanese to be the ‘Father of the Nation’ while Machar should “perish the thought” that he, rather than Kiir, should lead South Sudan. Elhag Paul, in the **South Sudan News Agency**, decried that Kiir released “the genie of ethnic cleansing” from its bottle – and it was growing bigger and bigger, poisoning the much needed spirit of tolerance. In an analysis for the **Sudan Tribune**, David De Dau accused elites – especially politicians – of mobilizing ignorant communities to make “the whole political saga” look like an ethnic conflict.

A slew of news stories ran globally on the release of a UN human rights report on crimes perpetrated since December. **Deutsche Welle** led with a headline that indicated that the “UN warns of crimes against humanity,” an observation that reverberated elsewhere (**Time**, **South China Morning Post**, **Voice of America**, ABC News of Australia). In an **AP** story that ran widely, UNMISS chief Hilde Johnson said “accountability for the crimes is critical to ending the legacy of impunity in South Sudan and preventing similar atrocities in the future.” The **New York Times** indicated that the report underscored the difficulties facing the peacekeeping mission. Pointing out that with the Government becoming a party to the fighting, “the Security Council is considering a change to its mandate so that it functions in a neutral capacity, with the principal goal of protecting civilians.”

NIGERIA

As global outrage over the violent 15 April abduction of more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls sparked front-page coverage in many countries, this week reporters and commentators noted the increasing number of urgent calls for action by United Nations officials and various luminaries. A video statement by Boko Haram's leader in which he threatened to sell the girls set off a fresh torrent of coverage that spared no one, but particularly the Nigerian Government and in some cases, the media itself.

Outrage over schoolgirls' abduction

"Boko Haram – a suitable case for UN-approved intervention" proclaimed a blog by Ewen MacAskill and Richard Norton-Taylor in **The Guardian** (London) as they made the case for 'R2P' or the right to intervene in order to protect civilians and detailed a round-table discussion in the UK where some had argued that "the UN should be seen as a legitimate arbiter of intervention" in the situation. "Ban Ki-moon talks with Nigerian President on girls' kidnapping," proclaimed a **Prensa Latina** headline, capturing the thrust of a phone conversation that the UN chief had with Goodluck Jonathan in which Ban conveyed his sympathies. Abuja's **Premium Times** carried a similar report. The United States Internet-based newswire service **RTT** flagged that Jonathan had accepted Ban's offer to send a high-level envoy to discuss how the UN can support the Government as it tackles internal challenges.

Nigerian media outlets were quick to capture the Secretary-General's concern and his efforts to assist. **Leadership** reported that Ban shared the anguish of the girls' families and Nigerians at this "traumatic" time – as he reiterated that targeting children and schools was against international law and unjustifiable under any circumstances. According to **The Sun** (Lagos), Ban assured Jonathan that the UN was ready to help Nigeria rescue the girls and achieve greater security of lives and property. The **Daily Times** covered the story under the headline "Jonathan meets US Ambassador, receives solidarity messages from UN, ECOWAS, others." **The Christian Science Monitor** said Ban was "very concerned" over reports that some girls had already been sold, which he found simply "unacceptable." Lisbon's **Diário de Notícias** noted that the UN wanted an "urgent" response from the international community. In **Time** magazine, Nick Gillespie took issue with the proposed or rumoured intervention of the US, advancing his view that "this is a battle to be fought by the nations directly affected, with help from regional and transnational bodies such as the UN."

A number of UN officials featured prominently this week, particularly their pronouncements about human rights violations. **Xinhua**, **The Week** (US) and **Euronews** TV channel reported that UN High Commissioner Navi Pillay expressed deep concern and urged Nigeria to spare no effort to ensure the girls' safe return. The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui, voiced her concern as well, according to the **Press Trust of India** and the **Algerian Press Service**. **The New York Times**, Nigeria's **This Day** and **The Centre for African Journalists News Agency** were among the outlets to detail a call by a UNICEF regional director for the immediate release of the girls. Canada's **The Globe and Mail** relayed that official's insight that the global outcry was important because it showed that "at some point people say enough is enough." Egypt's **Al Ahram** reported that a plan by UN Special Envoy on Global Education Gordon Brown for safe schools in Nigeria was being rolled out on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum under way in Abuja.

