

WORLD REFUGEE DAY: ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF AFRICAN REFUGEES

BRIEFING AND HEARING

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA AND GLOBAL HEALTH
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

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WORLD REFUGEE DAY: ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF AFRICAN REFUGEES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2007

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA AND GLOBAL HEALTH,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:33 a.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Donald Payne (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. PAYNE. Good morning. We will call this hearing to order, which will begin with a briefing from a representative of UNHCR in Geneva, Switzerland. According to House Rules, persons who are representing international agencies may not testify at an official hearing. Therefore, we will call this a briefing.

After I give some opening remarks, and we will hear from our ranking member, we will then open the briefing, which will then be adjourned. Then we will begin the official hearing. So let me just begin again by saying, good morning, and I would like to thank you for joining us in this very important hearing to discuss World Refugee Day, addressing the needs of African refugees.

World Refugee Day was established by the UNHCR, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, as a tribute to the indomitable spirit and courage of the world's refugees and internally displaced persons, IDPs, as well as those brave people who help them rebuild their lives. By the end of 2006, the world had seen an increase in the number of "people of concern," the term used by the U.N. refugee agency. Despite ongoing conflicts and instability in countries such as Sudan, Somalia, northern Uganda and Ethiopia and their spillover effects into the region overall, Africa has moved away from war and strife toward increased stability. This is a trend that is important to recognize.

That being said, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, this week called last year one of the worst on record for refugees, as there was a 14 percent increase in the number of refugees worldwide. Of the 12 million refugees in the world, about 3.2 million, a little over 25 percent, are in Africa. Though the overall number of African refugees is on a downward trend, Africa has about half of the world's 25 million internally displaced persons, IDPs. Sudan has over 5 million IDPs between Darfurians and those displaced during the Government of Sudan's 21-year war against the south. Zimbabwe also has over 5 million. Northern Uganda has 2 million. The Democratic Republic of Congo has 1.7 million. Even though the DRC emerged several years ago from conflict and held

a historic election last August, which I had the opportunity to witness, part of the reason for the high numbers of refugees and IDPs despite fewer wars is that, once people take refuge in another country or become displaced in another part of their own country, many factors complicate their return.

One positive development is an acceleration of southern Sudanese returning to their homes in 2007. More than 50,000 refugees have returned so far. Some of the key questions we hope to address in this hearing are how to better address the needs of refugees and IDPs; how to better integrate refugees and IDPs into our larger development efforts and provide better education, health care, income-generating activities within IDPs and refugee camps; and how we can more effectively deal with the increasing number of protracted displacements through resettlement in the United States and other means to avoid what is known as refugee warehousing.

On this point, I would like to specifically hear from our State Department witness about the resettlement numbers we can expect for African refugees in the United States by the end of 2007 and 2008. Additionally, we may not have an accurate count on the number of Somalis who have fled the ongoing crisis in Somalia. I have stated many times that the United States has a flawed policy in Somalia. That fact has contributed to refugee flows and humanitarian suffering as a result of the air strikes carried out in January and again by our destroyer ships firing into the country this past month. This action was totally irresponsible and misled. I hope we will get more clarification about the numbers of Somalis who have been displaced within and beyond Somalia during this hearing.

As we honor the courage of refugees and IDPs today, it is imperative for us to come together with the UNHCR, nongovernmental organizations and other donor governments to keep this issue at the forefront. If we fail to do so, refugees and IDPs will remain in their miserable conditions. We must pledge to help them rebuild their lives today to commit ourselves to long-term solutions and to prevent the nightmare from recurring tomorrow.

We have a long list of esteemed witnesses. So I will be brief in my introductions. First, we will be briefed via teleconference from Geneva by Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, who is Assistant High Commissioner with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

On our first panel, we will hear from Mr. William E. Fitzgerald, who is deputy assistant secretary with the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration in the U.S. Department of State. Panel II features Ms. Anne C. Richard, vice president of government relations and advocacy at the International Rescue Committee; Mr. Joel R. Charny, vice president for policy at Refugees International; and Mr. Neal Porter, director of international services, the Center for Victims of Torture; and last but not least, Mr. Daoud Hari, who is a resettled Darfuriian refugee living in my State of New Jersey.

The committee thanks all of you for coming. And with that, let me turn over to our ranking member, Mr. Chris Smith, for his opening remarks.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Payne follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DONALD M. PAYNE, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE
ON AFRICA AND GLOBAL HEALTH

Good morning. Thank you all for joining us for this very important hearing to discuss "World Refugee Day: Addressing the needs of African Refugees."

World Refugee Day was established by the UN High Commission on Refugees as a tribute to the indomitable spirit and courage of the world's refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP's), as well as those brave people who help them rebuild their lives. By the end of 2006, the world had seen an increase in the number of "people of concern," the term used by the UN refugee agency.

Despite ongoing conflicts and instability in countries such as Sudan, Somalia, Northern Uganda, Ethiopia, and their spill over effects into the region overall, Africa has moved away from war and strife towards increased stability. This is a trend that is important to recognize.

That being said, of the 12 million refugees worldwide, about 3.2 million—a little over 25%—are in Africa, though the overall numbers are on a downward trend. Africa has about half of the world's 25 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's). Sudan has over 5 million IDP's between Darfuris and those displaced during the government of Sudan's 21 year war against the South; Zimbabwe also has over 5 million, Northern Uganda has 2 million; the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has 1.7 million, even though DRC emerged several years ago from conflict and held historic elections last August which I had the opportunity to witness. Part of the reason for high numbers of refugees and IDP's despite fewer wars is that once people take refuge in another country or become displaced in another part of their own country, many factors complicate their return.

Some of the key questions we hope to address in this hearing are how to better address the needs of refugees and IDP's, how to better integrate refugees and IDP's into our larger development efforts and provide better education, healthcare, and income-generating activities within IDP and refugee camps, and how we can more effectively deal with the increasing number of protracted displacements through resettlement in the U.S. and other means, to avoid what is known as refugee warehousing. On this point, I would specifically like to hear from our State Department witness about the resettlement numbers we can expect for African refugees in the U.S. by the end of 2007 and in 2008.

Additionally, we may not have an accurate count on the number of Somalis who have fled the ongoing crisis in Somalia where, I have stated many times, the U.S. has a flawed policy in Somalia and in fact has contributed to refugee flows and humanitarian suffering as a result of the air strikes carried out in January and again earlier this month. This action was totally irresponsible and misled. I hope we will get more clarification about the numbers of Somalis who have been displaced within and beyond Somalia during this hearing.

As we honor the courage of refugees and IDP's today, it is imperative for us to come together with the UNHCR, nongovernmental organizations, and other donor governments to keep this issue at the forefront. If we fail to do so, refugees and IDP's will remain in their miserable conditions. We must pledge to help them rebuild their lives today, to commit ourselves to long-term solutions, and to prevent the nightmare from reoccurring tomorrow.

We have a long list of esteemed witnesses so I will be brief in my introductions. First we will be briefed via teleconference from Geneva by Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins who is Assistant High Commissioner with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

Our our first panel we will hear from Mr. William E. Fitzgerald who is the Deputy Assistant Secretary with the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration in the U.S. Department of State. Panel 2 features Ms. Anne C. Richard, Vice President Government Relations & Advocacy at the International Rescue Committee; Mr. Joel R. Charny, Vice President for Policy at Refugees International, Mr. Neal Porter, Director of International Services The Center For Victims of Torture; and last but not least Mr. Daoud Hari who is a resettled Darfuri refugee living in my state of New Jersey.

The committee thanks you all for coming.

With that, I turn to Ranking Member Chris Smith for his opening remarks.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for convening this very important hearing on the occasion of World Refugee Day.

This day was designated by the United Nations General Assembly, 2001, to be commemorated each year in order to honor the contributions of refugees around the world and to call attention to the plight of those who continue to suffer as refugees. This day also coincides with Africa Refugee Day, which has been commemorated since 1975 and was established by the Organization of African Unity Commission of Ten on Refugees as a way to raise funds for assistance for refugees in Africa.

It is tragic and shocking, Mr. Chairman, to consider that 12 million people in the world are refugees today, and almost a quarter of those, as you pointed out as well, 3.2 million live in Africa. In addition, Africa has an estimated 12 million internally displaced persons, most of whom are victims of conflicts within their countries. Floods and droughts have also contributed to the dislocation of large numbers of African people. More than half of the world's refugees have lived in camps for several years with no foreseeable prospects of returning to their homes and a more normal lifestyle.

No one can measure the suffering that often comes with being a refugee, being a stranger in a strange land, the inability of children to attend school, the frustration of parents unable to provide the basic necessities for their families. The hardships and fears that come with living in a tent or some other temporary shelter or having no shelter at all.

One might forget that refugees often are also suffering the emotional trauma that results from violence inherent in the conflicts that produce refugees. For that reason, it will be particularly useful to hear today testimony from Neal Porter, the director of international services from the Center for Victims of Torture. Legislation that I have sponsored, including the Torture Victims Relief Act Authorization of 2007, which passed the House on April 25 of this year and is now pending in the Senate, provides authorization for programming that helps refugees and others suffering the effects of torture, degrading and inhuman treatment. I would encourage my colleagues in the Senate to act on this bill so that the Center for Victims of Torture and others who provide services to torture victims can receive the assistance that they so desperately need.

The international community, Mr. Chairman, accomplished a major milestone when they recognized refugees as having certain rights under international law in the 1951 U.N. Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees plays a major role in ensuring that the promised resources and protection are provided. However, as laudable as international recognition and assistance are for assisting those forced to flee from their homes, far more needs to be done to prevent people from becoming refugees in the first place and to accommodate the safe return and re-establishment of those already refugees or IDPs. This hearing provides us with an opportunity to examine what we in the United States and the world community can do in this respect.

Although I and others have devoted significant attention in recent years and months to the tragedy in Darfur, no one can ever over-publicize the desperate situation of the victims of the Sudanese Government's genocide. When I think of refugees, my mind immediately recalls those who I met in Mukjar and Kalma camps,

only some of the 2 million who have been displaced from their homes in that region. The term displaced does not, however, even begin to describe the nightmare situation in which these people must live. As we have heard through testimony in recent hearings on Darfur, these people long most of all not for food or shelter, though they have little of either, but for protection and with good reason. Over 450,000 people have died in the violence of Darfur.

As Americans, I think we can be proud of the leadership, the role our government has played in assisting refugees and IDPs around the world. We are the major donor for the UNHCR, for example. PRM's William Fitzgerald will testify today from PRM that the program that we administered in 2007 poured some \$344 million for refugees, conflict victims, internally displaced and vulnerable migrants in Africa alone.

