

**PRESS CONFERENCE (near verbatim transcript)****Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan Press Conference Transcript – 11 September 2012 Kunar**

SRSG: I am very glad that I had the opportunity to meet representatives of the authorities of the province and also representatives of the people, of the elders, Ulema Shura, civil society and they shared with me their concerns. We spoke about several issues. The situation that is caused by cross-border shelling, they informed me about its impact on the civilian population and about the hardships caused by this and asked me to bring this to the attention of both the authorities of the country and also the members of the United Nations and help them, help you the people to address the situation. I confirm that this is the aim of my visit here: to listen to the concerns and bring their concerns, your concerns to the attention of mainly authorities of the country, and also to the attention of the international community, notably the United Nations including the United Nations Security Council.

I also confirm that the United Nations Organization, agencies, funds like WHO, like UNICEF, like WFP and many others are coming to assist the unfortunately affected people and to help them to cope with this humanitarian situation by providing humanitarian assistance to the displaced people. This is our intention to continue with this assistance.

Thirdly, we discussed cooperation between the United (Nations) System in broader terms and the people of the province, the authorities of the province. We discussed the implications of the closure of the (UNAMA) office here and I confirm that even if the office will be closed we will continue working together, we will continue supporting the people, we will continue working with the authorities and we will not abandon the people of the province. We will be frequently coming here including myself to be in constant dialogue to be able to help you even better in the future. These are the three main areas that we discussed, but we also discussed other issues as well.

Questions and Answers

BBC News: You are going to close down the office in Kunar. But you said that you will still continue assistance. Don't you think in this situation when rockets are coming from Pakistan, the closure of office will create disappointment among the people? (*This was the overall gist of the question*)

SRSG: As I said, we will first of all not stop working and supporting the people of the province. We will work from the regional office in Jalalabad. We will be frequently coming here. We will be in contact and we will continue with activities of many other parts of the United Nations, the organizations that are working on development issues, on humanitarian issues, on concrete project activities. All that, we will continue and hope to even increase these kinds of activities. We will also work with potential donors, the international organizations outside of the UN System, sensitizing them about the situation in the province and ask them to pay more attention to the needs – development and social needs – of the province. So, our support and cooperation will continue under any condition.

Question: The shelling on Kunar has been going on for last two years and the United Nations has remained silent. It didn't take the issue up with the Security Council and the General Assembly. In the future, will the UN silence continue or will raise the voice of the Kunar people in the Security Council? (This was the overall gist of the question)

SRSG: As you can see I am here to listen to the concerns. This was one of the concerns and I will bring it to the attention of the United Nations, including, as needed, the Member States of the Security Council. But I would like to confirm that the Government of Afghanistan is doing very much as well. The Government talks to Pakistan at all levels – at the level of the President, level of the Foreign Minister, military. All, this is there. The Government tries its best to agree and to conclude and close the story and to see the end of this cross-border shelling, notably if civilians are being hit. This is what we strongly support these activities of the Governments, dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan focusing on stopping this cross-border shelling. So, strong efforts are there.