

Testimony of Jonathan S. Gration, U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan
U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health

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Chairman Payne, Ranking Member Smith, Members of the House Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, thank you for the opportunity to be here today to update you on our work in Sudan and on my activities as U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan.

Mr. Chairman, let me begin by acknowledging your longstanding commitment to these issues. We know that you have recently traveled to the region and we greatly appreciate your dedicated efforts to improve the lives of the Sudanese people and to find lasting solutions for peace. That interest is widely shared by the members of this committee. Thank you so very much for your support.

As you know, the Secretary of State, Ambassador Susan Rice, and I rolled out the President's Sudan strategy in October. The President's strategy outlined three major goals:

1. Seek a definitive end to conflict, gross human rights abuses, and genocide in Darfur.
2. Implement the North-South Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that results in a peaceful post-2011 Sudan that is unified, or an orderly path toward two separate and viable states at peace with each other.
3. Ensure that Sudan does not provide a safe haven for international terrorists.

The United States has a clear obligation and a clear interest to lead international efforts for peace in Sudan. Failure to accomplish these goals could bring about additional suffering, further regional instability or new safe-havens for international terrorists. The United States continues to work with the international community to reduce the ability of terrorists and non-state actors who threaten U.S. interests from developing a foothold in Sudan. Today I wanted to speak to you today about some of my recent activities and how the Administration's actions are helping to meet the goals laid out in the strategy.

Let me focus first on our efforts related to Darfur.

In my travels to Darfur over the past year, I have witnessed firsthand the devastation and destruction that six years of conflict have inflicted on the people of Darfur, particularly on women and children. Broken ceasefire agreements and peace accords, the fragmentation of armed movements, and the interference of regional actors have made a sustainable peace in Darfur elusive. All the while, millions of Darfuris continue to live in fear and insecurity, and remain unable to return to their villages and homes.

As our Sudan strategy makes clear, the Administration remains committed to saving lives and to ensuring an inclusive and durable peace for the people of Darfur. We continue to support the Doha Peace Process by collaborating with the African Union and United Nations joint chief mediator, Djibrill Bassolé, to reach an agreement that fully and adequately addresses the grievances of Darfuris. We continue to work closely with our international and regional allies to push forward a Darfur peace process. I meet frequently, for example, with envoys from the P-5 and European Union, to coordinate our efforts. Most recently, we met in Moscow and in Abuja to align our positions on the way forward. To give the Doha negotiations the best possible chances of success, we believe that the fragmented armed movements in Darfur must unite and speak at the negotiating table with one voice. We have been working diligently to bring this critical element of the peace process together. As a result of our efforts, eight rebel factions have formed a coalition and are committed to having a wider unification on the ground.

To ensure that the interests of the people of Darfur are adequately represented in the peace process, we support the AU-UN Mediator's efforts to establish a dialogue between the Government of Sudan and Darfuri civil society. We attended the recent conference in Doha which kicked off discussions with members of civil society, and we strongly believe that the people of Darfur should be a vocal part of the peace process.

Throughout the peace process, we will continue to support and strengthen the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) by bolstering international resolve to hold actors that obstruct UNAMID's work accountable, by providing direct financial and logistical support for UNAMID's full deployment, and by planning contingencies for potential worsening of the crises in Darfur. Furthermore, an interagency peace and security team recently conducted an assessment of current U.S.

programs and initiatives in Sudan which will allow us to be more effective in addressing overall security concerns.

Darfur is not only troubled by internal security concerns, but by fighting along the border with Chad. We have also been working hard to encourage a normalization of relations between Chad and Sudan and have seen encouraging signs. On October 10th, a high-level Sudanese delegation was received by President Deby in Chad, and the two countries made a tentative agreement to implement a joint protocol initially signed in Khartoum in 2006. A Chadian delegation is also expected to go to Khartoum soon.

In November, on my most recent trip to Sudan, I traveled to West Darfur to work on improving security along Sudan's Western border. The governments of Sudan and Chad must follow this concrete step towards peaceful co-existence by ending their support for armed movements along their shared border, which continues to destabilize the security situation in Darfur and hurt the prospects for a sustainable peace in Darfur and the sub-region.

Finally, we are working with USAID and operational NGOs on the ground to improve the humanitarian situation and improve their access to populations in need. In my travels, I have observed that while significant effort has been made to fill gaps and avert crises caused by the expulsion of 13 NGOs in March 2009, humanitarian agencies continue to experience reduced access due to increased insecurity, targeted attacks against aid workers, and bureaucratic impediments.