Finally, on this World Refugee Day, we should not forget those who voluntarily subject themselves to the same harsh conditions in order to care for and protect refugees and displaced persons. We should pay a special tribute on this day, particularly to the men and women who have suffered violence, many to the point of death, in their efforts to assist the people of Darfur and people in other troubled spots. Humanitarian groups on the ground have reported being harassed by the Government of Sudan and deliberately attacked by rebel groups. Over a dozen humanitarian workers have been killed over the past year. In mid-December 2006, armed groups launched major attacks against NGO compounds in South Darfur. On January 19, 2007, the Sudanese Government security forces arrested and severely beat 20 U.N. staff members in South Darfur as well. On February 5, 2007, a civilian police officer was killed in an IDP camp in the north. The men and women who risk their lives, their welfare in caring for these refugees truly live out the words, I was hungry and you gave me food; thirsty and you gave me drink; a stranger and you welcomed me. I convey to these heroic men and women my personal gratitude for lending their hands and hearts and putting themselves at such grave risk for some of our poorest brothers and sisters in the world. I look forward to your testimony.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

We have our vice chair. Would you like to have an opening statement?

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for bringing this issue in front of our subcommittee.

And I have a list of concerns I think we need to address at this particular hearing and at the occasion of World Refugee Day. First is the peculiar condition of statelessness. The U.N. Declaration of Human Rights declares that everyone on earth has the right to claim a nationality. Yet there are groups of people in many countries who are denied citizenship, based simply on their ethnicity, geographic origin or political persuasion. Stateless people are particularly vulnerable because so much of our machinery of refugee assistance is geared toward helping people return to their country of origin. Too often, the problems of stateless persons fall through the cracks because our international machinery is not geared up to deal with the problem.

There have been some recent hopeful signs, however, and I understand that, last year, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees doubled the number of staff they had working on statelessness to two. And I have had some good conversations with Under Secretary of State Ellen Sauerbrey about her intent to tackle the issue. But I am interested in hearing more about what can be done and what we are doing.

Secondly, I would like to talk more broadly about how we can better provide protections for refugees, particularly the children. One idea that is gaining favor is considering basic education be a fundamental means of protection for refugees. And I think the instinct of many involved in refugee protection is all refugee resources must be geared toward providing the basics—food, water, shelter, and clothing—and that education is a luxury that should be reserved until after the emergency phase. I disagree.

I think there are a growing number of people who see the value of basic education as actually providing refugees with security and stability that is directly responsible for their survival. We visited a Darfurian refugee camp in eastern Chad on a trip with, then the chair, Ed Royce. Don Cheadle was with us and Paul Rusesabagina, and Paul Rusesabagina was the actual manager of the hotel where about 1,800 refugees were saved because of his efforts. And while there, you would notice that mothers often had to spend much of the day gathering food and fuel, and some of them had to walk for 20 miles to find branches of trees for fuel. And children then were left to fend for themselves during the day. And for these children, some simple classes or gatherings would greatly improve their lives and their odds for surviving in the future.

Ideally, though, the object of our policy should be geared toward avoiding creating refugee situations in the first place as well as trying to stabilize some of these political conflicts so that we can let refugees go back home. And this is where we need to put most of our energy. So while I think it is important, Mr. Chairman, to hold hearings like this one today regarding the plight of refugees in Africa, I think it only underlines the important work we are doing in each and every hearing here under your leadership to support Africans as they seek further governance at home. And we simply need to give more attention, as you are trying to do, and more of our energies to addressing this situation.

But one last thought, as I mention, ideally, we want all refugees to be able to go home, but unfortunately, that is not going to be possible for too many of those fleeing danger because of the political environments and the risk they are under if they do. And I think with we need to press our counterparts in other committees here in our Congress to support efforts to keep America as a beacon of freedom for those refugees who cannot go home.

America has always welcomed refugees. But I would like to see us do more in this regard. And so we need to be getting about that, and you are starting to set that path, Mr. Chairman. Thank you so very much.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Ms. Woolsey?

Ms. WOOLSEY. No, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. We will now move into the briefing. To brief us today, we are honored to have, via conference call, Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, who is Assistant High Commissioner for Operations, Refugees. Ms. Cheng-Hopkins took office in February 2006 and brings 27 years of diversified U.N. experience, including a decade in Africa with the United Nations Development Programme in Zambia and Kenya. She has also held key positions as Special Assistant to the Administrator of UNDP, as deputy executive secretary of the U.N. Capital Development Fund and as deputy assistant administrator for Africa in UNDP. She joins us today from the headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. I appreciate you joining us, and I look forward to your remarks.

STATEMENT OF MS. JUDY CHENG-HOPKINS, ASSISTANT HIGH COMMISSIONER, UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can you hear me loud and clear?

Mr. PAYNE. Yes, very loud and clear. Thank you. We will adjust that here.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the subcommittee. I will be, on behalf of UNHCR, I would like to express our appreciation for the opportunity to appear before you to review the situation of refugees in Africa. I will try to be as concise as possible. But please bear with me as I have just stepped off the plane from a 10-day mission to the Congo and Uganda. I would like to request that my full written statement be submitted to the record.

Mr. PAYNE. Without objection.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Mr. Chairman, UNHCR is charged by the international community to ensure refugee protection and to identify durable solutions to refugee situations. The three durable solutions are: Voluntary repatriation when circumstances allow; local integration for refugees living abroad for prolonged periods especially; and finally, resettlement to countries like the United States.

Perhaps nowhere has this been more challenging than in Africa over the past two decades. Currently, UNHCR is assisting some 2.4 million refugees in Africa. Africa represents almost 37 percent of UNHCR's annual budget of about \$1 billion, far exceeding other regions. In addition, last year, UNHCR substantially increased its involvement in protecting and assisting internally displaced persons, or IDPs, who have not crossed an international border and therefore do not meet the technical definition of a refugee but who face virtually the same protection challenges as refugees. In partnership with other U.N. agencies and our NGO partners, UNHCR is currently extending protection and assistance to some 6.8 million IDPs in Africa.

Let me start with the good news. As you have said yourself, Mr. Chairman, there is increasing hope that some situations of displacement in Africa are drawing to a close. Prevailing peace and security in several countries is permitting UNHCR to make significant advancements to find durable solutions for some of the protracted refugee situations. For instance, after over two decades of civil war in southern Sudan, displacing nearly half a million refu-

gees into seven neighboring countries, one-third have returned since the signing of the peace agreement in 2005.

Other key critical developments worth mentioning are the successful completion of elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, DRC, and the continuation of peace talks between the Ugandan Government and the Lord's Resistance Army, LAR, and recent missions to these countries has given me much optimism. UNHCR has strategically utilized third-country resettlement as a protection tool. In 2006, almost 20,000 refugees representing 28 different nationalities from Africa were referred to resettlement countries, a drop in the ocean. But for those affected, it is sometimes a question of life and death. In this regard, the United States remains our strongest partner, having offered resettlement to over half of the refugees we referred in 2007 and tens of thousands of refugees from Africa over the years.

The bad news however is that persistent obstacles remain. For instance, we find, more often than not, that refugees are returning to areas still devoid of basic social services and infrastructure. You cannot imagine what happens after decades of civil war. This may threaten the sustainability of their return. It may also undermine peace and security in the country or the region. We, therefore, urge important donors like the United States to continue to be engaged with us and our partners to invest in these reintegration activities.

In terms of local integration, to be frank, there has been mixed success. There are cases where whole states are bringing the process of integration, but many others remain reluctant, not least because of poverty, lack of land and other resources and ethnic considerations.

Let me now turn to the human side of our work with displaced populations. As you are aware, in the precarious situation that displaced people find themselves in, sexual and gender-based violence is a key concern. UNHCR has introduced techniques to identify and address these abuses.

Likewise, malnutrition is often a factor in these circumstances with rates as high as 22 percent in Africa. Together with partners like the World Food Programme, we undertake to provide nutritional service and provide needed supplementary food.

Education is also an issue for displaced populations, as mentioned by Congressman Woolsey. We are pleased that 75 percent of refugee girls and boys in Africa are enrolled in primary schools today, and we are working to raise this number further. Mr. Chairman, the United States is a valuable partner not only in terms of its financial support of refugee programs but also in its leadership in achieving long-term solutions to conflict and security, human rights abusers and poverty in the region. Thank you very much for listening.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Cheng-Hopkins follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MS. JUDY CHENG-HOPKINS, ASSISTANT HIGH COMMISSIONER, UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

I. INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), I would like to express our appreciation for the opportunity to appear before you today to provide an overview of the situation of asylum seekers, refugees and internally displaced persons

(IDPs) in Africa. I would also like to request that my full written statement be submitted to the record.

UNHCR is charged by the international community to ensure refugee protection and to identify durable solutions to refugee situations. Our mandate is grounded in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol (hereinafter “the Refugee Convention”), which define a refugee as a person having a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

In sub-Saharan Africa, UNHCR is present in 32 countries, with offices established in 138 locations. Currently, UNHCR is assisting some 2.4 million refugees in Africa:

- Central Africa and Great Lakes (918,000)
- East and Horn of Africa (520,000)
- Sudan and Chad (423,000)
- Southern Africa (229,000)
- West Africa (377,000)

As part of its mandate, UNHCR also works to prevent statelessness. This includes ensuring that Governments act appropriately to prevent or solve situations of statelessness in their territories.

Additionally, in 2006, as part of an inter-agency collaborative approach, UNHCR substantially increased its involvement in the protection and assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Liberia, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. In 2006, UNHCR protected and assisted almost 5.4 million IDPs and helped 1.04 million IDPs to return home. This year UNHCR is projecting that it will contribute to the provision of protection and assistance to approximately 6.8 million IDPs.

We welcome the opportunity this hearing offers to highlight progress which is being made as well as the challenges we are facing in the region in our effort to provide protection and assistance as well as obtain durable solutions for persons of concern.

II. PURSUIT OF DURABLE SOLUTIONS

In the region, prevailing peace in several countries is permitting UNHCR to make significant advances in its search for durable solutions for some protracted situations of displacement, most notably those of refugees from Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Southern Sudan, and of IDPs in Uganda. Among the key political developments, it is worth mentioning the successful completion of the electoral process in the DRC and the continuation of peace talks between the Ugandan Government and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA).

Voluntary Repatriation

UNHCR has begun to see the dividends of concerted efforts over the past years to address the situation of large-scale protracted refugee situations throughout the continent, with successful peace processes paving the way for major repatriation operations.

In West Africa repatriation prospects are high. At the end of June, UNHCR plans to complete the sub-region’s last major repatriation operation—Liberian refugees. More than 400,000 Liberian refugees and IDPs have returned home with assistance from UNHCR. As reconciliation initiatives continue in their country, Togolese refugees have also begun to return spontaneously from Benin and Ghana. With the tripartite legal framework for repatriation now in place supported by information campaigns, UNHCR expects that substantial numbers of the 14,000 Togolese refugees will repatriate by the end of 2008. With the completed repatriation of more than 10,000 Nigerian refugees from Cameroon, UNHCR is assisting the government in implementing reintegration activities. Following overtures by the newly elected Mauritanian President, preparations are also being initiated for the voluntary repatriation of Mauritanian refugees from Senegal.