The Huffington Post (US) reported that, during an "unhinged moment" in the Boko Haram video, its leader slammed the Secretary-General and then repeated "kill!" over and over. Several outlets (the **BBC**, **New York Times**) recounted the Islamist leader's warning that he would "give their hands in marriage because they are our slaves. We would marry them out at the age of nine. We would marry them out at the age of 12." **Reuters** chimed in with a warning from the UN that by doing so, the perpetrators would be liable for war crimes.

For social media, a cause célèbre

A viral social media campaign, using the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls, raised awareness and brought support from various governments, newspapers and public personalities. The Secretary-General's message that targeting children is against international law was re-tweeted on Thursday more than 1,250 times in three hours. Later, US Secretary of State John Kerry tweeted: "Doing everything possible to help, US team hitting the ground to work with President Jonathan." From **BBC Africa** to the Vatican to Angelina Jolie, Twitter was buzzing with posts expressing outrage, offering prayers and calling for the return of the girls unharmed. **CNN** and **The Age** (Melbourne) zeroed in on Malala Yousafzai's call that "if we remain silent, then this will spread, this will happen more and more and more."

ABC News (US) indicated that the girls' plight went from a national tragedy to an international crisis as the campaign reverberated on social media and rallies were held worldwide. **Le Monde** cheered that the campaign, "supported by Michelle Obama," had helped already – the US announced it would send security forces. The **Khaleej Times** argued that Boko Haram – which advocates for a society free from Western influence – had in fact invited a military intervention by Washington through its "immature and senseless acts." Cyril Bensimon in **Le Temps** (Geneva) credited the social media campaign for pushing Jonathan to react in a more concerned manner. In **The Philadelphia Inquirer**, Trudy Rubin asserted that if it had not been for the determined mothers – and Twitter – the plight of the schoolgirls would have remained hidden. An editorial in **The Daily Telegraph** (London) called the abductions "a stain on humanity's conscience," adding that the tardy response fed suspicions that the Boko Haram threat was not being taken seriously enough – especially by the West. Nicholas Kristof (**The New York Times**) contended that the media, the US Government and the UN were largely indifferent until grass-roots activism catapulted the news to the top of the agenda – three weeks after the abductions.

Reaction at snail's pace

The World Economic Forum in Abuja also prompted calls for action, such as from Nigeria's **Guardian**, which reckoned that the forum should exert pressure on blocking arms supplies to Boko Haram. **The New York Times** underlined that the kidnappings occurred on the eve of the meeting – adding that while the show of force may keep WEF delegates safe, Nigeria's Government could not protect its people and will not be able to attract investment and lead the country to its full potential if it cannot contain this insurgency. Lindsey German complained in **The Guardian** (London) that Abuja was doing relatively little to find the girls and had penalized those who demonstrated "in huge numbers" against the President on this issue. An editorial in **The Times** of London argued that there had been no coherent response from the Nigerian Government. Echoing this disappointment was Fatima Zarnagana in **Leadership** (Abuja), who lamented that insurgents had been abducting girls for months – but Nigerians only became aware of it recently. In **Foreign Policy** (US), Lauren Wolfe asserted that crimes against women and girls were commonplace, and went ignored, unprosecuted and unreported by the international media every day – especially when they occurred in the global South.

Others noted the contrast between the international community's concern over the missing Malaysian Airlines plane and the kidnapped girls. **The Washington Post** observed that more than two dozen countries had searched for the plane and yet, until this week, US military and intelligence agencies were not directly involved in the search for the girls. Similar sentiments were echoed by Nigeria's **This Day**, which questioned how in an age of drones, Google maps and aerial surveillance that such a huge number of girls could vanish. In **The Huffington Post** (US), Malika Saada Saar wondered whether the international coordination in the search for a missing plane could be applied to this case in Nigeria.

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