The challenges in Darfur—in humanitarian assistance, security, and the peace process—are complex. That is why it is so important that we work together within our government and throughout the international community to complement international efforts and not have them compete. We tackle these complex challenges because we want to help build a better future for the Darfuri people.

As I outlined earlier, the new Sudan strategy recognizes that we must focus on a comprehensive approach to peace in Sudan. Central to this is support for full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. To that end, we are currently working with the National Congress Party (NCP) and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) to address outstanding elements of the CPA. This is crucial in order for the April 2010 elections and January 2011 referenda to be held on schedule.

Because these dates are rapidly approaching, my two trips to Sudan this month have largely focused on pushing the CPA parties to reach agreement on several deadlocked issues. Two of the most pressing are the use of contested census results in the upcoming elections, and disagreements on procedures for the referendum on self-determination for Southern Sudan. We are deeply engaged with the parties through the trilateral process to resolve these outstanding issues.

We are deeply concerned about the increase of inter-ethnic violence in the South and its effects on local populations. To respond to the humanitarian needs and promote national stability, the Administration is working to support international organizations and NGOs that provide emergency assistance to newly displaced populations and facilitate community-based recovery and risk-reduction activities. These partners also operate in rural areas of Southern Sudan to assist recently-returned populations and to respond quickly if conflict breaks out in the months leading up to the April 2010 elections and the January 2011 referenda. As the elections and referenda approach, we will increase our efforts to help mitigate these threats and foster reconciliation efforts.

Additionally, my office continues to monitor and push for implementation of ten critical CPA issues agreed upon by the parties in August 2009. These include the demarcation of the North-South border, continued implementation of resource-sharing arrangements, and implementation of the July 2009 Permanent Court of Arbitration decision on Abyei. I recently visited the Abyei region to encourage progress on demarcating Abyei's boundaries and to meet with local communities to discuss progress and concerns. There I found two needs that continue to be unmet. First is the need for dissemination of accurate information about the arbitration decision, border demarcation, and other actions that affect the people in the area. The parties have agreed to these efforts and we are encouraging them to move forward on implementation. Second is the need to ensure development resources are available on both sides of the Abyei border, to both Dinka and Misseriya areas. Our partners and other international actors are working to improve conditions in this region and we hope to focus more attention on those areas.

We are also focused on ensuring that the April 2010 elections are credible and that they further the peace process. Voter registration will conclude next week, and while not without problems, we believe it is a positive step forward for the elections. According to unconfirmed reports, as of November 30

almost 12 million Sudanese have already registered to vote in all parts of the country, albeit with uneven registration rates across constituencies. Still, far more work needs to be done. We will be able to make a fuller assessment of the registration process after it concludes on December 7. Together with the international community, we will continue to work closely with the NEC and with the parties to encourage them to respond to and address concerns raised on all sides. We continue to coordinate our CPA implementation efforts with groups on the ground, like the Carter Center, and with various international partners.

Beyond the elections and referenda, the parties and the international community must begin preparations for the post-CPA period to encourage long-term stability in the region. The parties will need to negotiate equitable arrangements dealing with issues such as migratory movements and cross-border resources, regardless of whether the outcome is unity or separation. It is crucial to Sudanese and regional stability that these arrangements are made in advance of the referendum. We applaud the robust international efforts undertaken to educate the parties about post-CPA options, and we will be working over the next several months to help the parties transform this education process into concrete discussions that chart a path forward beyond the referendum.

To further our international coordination, we plan to organize a follow-on event to the June 2009 Forum for Supporters of the CPA held here in Washington that revitalized and focused international efforts around the CPA. Such a forum will likely be held in early 2010, and will focus both on remaining CPA implementation issues as well as necessary discussions about how the international community can help the parties manage the 2011 transition.

As Sudan's historic elections and referenda near, we will continue to work with the parties and international actors to ensure that peace and stability prevail. As part of the U.S. Strategy on Sudan, senior officials from the interagency will meet in early 2010 for the first in a series of quarterly interagency reviews designed to assess whether progress or backsliding has occurred and agree on whether incentives or pressures are warranted.

With regard to Darfur and to relations between North and South, we will not waste a minute in achieving our objectives for a peaceful and stable Sudan. We do not have the luxury of time. What we

do have is the determination of the United States and its partners to help bring peace to Sudan. Our country must fully utilize all of our instruments of statecraft in this endeavor.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee, I would like to thank you for your leadership and support on efforts to end the suffering in Darfur and the rest of Sudan. Thank you for inviting me to speak to you today. I look forward to your questions about these most critical issues.