In the Great Lakes, two major repatriation operations pertaining to Burundi and Congolese refugees continue. Overall, some 341,000 Burundians have returned home since the beginning of repatriation operations in 2002, 45,000 of them during the past year. Yet, some 350,000 persons remain in asylum countries, mainly in Tanzania. Their reticence to return is attributed to political uncertainty, lack of access to land and basic services, food insecurity due to droughts and floods and lack of reintegration opportunities. In tandem with voluntary repatriation the options of resettlement and local integration are being explored. Repatriation to DRC continues with some 109,600 persons having returned since 2005 primarily from Burundi, the Republic of Congo (ROC) and Tanzania, of whom some 41,000 returned spontane-

ously. The progressive stabilization following the completion of the electoral process in DRC nurtures hopes for an increase in repatriation movements, but this is tempered by the grave security situations in some regions and serious gaps in the reintegration support provided to returnees. .

Since the conclusion of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, UNHCR facilitated repatriation movements to Southern Sudan from CAR, Kenya, Uganda, DRC, and Ethiopia. Close to 155,000 persons have return, including spontaneous returnees. UNHCR completed the repatriation from CAR and DRC which has allowed for the closure of field offices. Efforts are now focused on reaching the target figure of 102,000 returns in 2007; to date approximately 53,000 persons have returned since the beginning of the year.

After five years and the return of some 400,000 refugees, the repatriation of Angolan refugees was concluded officially in March 2007. UNHCR works now to enhance the sustainability of reintegration of returnees and secure durable solutions, such as resettlement and local integration for remaining Angolan refugees.

However, the absence of an effective transition from short to longer-term assistance and development threatens to reduce the life expectancy of such return efforts. Without adequate resources for development, institution-building and reconciliation, societies can unravel again, dormant conflicts can reignite, and civilians can be forcibly displaced once more.

UNHCR would therefore encourage the United States, which has supported peace processes and generously contributed to UNHCR repatriation operations, to remain engaged in these countries, ensuring not only a smooth transition to development but sufficient bilateral investment to enable them to continue to progress and achieve durable peace.

Local Integration

With some of the major repatriation operations coming to a close, and a new receptivity of some host countries to local integration, one of the main priorities of the organization in the region is to achieve local integration of remaining refugees in their host countries

Notably, significant progress has been achieved in promoting local integration as a solution for Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees in West Africa. Initially an initiative of the Mano River Union countries (Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia) and Cote d'Ivoire, the ambit of the effort has been expanded to include other countries in the region, namely Gambia, Nigeria and Ghana, where residual populations of Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees. The approach in West Africa is interagency in orientation and relies to a considerable degree on the regional Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol relating to the Free Movement of Persons.

In Angola, building on the apparent willingness of the government to integrate long-staying refugees from DRC, UNHCR is focusing on the legal aspect of local integration, given that the Congolese refugees concerned are relatively well integrated in socio-economic terms. A draft decree has been presented to the relevant ministerial departments and follow up discussions are foreseen.

The Governments of Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia indicate a strong willingness to consider local integration as a durable solution for at least a part of the remaining Angolan refugee population. In the latter two cases, UNHCR began working with the government on the development of a local integration strategy. In Mozambique and Namibia, UNHCR and the Governments are revising the programmes to strengthen self-reliance initiatives. In Mozambique for instance, the different activities include crop production, micro-credit for small business, vocational training and animal husbandry.

We would welcome the assistance of the US Government in encouraging and supporting Governments hosting remaining refugees to provide opportunities for these individuals to locally integrate.

Resettlement

In 2006, some 19,300 refugees of 28 different nationalities were referred from 37 countries of asylum in Africa to resettlement countries for consideration. This was an increase of 36% from 2005. It is important to highlight that in 2006 UNHCR operations in Africa benefited from additional funding from Australia, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States. This assisted UNHCR in exceeding its initially estimated capacity of 15,900 submissions.

In addition to individual submissions, there were some notable successes in using the Group Methodology, through which three groups in 2006 were processed. These include the survivors of the August 2004 massacre at the Gatumba refugee camp in Burundi; the "1972 Burundians," persons who experienced multiple flight and are

presently in refugee camps in Tanzania; and a group of Eritrean refugees of Kunama origin residing in Ethiopia.

For 2007, as of the end of May 2007, a total of 5,738 persons had been submitted to the US from countries in sub-Saharan Africa. This is out of a total of close to 10,000 submissions against more than 26,000 identified needs in the region. It is estimated that UNHCR has a capacity to process a little less than 18,000. The majority of these individuals have sought refuge in the Great Lakes and East and Horn sub-regions.

For 2008, UNHCR has identified nearly 28,000 refugees to be in need of resettlement in Africa. Most of these are expected to be located in the East and Horn of Africa, followed by the Great Lakes region.

III. GUARANTEEING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS OF PROTECTION

While there are promising scenarios for realizing durable solutions for hundreds of thousands of refugees, such prospects are not yet available for millions of other refugees and asylum seekers in the region. For the latter group, UNHCR faces a continuous challenge in efforts to meet standards of protection and assistance, in particular the special needs of women and children.

Protection Tools

UNHCR has been implementing a variety of approaches and tools to improve the protection of persons of concern. These include participatory assessments, development of standard operating procedures on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), and registration.

With regards to participatory assessments, UNHCR has rolled out the Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) initiative in thirty-five (35) African countries. This methodology enhances understanding of the situation of refugees and in many cases contributes to strengthening the relationship between UNHCR and the refugees. The results underpin strategies addressing a wide range of protection issues including sexual exploitation of refugee girls, child labour and recruitment for military activities, discrimination against persons living with HIV/AIDS, and prostitution of adolescent girls. In Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Sierra Leone, a regional project was implemented for Liberian refugees to identify adolescents at risk and provide literacy and vocational training as well as HIV/AIDS awareness. In Ghana, UNHCR facilitated the creation of a Refugee Action Committee and the development of a Peer Counselor network specialized in psychosocial support and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) prevention. In Uganda and Zambia, female police officers were recruited to patrol refugee settlements and more refugee women groups were formed.

Almost ninety per cent of operations in Africa adopted Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to prevent and respond to SGBV. In Kenya, better policing and distribution of firewood in camps contributed to reducing the number of incidents; however it is important to note that a recent assessment mission found that coverage is only at 50%. In Southern Africa, a peer review mechanism was established to monitor implementation of SOPs in the sub-region. In Benin and Burkina Faso, three Community Centres were established under the Strengthening Protection Capacity Project (SPCP) to host the offices of several refugee organizations, which implement SGBV and HIV/AIDS training and awareness activities.

ProGres, a registration tool, complemented by new standards, is being employed in more than 80% of the operations in Africa to ensure effective individual registration and documentation of refugees and other persons of concern. In Djibouti, UNHCR assisted the Government in the long overdue registration and verification of camp-based refugees. In Gabon, with the assistance of UNHCR, the government has begun to issue identity cards to 15,500 refugees, a precondition for obtaining work permits and embarking on self-reliance activities. The data gathered equally facilitates planning particular for self-reliance activities and repatriation operations.

Promotion of Social and Economic Rights for Refugees

UNHCR continues to strive to improve the quality of life in asylum and build the productive capacities of refugees. However, overwhelming basic needs of refugees, dire poverty in hosting areas and Governments' overriding responsibilities towards their citizens hinder the full realization of refugees' social and economic rights.

Starting in 2006, during which austerity measures were adopted, resources were prioritized to address severe malnutrition problems. During that year, the highest rates of malnutrition had been registered in Kenya (up to 22%), Ethiopia (up to 14%), Chad (up to 12%) and Sudan (up to 16%). UNHCR carried out assessments, nutritional reviews and surveys in partnership with the World Food Programme in those countries. Consequently, supplementary feeding programmes were imple-

mented in Ethiopia, eastern Sudan and Chad; micronutrients as well as fortified blended food were provided to refugees in Kenya and Chad.

Building upon efforts in 2006, the High Commissioner, in 2007, allocated 9.2 US Million in an effort to further reduce high prevalence of malnutrition and SGBV as well as improve maternal and child health, amongst refugee populations in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Tanzania. These funds have been invested in deploying a Public Health Officer, Nutritionists and SGBV monitors in the field. Additionally, complementary food items, ambulances, essential drugs and medical supplies have been procured. Further community health workers are being trained.

Enrolment in primary school of both refugee boys and girls in Africa reached an average of 75%, the lowest rate being in Central Africa and the Great Lakes (72%) and the highest in Southern Africa (80%). Gender parity at the primary school level was achieved in most of sub-Saharan Africa. However these achievements cannot overshadow persistent high drop-out trends among refugee children. Two key factors leading to drop-outs are the impoverished living conditions, and low quality of education (lack of qualified teachers, lack of education material, etc).

In Southern Africa, continued advocacy efforts and partnership with UNAIDS enabled UNHCR to assist partners to deliver HIV/AIDS services and resulted in host Governments integrating refugees in their national HIV/AIDS plan. There were seven countries in Southern Africa by the end of 2006 had integrated refugees in national anti-retroviral therapy (ART) programmes.

Self-reliance programmes are carried out in many countries in partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN Agencies and development actors. Remarkable progress was made in Benin, where local authorities provided access to land and refugees succeeded in creating a livelihood through small scale agriculture. In Chad, refugees are progressively integrated into local services (health and education) with the support of the Government, UNICEF, UNFPA and FAO. In the Republic of Congo, following the establishment and training of fisherman and farmers groups, 80% of refugee families are living from fishery and agriculture activities. In Mozambique, UNHCR and the respective governments are working together to strengthen self-reliance initiatives; this includes crop production, micro-credit for small businesses, vocational training, and animal husbandry (in cooperation with the International Labour Organization). Notably the Government of Mozambique has used development related resources for the benefit of refugees and surrounding local populations in the health sector and to some extent in education. Such government receptiveness to use development resources for refugees is exceptional. Despite the promotion of the concept Development Assistance for Refugees, which advocates for combining the capacities of refugees, hosts, government, development and humanitarian partners, civil society and others, many host governments remain unconvinced. In many situations refugees are viewed as liabilities rather than as assets, who could spur local economies through the upstart of small enterprises or as skilled labour in the market. Refugees are also often settled in remote and poor areas which do not always fall under governments, other UN Agencies and development priorities. This poses an additional challenge to UNHCR in mobilizing partnership for sustainable promotion of area development and of livelihood of populations of concern.

UNHCR would appreciate all advocacy efforts with host governments to incorporate refugee concerns and those of their hosting areas in development agendas.

Creation and Maintenance of an International Protection Regime

A key component of refugee protection of persons of concern is the promotion of national legislation. In the region significant efforts are made to support governments to improve national asylum systems. In the last year and a half, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Uganda passed new refugee laws. In Malawi, with the support of UNHCR, the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) Unit completed the assessment and submitted recommendations to the National Refugee Committee for 50% of the 1618 pending asylum claims. A similar initiative was launched in Mozambique in October 2006 for more than 4,000 pending asylum claims with completion anticipated by mid-2007. In Burundi, UNHCR supported the government in carrying out RSD for some 20,000 Rwandan asylum seekers. In Tanzania, UNHCR contributed to the revision of the draft refugee legislation.

In 2006, Rwanda acceded to the two conventions on the status of stateless persons and on the reduction of statelessness. In Côte d'Ivoire, UNHCR is closely monitoring developments linked to nationality and identification processes. UNHCR is also closely monitoring the situation of undocumented Mauritians in Senegal as well as of Arabs (Mahamids) in Niger who might be at risk of statelessness.

IV. EXPANDING ROLE WITH INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Cluster Approach

In 2005, the United Nations initiated a programme of humanitarian reform, based on recognition that there were gaps in humanitarian responses to complex emergencies and disasters, particular in failing to meet the needs of IDPs and other affected populations in a timely and consistent manner. A number of measures have been introduced to address this situation, including the establishment of an agreed division of labour amongst United Nations and other humanitarian agencies known as the 'Cluster Approach' which aims at ensuring predictable and efficient humanitarian response in emergency situations. UNHCR, at the global level, accepted a lead (or co-lead) role for the Protection, Emergency Shelter and Camp Coordination/ Camp Management clusters.

That States carry the primary responsibility for the protection of rights and welfare of their citizens, including those who are internally displaced is indisputable. On the other hand it is also acknowledged that humanitarian actors can play an important supportive role in addressing many facets of the phenomenon of internal displacement. UNHCR and other agencies of the humanitarian community supporting States' efforts so that they can exercise this responsibility in an effective and equitable manner. In Clusters under its leadership, UNHCR is building upon its longstanding relationships with UN agencies and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in carrying out joint needs assessments, development of strategies and policies and programme interventions.

Key Activities at Field Level

In CAR, UNHCR, as protection cluster lead, began to implement in June 2006 a three-pronged integrated protection strategy, based on sensitization on IDPs rights, protection monitoring network in the Northern part of the country and follow-up at the community/village and household/family levels and assistance to IDPs. In 2007, UNHCR plans to expand IDP protection activities, and strengthen UNHCR's presence in northern CAR through the opening of offices in Paoua and Kaga Bandoro.

UNHCR is leading the Protection cluster in Côte d'Ivoire, the only cluster activated in the country. The cluster carries out awareness/training activities on The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement¹, human rights and provides advice and support to the Government on establishing national legal frameworks for IDP protection and assistance. A profiling exercise of IDPs in Abidjan was recently completed. Ouagadougou Peace Accord of March 2007 provides a new opportunity for the establishment of a sustainable peace, also paving the way for achieving durable solutions for the IDPs. We would like to point out that unless urgent funding is received, UNHCR might be obliged to withdraw from the cluster lead role

In Chad, as agreed in the UN Country team, UNHCR assumes a lead role for IDPs in the areas of protection, camp/settlement management and shelter, under the overall leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator. While the Cluster Approach is expected to be formally adopted in Chad in the immediate future, the UN Country Team put in place a cluster-like structure more than a year ago. Monitoring missions are conducted to IDP sites to identify protection problems. Human rights violations are brought to the attention of Chadian authorities and partners in the Protection Cluster.

As protection cluster lead (with MONUC) in DRC, UNHCR established protection working groups in seven provinces containing major areas of displacement and a national protection working group, which quickly became key fora for discussion and advocacy for all civilian protection issues. Protection monitoring activities carried out in main IDP and returnee (refugees +IDP) areas help identify problems and gaps and are used for advocacy and interventions with authorities and MONUC to improve response. The protection cluster also established a system of legal advice

¹There is no single international legal instrument that sets out the rights of the IDPs and the obligations of governments and other actors towards them. However, international human rights law and international humanitarian law do provide protection for the displaced and were used as the basis for the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, presented to the UN Commission on Human Rights by the Representative of the Secretary General on IDPs in 1998. The Guiding Principles describe the rights of the internally displaced at all stages of their displacement, right up to their safe return or resettlement, and also cover the prevention of displacement. Although not legally binding, the UN General Assembly in unanimously adopted resolutions have taken note of the Principles, welcomed their use, and encouraged UN agencies, regional organizations, and NGOs to disseminate and apply them. Individual governments have begun to incorporate them in national policies and laws, international organizations and regional bodies have welcomed and endorsed them, and some national courts have begun to refer to them as relevant restatements of existing international law.

and referral services for returnees and IDP populations to settle land disputes in Ituri.

In Somalia, given the constraints of limited humanitarian access and security, the Protection Cluster, co-led by UNHCR and OCHA, works with local protection cluster partners to establish protection monitoring and population movement tracking systems to assist with the UN Country Team's early warning and strategic planning exercises. Also, UNHCR and UN Habitat jointly lead the Shelter Cluster, with UNHCR being the lead for emergency / temporary shelter and Habitat assuming responsibility for permanent shelter solutions. In Bossaso, UNHCR together with other agencies contributed to the "Bossaso Pilot," a project to provide a permanent solution to IDP shelter problems.

UNHCR considers that the Cluster Approach provides a valuable basis for the development of an enhanced inter-agency response to the protection of IDPs, while recognizing that this approach is still a 'work in progress' that will need to be reviewed and revised in the light of experience. Internal and inter-agency evaluations of the field impact of the Cluster Approach are being planned and carried out.

V. SECURITY CHALLENGES

Despite the above outlined progress, there are some areas where, due to instability, UNHCR is severely limited in protecting and pursuing durable solutions for persons of concern. This is especially true in the Chad, Sudan (Darfur) and Somalia. The volatile security situations in these countries are also leading to increasing displacement internally and externally. It is also important to highlight that while there are internal conflicts within Chad and Darfur, there are also linkages between these conflicts and instability in CAR and thus it is necessary to view these conflicts in a regional context.

Darfur

UNHCR is concerned about the humanitarian situation and the continued insecurity in Darfur. The progressive deterioration of security conditions seriously hampers efforts to protect civilians and causes further displacement, with repercussions in neighboring Chad and CAR.

The UN mission in Sudan (UNMIS) estimates that insecurity, tension and attacks on aid convoys have this year added another 140,000 people to the two million people displaced by civil war in Darfur. Many of the camps are full, and more than half a million people are completely out of reach of aid agencies. During May, at least 10,000 people were newly displaced.

Violent incidents and tribal clashes are almost daily occurrences, and attacks on villages and IDP camps by various militias continue. OCHA reports that the assaults on displaced people rose to 414 in 2006 from 105 in 2005. Militarization of IDP camps is becoming increasingly worrying feature in IDP camps. Domestic violence and sexual assaults on women are on the rise, especially those who venture to collect firewood out of the camps.

Increasingly, access to needy populations is limited, owing to security considerations. In 2006, security incidents affecting humanitarian personnel rose by 70% from the previous year to 1,800, according to OCHA. UNMIS reported that 12 relief workers were killed in the second half of 2006 and beginning of 2007—more than the last two years combined with 30 aid agencies compounds attacked. Consequently, mobility is seriously circumscribed and UNHCR and its partners have to rely on transport by air. Presently UNHCR has access—and this not all the time—to slightly over half of the IDPs in West Darfur. While UNHCR continues to reach out to as many IDPs and returnees as possible, we are becoming overly reliant on air assets, security escorts and an effective international military presence. Due to these constraints, we are struggling to fulfill our protection responsibilities to the affected people.

Movements do not remain within Darfur. The insecurity in Darfur triggered movements toward the CAR. Approximately 2,600 Sudanese refugees sought refuge in northeastern CAR due to clashes in South Darfur in May. In view of their conditions, the UN in CAR—including UNHCR—started an aid operation last week. Plastic sheeting, food, water and sanitation supplies are being provided. More people are expected to arrive.

The fighting between Sudanese armed forces and Sudanese rebels in Darfur has also had tangible repercussions into Chad. This fighting is occurring intermittently along the Chadian-Sudanese border in Cariari, in the north-east of Chad, only a few kilometers away from the refugee camp of Oure Cassoni.

It was also recently reported that a group of 45,000 Chadians arrived in Foro Baranga in West Darfur, occupying abandoned villages. Movements are reportedly continuing. The majority of the group is Chadian Arab nomads. Many of them seem

to have been involved in the fighting in the region. UNHCR, together with other agencies, is assessing the situation to see whether they can be considered as asylum seekers/refugees and if assistance is needed and to what extent UNHCR should provide assistance. UNHCR has formed a Task Force to determine the appropriate strategy for assisting and caring for them. UNHCR works with the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) to establish a timetable and a plan of action for tracking and monitoring new arrivals, as well as to establish standard operating procedures for investigations. An in-depth analysis of their profile and situation is being conducted on the ground.

Apart from the above group, some 15,000 Chadian asylum seekers are gathered in Galu, Azaza and Arara. They started arriving in West Darfur last year, following insecurity in Chad. Movements slowly continue this year as well. In order to assist them, UNHCR opened two new refugee camps last year in Um Shalaya and Mukjar, where those willing to move have been transferred. There are currently 5,000 refugees in both camps. UNHCR registers them with COR, and provides them with basic assistance such as shelter and Non-Food Items. While UNHCR was visiting the camp on a daily basis, movements to the camp have been recently suspended following a security incident in which six of UNHCR staff were temporarily abducted.

UNHCR fears that the international community could face a catastrophe in Darfur if bold measures are not taken. While discussions on the deployment of a more robust security force within the framework of the AU/UN Hybrid Mission continue, it is also necessary to complement these activities with peace negotiations. It is assessed that a peace agreement could start the complex process of reconciliation between not only the parties engaged but also members of civil society, including the displaced. To reach that peace agreement requires advocacy with all the parties involved and the full commitment of the international community, in particular the UN Security Council.

Chad

In Chad, insecurity hinders access to refugees and IDPs. The fragile security conditions represent a constant risk for the humanitarian staff and have caused various humanitarian agencies to evacuate staff on several occasions. Adoption of UN security measures in the whole of eastern Chad resulted in the cessation of all development activities and severe constraints in the delivery of humanitarian activities. Efforts by the Government to restore some law and order in eastern Chad have been noticeable, but harassment and violence against humanitarian staff, IDPs and refugees unfortunately continues.

An overriding preoccupation for UNHCR is how to maintain the humanitarian and civilian character of the camps. UNHCR has been working with the government for some time to relocate refugee camps farther from the border. Presently, most refugee camps are between 60 to 80 kilometers away from the border and could therefore be easily targeted from Sudan. Two camps—Oure Cassoni and Am Nabak—are almost on the border. Although new potential sites are being suggested by the Government of Chad for such relocation, it is proving difficult to identify a suitable site which could adequately meet the basic needs, in particular water, of the refugees.

UNHCR is equally focusing on countering recruitment of refugees from refugee camps in the East. Of the refugee camps in Eastern Chad, probably most, if not all, have experienced activities related to recruitment. Information has been received, collected and cross-checked from a variety of sources. Recruitment has been carried out forcefully, with reports of ill-treatment and even torture, but also voluntarily, perhaps drawing on refugees' sense of duty toward their homeland. Recruitment of IDPs and local populations is also occurring with the increased militarization of Eastern Chad, accompanied by higher numbers of IDPs.

One of the key actions that UNHCR has been pursuing to address these security risks, has been advocacy on the establishment of an international presence to ensure security in and around refugee camps as well as for IDPs and humanitarian workers. Initiatives by the UN Secretary-General and more recently, the French Government to address this longstanding need are encouraging.

UNHCR has also been working with the Chadian Government to strengthen its capacity to improve security conditions. More specifically, UNHCR secured additional funding to reinforce its current Memorandum of Understanding with the authorities on the maintenance of security in and around the refugee camps, and to increase security measures for humanitarian workers and their assets.

Partnerships with NGOs have been indispensable in Chad. In particular UNHCR would like to highlight that the technical and financial contributions of NGOs partners have been critical to ensuring that the main needs of persons of concern are being met. We would urge continued funding of NGOs in Chad.

We would further encourage the United States Government to continue to lend its support to initiatives of the UN and other Governments aimed at setting up an international presence in eastern Chad to provide protection to Sudanese refugees and Chadian IDPs.

Somalia

Elusive peace and the volatile situation in Somalia are also of great concern to UNHCR. The security situation is severely limiting UNHCR and its partners' ability to address consistently the urgent needs of IDPs. It is equally of concern that the Kenyan border remains closed preventing new Somalis asylum seekers from entering the country. The situation is further not conducive for voluntary repatriation prospects to South and Central Somalia leaving most Somali refugees, the majority of which are in Ethiopia and Kenya, where the Governments maintain an encampment policy and refuse to consider local integration, as a clear cut protracted refugee population. Notably resettlement has and continues to be robustly pursued for Somali refugees. Nonetheless, for the vast majority voluntary repatriation is the most appropriate solution and many have been waiting for more than a decade to return home.

In order to support the TFG's efforts to stabilize the country and ensure law and order, the African Union decided to deploy a force of some 8,000 peacekeepers, AMISOM. UNHCR is hopeful that the deployment of a larger AU Stabilization Force could be critical in stabilizing South and Central Somalia. So far, only 1,700 Ugandan troops are deployed in Somalia.

TFG is also pursuing political dialogue with an array of concerned actors such as clan elders, religious leaders, and civil society. UNHCR views this as a positive step and would like to ensure that the views of the displaced are properly represented within any reconciliation process.

With a view toward advancing peace in the country, UNHCR views positively by the recent appointment of Mr. Yates as a US special envoy for Somalia and would welcome opportunities to share information on the situation of displaced persons as it pertains to the peace process.

VI PARTNERSHIPS

We would like to highlight, further to previous indications in our presentation, that partnerships are indispensable for UNHCR to fulfill our mandate. We work hand in hand with governments and other humanitarian and developmental actors, in particular with NGOs. Additionally they join us in advocacy efforts and regularly participate in our Executive Committee. As is evident in the country briefings, UNHCR is increasingly collaborating with military actors. As this can have negative repercussions on humanitarian space we are closely monitoring and continuously assessing our association with military actors. Political actors are equally important partners, who can use their leverage in enhancing protection and in pursuit of durable solutions. We are trying to ensure that key political actors, such as the United States Government, other influential States and regional and sub-regional organizations such as the African Union and ECOWAS are kept abreast of the situations and concerns of displaced persons.

VII. CONCLUSION

In closing, Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I would like to thank you for your leadership in highlighting and addressing the critical protection needs of refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs and others of concern in the African region. We look forward to working with you to ensure that enhanced protection and assistance are delivered and durable solutions are identified through robust support and cooperation from the United States and other members of the international community. Only by working together with the international community will we be able to address the political, social, and financial impact of large-scale displacement in the region and to ensure full protection of individual refugees and others of concern.

Thank you and I would be happy to address any questions or concerns you might have.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much for your testimony, and we look forward to questioning. Let me begin by asking you about the international community. I have recently seen refugee spillover beyond Darfur and Chad where there are now refugees from Central African Republic crossing over into Darfur and Chad. Can you de-

scribe trends in refugee cross border and continued internal movements in Darfur, Central African Republic and Chad?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Yes. A few of these states, where the situation is precarious as it is, the emphasis is on security. In Darfur, the spillover into Chad continues to increase. I believe we are using a planning figure of some 230,000 Darfuri refugees in Chad. Of course, our HCR presence in eastern Chad has been quite well established over the years. You know, I am quite sure you have visited some of our camps. They cover the entire length of Darfur from the north, way down to the south in Gereida, which borders CAR, the Central African Republic. The key, of course, now is insecurity itself within Chad because of the situation within Chad. So that is a situation that we have to constantly watch. The question also in eastern Chad is a longstanding problem with the Government of Chad, of finding new space for new sites for refugee camps, and moving them further away from the border in order to prevent militarization and recruitment of soldiers within the camps.

But the discussions are still continuing. In fact, I was there. When I was there, I did raise this with the prime minister to actually negotiate for land further inside the country, but as you can imagine, it is very difficult because of the situation Chad finds itself in today. But we will continue on with these negotiations. Thank you.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. And I have visited several of the UNHCR camps in eastern Chad, in Dimi, in Iridimi and several others. Let me just ask another quick question regarding the Horn. There was a recent article in the *Washington Post* that noted that approximately 8,000 Somalis sought refugee in Oman. Also there have been accounts of Somalis crossing into Yemen. How many refugees arrived in these countries, to your knowledge? How do you estimate how many, since many are going at sea? What are the estimates about numbers that may have been lost at sea? And also, in your opinion, why are many of these refugees choosing to flee by sea as opposed to going to neighboring countries? Do you have a sense of whether these countries will remain open to Somali refugees? Also, recently in Kenya, the government closed its borders. It refused to allow Somali refugees to come into Kenya during the recent fighting several months ago in Mogadishu. Kenya actually deported long-term Somali residents back to Somalia and Ethiopia. This is actually a major violation of international law and even Kenyan law. Could you comment on that situation also? Thank you.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Yes, Mr. Chairman. The situation in the Horn is indeed troubling. Actually, I lived in Kenya in the early 1990s during the 1990s influx of Somalis into Kenya. So it is obviously déjà vu this time around, you know, with the same situation. We visited Kenya, actually, and Somalia itself last month. I was in Puntland and the government in Puntland was actually extremely concerned about Somalis from central south using Puntland as a sort of crossing area into Bossaso from where they board these so-called human smuggler boats into Yemen. I don't have the exact number of the deaths at sea. I can get that for you I am sure if you would like.

But UNHCR has just recently decided to upgrade and expand its presence in Yemen. Before, we had a rather modest presence, but we have recently just rebudgeted for the office there in order to help the Yemeni Government in the process of registering and perhaps even helping resettle some of the Somali refugees.

But on your question about—yeah, the question about why coming to Yemen instead of other places, I think—well, number one, the Kenyan border is closed, even though we know for a fact that a few, more than a few manage to slip through. But that border is closed for practical purposes. And to be very honest, this flow we are seeing going up north to Yemen and then onto Oman and Saudi Arabia, et cetera, is what we call the mixed, the mixed migration nexus, meaning that these are mixed flows of people. Some are fleeing for fear of persecution and for fear for their lives, but some, we must acknowledge are basically running to better areas to find employment, you know, for better job opportunities and a means to improve their livelihood for their families back home.

So there is this mix. And that is why it is quite important for the ones who are truly genuine refugees, the ones that could face danger, that would be persecuted if they were sent back home or could be pursued even, that those be afforded the maximum protection, you know, ultimately, I suppose with resettlement as an option even though, again, as I said in my oral address, this is a drop in the ocean usually because the numbers are small. But that is basically the main strategy and the main efforts of our expanded presence in countries like Yemen to play this role.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Mr. Smith?

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And Assistant Commissioner Cheng-Hopkins, thank you very much for your testimony and for your service. We, certainly on this committee, and I think many in Congress, greatly appreciate the work of UNHCR. It is one of the leading agencies of the U.N. that gets the job done everywhere in the world despite the fact that it lacks resources from the international community. So I want to thank you for your noble service.

Let me ask you three basic questions, the first one dealing with the IDPs. In your testimony, you mentioned the expanding role with assisting entirely displaced persons. You talk about the cluster approach, and the UNHCR, at the global level, has accepted a lead or co-lead in the role of protection in emergency shelter and so on. In their testimony that will be presented later on, Joel Charny, vice president of Refugees International, points out that almost one out of every four people in Africa are not refugees in terms of the people who are at risk, that IDPs outnumber refugees by almost a 4:1 ratio. He points out the discrepancy in assisting these people in part is attributable to the fact that it is a state itself that is supposed to be in charge of helping in assisting these people. Very often they are the problem in the first place.

And secondly, there has been a lack of organizing an international response to internal displacement because there is no single agency that ultimately is responsible, and that has led to serious gaps. So my first question would be with regard to IDPs, how

much progress are you making with this new cluster approach? What do you foresee in the next year or 2 in terms of expanding that so that, again, these IDPs are more adequately cared for?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Yes. Thank you so much, Congressman Smith. Thank you for those very nice words about UNHCR. We are very grateful to hearing it every time it is said.

You already pointed out that the number of IDPs not just in Africa but worldwide are really far exceeding the numbers of refugees and, as you had pointed out, that in some instances one could actually say that IDPs are probably less well cared for than refugees. Why is that so? Because, yes, these are, after all, citizens of a country, you know. They are not refugees in a foreign country, and that is, you know, would be the sole—it would be the responsibility of UNHCR as per our mandate and conventions. So, yes, there is an element of that, that the state is responsible, but also, as you said, because no one agency—so we are not—if I could be very frank, we are not mandated as we are for refugees for the care, maintenance and protection and assistance to IDPs as we are for refugees.

We took on the IDP role, you know, we have been involved with IDPs in the Balkans, for instance, for several years. But we are really only taking it on in a big way in the sense of coming up with the policy paper and a whole strategy documenting, including a protections strategy, for IDPs, only recently, I would say a year ago, with the introduction of a cluster approach, which as you know is one major element of the so-called U.N. humanitarian reform. And under the approach, as you are aware, the whole idea is not for one agency to be responsible for a particular sector or a particular group but to use the whole concept of the cluster and the co-chair or the chairs of the cluster to bring together both U.N. agencies and NGO partners to meet the needs in that particular area, if it is water and sanitation or protection.

UNHCR in most countries is responsible for protection, camp coordination and management and emergency shelter. But as you can imagine, the needs are way too vast to be covered. The most we can do by chairing these cluster meetings is, for instance, in the case of Uganda, what we are doing in northern Uganda, what the protection cluster is doing, which is very appreciated by all, is the population tracking movement. I am sure you know about the rush of IDPs to return home, I mean to the point where we are trying to play catch up in northern Uganda. So the fact that we do have this cluster and this chairmanship and are able to use the network of NGOs with which we work to come up with, you know, as precise a number as we can, where populations are moving, in what direction are they moving to final destinations, or are they too scared? Are there transit centers? So I think that kind of protection activity is indispensable if one were to plan for the IDPs, whether they are on the way home or whether they are already home. So that is useful in itself. But when you come down to identifying gaps and who is doing what, I must say, that is a lot more difficult because the needs are huge.

We are talking about people returning to no real roads, no schools, no health clinics, no water and sanitation. In fact, I would say it is quite frustrating for some of my colleagues to be able to identify the gaps but yet not have a partner or an agency ready

with a response. But if you accept that having that information is better than not having any, then I suppose the cluster approach is very useful in that respect.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. If I could just ask two final questions. Currently, there are about 20,000 Eritreans who are languishing in Darfur camps. Could you tell me what actions UNHCR is taking or plans to take to address their situation? In fact, on the issue of human trafficking, last week, the Bush administration released its trafficking of persons report, a comprehensive look at how other countries are meeting minimum standards as it relates to prevention, prosecution and protection, the three Ps of trafficking. Obviously, in a refugee setting, there is a very special case and concern because there are vulnerable populations. I remember visiting Stankovich in Macedonia during the Serbian War, and frankly, there were girls that were being trafficked, regrettably, right out of that camp into modern day slavery. And I am wondering what the UNHCR is doing regarding that trafficking of persons, particularly of women into forced prostitution, what is being done to protect those individuals? And that would include, and maybe with special emphasis, stateless persons who have even less moorings in the society and are perhaps less visible than someone else and, therefore, perhaps more vulnerable.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Yes, in fact, the High Commissioner was just there; I believe you are talking about Um Shalaya in Sudan where we have camps for Eritreans. And he was frankly completely appalled by the conditions he found. As you know, these are long-protracted refugee situations. In fact, many have been there apparently 40 years even, close to 40 years. And if one had to identify a forgotten emergency, this is a forgotten emergency. What HCR is doing now, especially since the High Commissioner's visit is, again, like in the case of Yemen, we are now diverting some resources to beef up again our presence, especially our protection presence. We are doing more vigorous, more rigorous registration of people so that we know their needs, we know the truly vulnerable, so, with the limited resources, one can prioritize because the key in my business is always to prioritize because you never get everything that you need. So without this kind of information, you know, one is not able to prioritize.

On your question about tracking statelessness, what I can tell you there is, our goal is basically is to—you know, the first—to get, you know, at the beginning, we should identify them. The world is not very good at identifying a stateless person. So our main aim here is to come up with better systems to identify them. And then, once we have identified them, then we can start thinking of solutions. So, in certain countries, we advocate for reduced citizenship campaigns, advocate that certain groups really deserve and really have every, every right to be citizens for various historical and other legal reasons. But those campaigns and information campaigns, that is in a nutshell what we do for these people. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Ms. Watson?

Ms. WATSON. Well, I wanted to follow up on the stateless. And do you know how other organizations besides your own might be addressing this issue? What is it that we can assist in helping you do along the statelessness lines?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Yes. In fact, this is one area where we do work very closely with our sister agencies in the U.N. system. We worked closely with UNICEF on birth registration, for instance, of stateless parents. We have worked with UNSD and the population census because thereby again having the overview of one is then able to determine what segments of the population are actually stateless. As I said, the whole idea is to first identify them because it is one thing to say that we have stateless people, but it is another to actually identify them so that we can actually, you know—find the proper solutions for their particular plight. We also work with OHCHR, the High Commission for Human Rights, on arbitrary deprivation of citizenship, which you know that has happened. So it is a human rights issue as well as the statelessness issue. So we do work very closely with them and, again, advocate for them, with them vis-à-vis the powers that be, whether it is the country that they are in or whether it is the country from which they have been expelled. Thank you.

Ms. WATSON. Is this an issue that the proper agencies of the U.N. have addressed? And are there other countries—I was listening to you say that the refugee issue is being focused on in terms of moving them back, far away from the borders. But is it an issue that comes up in the proper committees of the U.N.? And are there other countries that would beckon them?

Mr. PAYNE. Are you still there?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Yes. I understood the first question, but I didn't understand the second. When I said that in Chad we were attempting to move the camp.

Ms. WATSON. Right.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Further away from the border, I didn't mean into the interior. That is not the goal at all, but I do believe we have a standard of 50 kilometers is our standard.

Ms. WATSON. Yes, I understood that. I was just wondering, in terms of statelessness and human rights, would there be other countries in the central part of Africa or anywhere on the continent that would address the human rights issue of finding a home and dealing with statelessness and identifying them with their own nations?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Yes, I think, in Africa, the statelessness issue I think is relevant in the Congo, in the Kivus for the Banyamulenge. It could be more. As you know, now with the conflict, a lot of it is actually around who is a true Ivorian and who isn't. So it is becoming a hot issue I think in Ivory Coast. And there, again, our presence is very much to—in these countries is very much to, again, you know, advocate on behalf of these people vis-à-vis the central government and identify them and basically, you know, come up with a good case that they should be accepted.

Ms. WATSON. How many staff people would you have, UNHCR have, working on statelessness? I mean, do you have the proper resources?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Well, in headquarters, we are talking about two to three within the Department of International Protection that are focused only on statelessness. Of course, other colleagues in the Department of International Protection also have a role, and in the field, all our protection officers have training in statelessness and have guidelines and also a responsible role to play for statelessness.

Ms. WATSON. Do you think that the United Nations has responded quickly and effectively enough to these humanitarian issues, particularly in Africa? And what changes do you think need to be made by our U.N. agencies or U.N. members to address the challenges of relief operations?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. A lot of these situations, obviously, you know, the U.N. works with governments. So, for all operations, you know, it is very clear, even in the very difficult IDP operations, including in Darfur, we work with the endorsement of the conference of the governments. So, likewise, when it comes to humanitarian access to the stateless, just like humanitarian access to the IDPs, if the central government is reluctant or is not cooperating with us, you know, there is only so much we can do. Of course, we can advocate together with other NGOs; we can go to the media. But by and large, we have to work with these governments.

Ms. WATSON. It just seems to me that the situation, from what we have heard in the last few weeks from people who have traveled and have championed the causes of the refugees, the situation doesn't seem to be getting any better. It seems to be getting more complex. What do you think contributes to that?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. I am sorry. Was the situation getting worse for refugees or for the stateless?

Ms. WATSON. Yeah. Uh-huh.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Refugees or for the stateless?

Ms. WATSON. Refugees and the stateless.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Okay. I am not aware that it is getting worse for the stateless.

Ms. WATSON. Okay. Refugees then.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Yeah. For refugees, well, it depends. It depends, you know, where we are talking about.

Ms. WATSON. Well, let's say on the border of Chad.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. On the border of Chad, for the Darfuris, it is getting tough because of our lack of access even within, you know, within Chad itself because of the insecurity that is now spreading into Chad. But that, I would not, you know, generalize to all refugee situations because, on the other hand, we do now have, after decades of civil war, you know, peace agreements being signed. And people are moving because they have relatives, because they feel confident that it is secure enough to return, because they listen to the radio and the programs that we put on the air to talk about returns and what areas are safe, whether there are land mines, et cetera, or not. And people are moving, and that is why we are seeing these movements into southern Sudan that are phenomenal. Movement of IDPs, back home in Uganda, I went and visited camps that were three-fourths empty, empty. The people had left. They had left, and they had decided to go back either to a place of final destination or transit place. I think Congolese, the

Congolese returning from the neighboring countries, again the fragile democratic elections, but nonetheless, wanting to again hope that things would work out. People just want to go home. And that, I found out with this job, is more true than anything else. People just want to go home.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, thank you very much.

We are going to have a vote in a minute, so I would like to ask Ms. Woolsey if she would like to ask a question.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Ms. Cheng-Hopkins. You know, this is very informative. On World Refugee Day, we are talking about providing protection and prevention and prosecution, while at the same time refugee situations are being created all over the world, new ones. And my question to you, Ms. Cheng-Hopkins, is: What does the UNHCR do when they see that there is going to be a new refugee situation, that it is in the making, that it is obvious? For example, in Iraq, it is estimated that 50,000 refugees are being created at the rate of 50,000 a month. So do you prepare for this? Or do you react to it? Is there an infrastructure that is in place that can get moving on what is going to be an obvious situation with staffing and funding and getting food ready and bringing the other nations together to do their share? How does that work? Or do you—is it just a reaction?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. No. I don't think we would be very popular if we weren't better prepared and more professional about it. Yes, I can go to a whole long thing about our planning and prepositioning and all that, but perhaps the best way is to illustrate, for instance, you mentioned Iraq. Yes, that is the most recent refugee-producing situation of huge numbers, huge numbers of refugees. We had, of course, anticipated—we had, I would say, relatively modest offices in Jordan and Syria before the war and before the outflow started in earnest. But since then, in a matter of I would say 6 months, we had more than—we have expanded by ten times. I don't have the exact figure, but I would say even more than ten times the size of our presence and offices in these countries. Why? Why? Because the numbers coming over were so huge that we needed to set up—you know, the way we function is, we never function just in the capital. We set up sub-offices, field offices, field units, we basically go to where the people are going to so that we are able to service them, to be able to register them, to talk to them, to see their needs. So, in the case of Iraq, as I said, you know, we have really expanded our presence, and what we are doing is, again, registering people to—again, finding who are the most vulnerable, whose lives are truly in danger, who are the highest risk, and those are—once we register again, it is very human-resource heavy, get people's so-called refugee status determined and then having those resettled that can be resettled. But also we spend a lot of time working with the Governments of Syria and Jordan to keep the good will because, as you can imagine, with 1 million to 2 million people coming across to your country, I don't think—you know, even in the most wealthy country, would not be able to accept that. So these countries that are not exactly wealthy are having a hard time. I have been in schools in Syria where more than half the children are Iraqi, refugee children.

So, obviously, there is going to be a pressure put on these governments to refuse these people, to send them back or not to accept them for basic services anymore. So our role is always to keep that good will, yes, and to pump in resources so we can expand schools; we can expand equipment for the schools; we can provide equipment to the medical clinics to buy their good will, if you wish, so they will continue helping the refugees and not just—you know, instead of just sending them away.

Ms. WOOLSEY. So when that is occurring, then are we displacing support for Africa and the Darfuris in sending them then to the Mideast? Or do you just expand your resources? I mean, are we taking people from Africa, to help in the Mideast or are we just expanding, making your program larger?

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. No, I don't think we are. We appeal for new resources whenever we have, for instance, what happened in Iraq. And you know, donors come forward in response to our appeal. And the previous needs identified, for instance in Darfur and elsewhere, we are continually competing for those, and they continue being funded at the level they were funded in previous years. So I wouldn't say that there is a diversion of donor resources to the Iraq situation.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Okay.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Thank you.

Mr. PAYNE. Great. Let me thank you. I just have one quick observation again, and it is regarding North Africa. There is another refugee situation that we seldom hear about. That is with the Sahrawi people, the refugees who have lived in camps in Algeria since the late 1970s after Spain left its colony in Western Sahara and Morocco went to acquire it. As you noted, the debate continues. I wonder if you could give me a thumbnail sketch of what is happening in these camps? Some of the people have been living there for about 30 years.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Yes, as you say, this is a very longstanding problem of some 90,000, I believe. Even though it is a constant fight we have, depending if you are talking to the Polisario or the Moroccans, there is big, big tension over the numbers. But anyway, we are working on the planning figure of 90,000 refugees in the Sahrawi, in Tindouf, in the camp. In recognition of the fact that these people, you know, should keep their ties with the families back home even though they are displaced in these camps, but they should keep the ties for the day when peace comes.

UNHCR, I think together with a few donors, I think somebody must have come up with this bright idea of what we call confidence-building measures program. That is for people who have been sort of separated for so many decades now from their families, we actually have a program where we bring people, where we actually transport people from the camps to spend—I don't know—a few weeks, a few months with their families back home, and then they go back again to the camp. You are only allowed one trip per lifetime. So you can't use it to go back and forth. But people are able to visit back home, keep their ties until the day when the sun breaks through in the peace talks. Because, come to think of it, what else could one do? So I think this probably came up in some

brain-storming with maybe some of the interested donors in this process, but that is quite a novel kind of thing that we do, those confidence-building measures of sending people home.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, thank you very much.

Let me also echo what Mr. Smith said earlier, and as I indicated, we really are very appreciative of the work of UNHCR and the tremendous good that it has done for people in a very bad situation. We appreciate all of your hard work and we look forward to continued support from the USA for UNHCR. So thank you once again.

Ms. CHENG-HOPKINS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee.

Mr. PAYNE. We will now have our second panel. Mr. William Fitzgerald: Mr. Fitzgerald is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. His regional portfolio focuses on sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, Central Asia and Latin America. He also oversees the bureau's public affairs office.

Prior to joining PRM in May 2006, Mr. Fitzgerald was Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Kampala, Uganda, where he served as chargé d'affaires for 6 months. As an 18-year veteran of the Foreign Service, Mr. Fitzgerald has also served in three other African posts—Togo, Mali and Zambia.

We look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF MR. WILLIAM E. FITZGERALD, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF POPULATION, REFUGEES AND MIGRATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. FITZGERALD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Payne, Ranking Member Smith, as well as the other members of the subcommittee, thank you very much for inviting us to participate in this hearing.

Again, I would like to point out that it is particularly fitting that the hearing takes place today on World Refugee Day, formerly known as Africa Refugee Day.

Thanks to the generous support of Congress and the American people, the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration programmed more than \$344 million in fiscal year 2006 for protection and assistance to refugees, conflict victims, internally displaced people, and vulnerable migrants in Africa. This year, in 2007, we anticipate programming at least \$306 million.

I would like to provide some of the highlights on our efforts as well as some of the challenges that we continue to face. I have submitted a longer statement for the record.

By "Africa," I mean the whole continent, including North Africa, and by "we," I will also mean the international humanitarian community since the United States generally approaches these issues as multilateral responsibilities in which the United States plays a leading, but not solo, role.

Earlier this year, for example, I co-led a USG-European Community mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo. I was there to assess how we could better support UNHCR and partner organizations in the return and reintegration of Congolese refugees from Tanzania, Zambia, and other neighboring countries during this window of opportunity.

There are, of course, a number of “good news” stories on the refugee front in Africa. First of all, first asylum—the first principle in refugee work—and Africa’s legendary hospitality to refugees are generally intact across the continent.

There are some worrisome situations, however. Tanzania has recently expelled Rwandans and Burundi that it says are illegal migrants and not refugees. Kenya’s border with Somalia has been officially closed since January. We are working with these governments, advocating greater adherence to refugee asylum principles.

Peace agreements across the continent have ended some long-running conflicts, enabling refugees to voluntarily return to their home countries. More than 200,000 Sierra Leonean refugees have returned, some 400,000 Angolan refugees; refugee returns to southern Sudan have topped 154,000, and I am pleased to say that the active caseloads in the Central African Republic and the DRC have all returned home.

Returns to Burundi have totaled more than 340,000, and the DRC a little over 100,000. Both repatriations are well under way, if far from finished. More than 250,000 Liberian refugees and more than 320,000 IDPs have also returned home. Organized refugee repatriation ends for Liberia on June 30th, in about 10 days.

We recognize this is the third time that we have supported refugee return to Liberia since war broke out there in 1989. But there is reason, I think now, to believe that peace will be more durable this time, with important transformations in Liberia under way with a U.N. peacekeeping force on the ground providing security and with Charles Taylor in custody in The Hague.

Africa is notable for having been the incubator for a number of humanitarian approaches, for example, bridging the gap between relief and development when refugees go home or when local integration is called for in protracted refugee situations. We are closer to the mark in southern Sudan, but the relief-to-development gap is wide in most places. It is a problem that neither the U.S. Government nor the U.N. system, nor the international community as a whole has yet resolved.

Another humanitarian approach piloted largely in Africa has been the international effort to set and reach minimum protection and assistance standards. Chad is one of the best current examples of where a concerted effort to apply the range of minimum protection and assistance standards has paid off. I know that many of you on the subcommittee and your staffers have made the arduous journey to eastern Chad to review the situation of the 230,000 Darfurian refugees in 12 Chadian camps there. We would appreciate hearing your perspectives.

The international emergency response to the Darfur refugees in Chad, quite frankly, was slow off the mark in 2003 and 2004. Malnutrition rates among refugee children there were among the highest ever recorded. Under USG pressure and persuasion, UNHCR increased its appeals, and recruitment of more implementing agencies brought malnutrition rates down well below the minimum standard and ended the need for special feeding programs.

Let me hasten to add that Chad is also one of the places that best exemplifies many of the toughest challenges that we face.

Security and neutrality in the refugee camps: Some are simply too close to the Sudanese border, but refugees have refused to move and finding alternative sites farther away from the border has been extremely difficult. Education is one of the key points of entry in keeping children and youth safe from recruitment to rebel causes. PRM has also funded additional gendarmes to enforce law and order, but humanitarian operations, especially in eastern Chad, require a more robust security. We welcome the French Government's renewed resolve to address this need.

Also security for humanitarians: Shrunk humanitarian access threatens the recent gains in reaching minimum international standards.

The carrying capacity of eastern Chad: Water and fuel wood are scarce.

Implementing capacity: Given the challenging working conditions, most humanitarian agencies have had difficulty in recruiting personnel and an even harder time holding on to them.

The impact on local Chadians: Those who have shared their land, water and grazing resources, their fuel wood and sometimes even their food with the refugees are, in fact, primary donors despite their own acute poverty. We need to include them in our programming as well.

Lack of publicity, lack of visibility: Most people have heard of Darfur. Chad is a very different story.

As you know, Chad is itself in the throes of armed conflict. Among the conflict victims there are now approximately 140,000 internally displaced Chadians, as well as Chadian refugees who fled to Darfur. We have increased our support to the International Committee of the Red Cross and to UNHCR, which under the new "cluster approach" is charged with protection, IDP camp management, and emergency shelter. Our USAID colleagues have provided support to the Office of the U.N. Humanitarian Coordinator (OCHA) and to some of the NGOs that are working to aid the IDPs as well the refugees.

The "cluster approach," simply put, is designed to ensure that the IDPs, like refugees, will benefit from international protection and assistance. Piloted in the DRC, Liberia, and Uganda, but also applied in new situations such as Chad and Somalia, the cluster approach is too new to be legitimately evaluated, although a system-wide evaluation is currently underway with its findings expected later this year.

Let me also mention the latest crisis involving refugees from Somalia, where flooding in the refugee camps in Kenya, combined with some disease outbreaks and an influx of new refugees, created a particularly complex regional humanitarian emergency. The President has authorized several drawdowns from his Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund to provide additional support to ICRC inside Somalia and to UNHCR and NGO implementing partners for support to the new Somali refugees.

In answering your question earlier, we estimate that the number of Somali refugees are about 30,000, along with approximately 400,000 new IDPs within the country; although I would say that in the past month about 100,000, roughly 25 percent, have since returned to their homes in Mogadishu.

The bureau also addresses the needs of a variety of other vulnerable migrants in Africa. The migration flows, for instance, through North Africa of people primarily from sub-Saharan Africa, who are seeking to reach Europe, is a challenge that falls into the bailiwick of one of our key partners, the International Organization for Migration.

In southern Africa, we have funded a migration dialogue among immigration authorities and NGOs from the region's countries in a bid to counter some of the xenophobia that we have found in South Africa and other states in the region.

In the area of anti-trafficking, PRM has helped to implement some projects under the President's Anti-Trafficking Initiative.

Statelessness has once again become a concern in the world, and that's a good thing. The department is increasing its attention to statelessness by devoting a distinct subsection to this issue in future country human rights reports. In Africa, we are engaged with the UNHCR on resolving problems of potential statelessness.

Finally, I would like to highlight the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program, which is a vital component of protection for vulnerable African refugees in need of this durable solution. In recent years, the number of African refugees resettled in the United States has reached its highest level since the passage of the Refugee Act. In fiscal 2007, we anticipate admitting approximately 18,000 from Africa, originating from some 23 countries across the continent. We expect a similar number in fiscal year 2008. With no near-term end to the Darfur conflict, at least not in sight, we plan a mission to eastern Chad later on in this fiscal year, again security permitting, to explore enhanced resettlement opportunities for Darfur refugees there.

I have touched today only on a few illustrative examples of how my bureau is putting into practice the best humanitarian traditions of the American people, assisting some of the most vulnerable populations—refugees and victims of conflict across Africa.

This concludes my remarks. I would be very happy to try to answer the questions that you might have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Fitzgerald follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. WILLIAM E. FITZGERALD, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF POPULATION, REFUGEES AND MIGRATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Chairman Payne and Ranking member Smith, as well as other members of the Committee, thank you very much for inviting us to participate in this hearing. We welcome the opportunity to discuss our efforts related to African refugees. I would like to point out that it is fitting that this hearing takes place today, June 20, on World Refugee Day—which many will know was originally Africa Refugee Day.

Thanks to the generous support of Congress and the American people, the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) programmed more than \$344 million in Fiscal Year 2006 for protection and assistance to refugees, conflict victims, internally displaced persons, and vulnerable migrants in Africa. This year—FY2007—we anticipate programming at least \$306 million. I would like to provide some highlights on our efforts, as well as on the challenges that we face across the continent.

By "Africa," of course, I mean the whole continent, including North Africa. Given the size and diversity of the Africa region—more than 50 countries with a variety of ethnic, political, disease burden, and economic challenges—it is not surprising that the refugee and migration landscape is a constantly changing one.

And by “we”, I will often mean the international humanitarian community since the United States generally approaches these issues as multilateral responsibilities in which the United States plays a leading, but not solo, role. Earlier this year, for example, I co-led a USG-European Community mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to assess with our European donor colleagues what was needed and how we could together better support UNHCR and partner organizations in the return and reintegration of Congolese refugees from Tanzania, Zambia, and the other neighboring countries during this window of opportunity.

There are a number of “good news” stories on the refugee front in Africa.

First of all, first asylum—the first principle in refugee work—is generally intact across the continent. We worry that Africa’s legendary hospitality to refugees, codified in the generous 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees, is disappearing. But despite some very strong complaints recently that refugees bring instability, insecurity, and disease, most African countries allow people in need to enter for the purpose of seeking asylum. There are some worrisome situations. Tanzania has recently expelled Rwandans and Burundi that it says are illegal migrants rather than refugees. Kenya’s border with Somalia has been officially closed since January. We are working with these governments, advocating greater adherence to refugee asylum principles.

Peace agreements have ended some long-running conflicts, enabling refugees to voluntarily return to their home countries. With repatriations, the total number of refugees on the continent has been declining since 2002. Returned refugees remain of concern to UNHCR and to us during the reintegration period.

- More than 200,000 Sierra Leonean refugees returned home, with the end of the formal repatriation program in mid-2004.
- Some 400,000 Angolan refugees have gone home since 2002.
- Refugee returns to southern Sudan have recently topped 154,000 with the active caseloads in the Central African Republic and the DRCongo having all returned.
- Returns to Burundi (over 340,000 so far) and the DRC (over 100,000) are well underway, if far from finished.
- More than 250,000 Liberian refugees and more than 320,000 IDPs have returned home with USG assistance to rebuild their lives and contribute to Liberia’s overall recovery. Organized refugee repatriation ends June 30.

We recognize that this is the third time that we have supported refugee return to Liberia since war broke out there on Christmas Eve in 1989. But there is reason to believe that peace will be more durable this time, with important transformations in Liberia underway, with a UN peacekeeping force deployed there, and with Charles Taylor in custody in The Hague. Liberia illustrates well that tackling such challenges as insecurity, extreme poverty, and a lack of political dialogue requires action by governments and non-humanitarian partners to create a context in which displacement can end.

Africa is notable for having been the incubator for a number of humanitarian approaches—for example, bridging the gap between relief and development when refugees go home or when local integration is called for in protracted refugee situations. It is critical to help create conditions in the home country that will encourage voluntary repatriation. It is equally important to protect our investments in humanitarian assistance over the years with enough development aid to keep the transformations going. We are closer to the mark in southern Sudan, for example, but the relief to development gap is wide in most places such as Burundi and the DRCongo. It is a problem that neither the U.S. Government, nor the UN system, nor the international community has resolved.

Another humanitarian approach piloted largely in Africa has been the international effort to set and reach minimum protection and assistance standards. Some of these are captured in the “Sphere Standards” developed by humanitarian practitioners. Some are captured in the UNHCR standards and indicators process. Some standards, such as our focus on combating gender-based violence, arose from the fact that rape and other violence against women and girls is far too common. Some arose from scandals over exploitation of refugees in West Africa and Nepal, leading to codes of conduct for all humanitarian personnel. Some arose from basic common sense such as U.S. inter agency cooperation to ensure that refugees also benefit from the President’s HIV/AIDS and malaria initiatives. All guide the Department’s strategies to deal with each refugee and conflict victim situation.

Chad is one of the best current examples of where a concerted effort to apply the range of minimum protection and assistance standards has paid off. I know that many of you on the Sub-Committee and your staffers have made the arduous trip

to eastern Chad to review the situation of the over 230,000 Sudanese refugees now in twelve camps. We in PRM have traveled there regularly, but would appreciate hearing your perspectives on this rapidly evolving situation. The international emergency response to the Darfur refugees in Chad was slow off the mark in 2003 and 2004. Malnutrition rates among refugee children were among the highest ever recorded. NGO implementing agencies were few and far between. Under USG pressure and persuasion, UNHCR raised its first appeals from under \$20 million to a more appropriate \$105 million—and recruitment of more implementing agencies brought malnutrition rates down well below the minimum standard and ended the need for special feeding programs. We are funding a full range of activities in eastern Chad, some of which are considered supplementary or even luxuries in other settings—for example, secondary education, animal husbandry, income-generating activities, sports, and mental health.

Let me hasten to add that Chad is also one of the places that best exemplifies many of the toughest challenges that we face.

- Security and neutrality of the Sudanese refugee camps. Some are too close to the Sudanese border. Yet refugees have refused to move and finding alternative sites has not been easy. Education is one of the key points of entry in keeping children and youth safe from recruitment to rebel causes. PRM has funded additional gendarmes to enforce law and order but humanitarian operations require more robust security. We welcome the new French Government's renewed resolve to address this need and look forward to the Darfur Contact Group meeting in Paris June 25.
- Security for humanitarians. With UN “phase 4” security level in place, humanitarian personnel are required to travel in convoys which limits contact hours with the refugees and threatens the recent gains in reaching minimum international standards. The killing last week of a first tour aid worker with Medecins Sans Frontières in a clearly marked car in neighboring Central African Republic underscores the of danger to many humanitarians these days. We will need expanded humanitarian space if we are to carry out any resettlement activities of the most vulnerable Darfur refugees.
- The carrying capacity of eastern Chad. Water and fuel wood are scarce. With water tables possibly dropping from use by refugees who outnumber local inhabitants, UNHCR may target a lower standard of only 10 liters of water per person per day. One often hears the word “unsustainable” though the conflict in Darfur shows no immediate sign of reaching a point where refugees could repatriate in safety and dignity.
- Implementing capacity. Given the challenging working conditions, most humanitarian agencies have had difficulty in recruiting personnel for eastern Chad and have experienced extraordinarily high turnover. Obviously, this is not helpful in terms of program delivery and continuity.
- Impact on local Chadians. Those who have shared their land, their water, their grazing resources, their fuel wood, and sometimes their food with the refugees are primary donors despite their own acute poverty. It has become more common for the international refugee protection and assistance architecture to include local people affected by the presence of refugees. In the case of eastern Chad, five percent of the UNHCR budget has been set aside for affected Chadians but when resources are short, refugees naturally get priority. Our own USAID has provided funding to address some of the needs of affected Chadians but has been stymied to some extent by the same issues of security and implementing capacity.
- Lack of publicity/visibility. Most people have heard of Darfur. Chad is another story. And the 50,000 refugees in Chad from the Central African Republic are rarely noticed. Donor support is correspondingly rare. As Chad becomes a protracted refugee situation, attracting adequate resources will become even more difficult.

As you know, Chad is itself in the throes of armed conflict as various rebel groups seek to depose the Deby regime and as ethnic conflict in the east between tribes, and now also between “Arab” and “non-Arab” Chadians, increases insecurity. The conflicts in Darfur and Chad are also mutually reinforcing in some ways. As a result, among the conflict victims, there are now some 140,000 internally displaced Chadians—as well as Chadian refugees who have fled to Darfur. We have increased our support to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and to UNHCR, which under the new “cluster approach” is charged with protection, IDP camp management, and emergency shelter. Our USAID colleagues have provided support to the Office of the UN Humanitarian Coordinator (OCHA) and to some of

the NGOs that are trying to aid the IDPs as well as the refugees. Once again, the issues of insecurity that limits humanitarian access, of implementing capacity, and of scarcity of water and fuel wood for large concentrations of people arise as challenges to getting another emergency response up and running.

The “cluster approach” is designed to assure that IDPs, like refugees, will predictably benefit from international protection and assistance. Piloted in the DR Congo, Liberia, and Uganda, but also quickly applied in new situations such as Chad and Somalia, the “cluster approach” is too new to be legitimately evaluated—although a system-wide evaluation is currently underway, with its findings expected later this year. IDPs have typically benefited from international assistance; but protection efforts have fallen short, in part because of issues of national sovereignty. It is thus in the realm of protection and in the role of UNHCR that we are probably seeing the greatest change owing to these humanitarian reforms.

As another example of the Bureau’s work, I would mention the latest crisis involving refugees from Somalia where flooding of the refugee camps in Kenya combined with some disease outbreaks and an influx of new refugees into Kenya, Ethiopia, and Yemen created a particularly complex regional humanitarian emergency. The President has authorized several draw downs from his Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund to provide additional support for the International Committee of the Red Cross inside Somalia and to UNHCR and NGO implementing partners for support to the new Somali refugees. The Defense Department responded to our request for airlift of tents and other non-food items to the flood stricken refugee camps in Kenya.

The Bureau also addresses the needs of a variety of other vulnerable migrants in Africa.

- The migration flows through North Africa of people primarily from sub-Saharan Africa who are seeking to reach Europe is a challenge that falls into the bailiwick of the International Organization for Migration. Yet there is also a role for UNHCR in determining that none of the migrants would have a claim to refugee status—as happened for example last year when asylum-seekers in Morocco attempted to get “into Europe” by jumping the fences into the Spanish enclaves of Melilla and Ceuta.
- In southern Africa, we have funded a migration dialogue among immigration authorities and NGOs from the region’s countries in a bid to counter some of the xenophobia in South Africa and its neighbors.
- In the area of anti-trafficking, PRM has helped to implement some projects under the President’s Anti-Trafficking Initiative.
- Statelessness has once again become a concern in the world as some demagogues seek to deprive long-time inhabitants of a country of their de facto citizenship as has occurred in Côte d’Ivoire and the DR Congo. We have seen the right of return denied to some refugees from Eritrea and Mauritania and requirements for documentation of citizenship has become more common, creating problems for many people who find themselves without it.

The Department is increasing its attention to statelessness by devoting a distinct sub-section to this issue in future country Human Rights Reports. In Africa, we are engaged with UNHCR, the agency mandated to protect stateless persons, on resolving problems of potential statelessness among Mauritanian refugees in Senegal, and among refugees and migrants in Cote d’Ivoire. We also seek to prevent statelessness through supporting universal birth registration and documentation, particularly for refugees preparing to return home to Sudan, Burundi and the DRC.

Finally, I would like to highlight the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program, which is a vital component of protection for vulnerable African refugees in need of this durable solution. In recent years, the number of African refugees resettled in the United States has reached its highest levels since the passage of the Refugee Act. Since 1980, more than 200,000 African refugees have been resettled in the United States. In fiscal 2007, we anticipate admitting approximately 18,000 refugees from Africa, originating from some 23 countries, with the largest numbers from Somalia, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, and Eritrea. With no near-term end to the Darfur conflict in sight, we plan a mission to eastern Chad later in FY 2007, security permitting, to explore enhanced resettlement opportunities for Darfur refugees there.

I have touched today on only a few illustrative examples of how my Bureau is putting into practice the best humanitarian traditions of the American people, assisting some of the world’s most vulnerable populations—refugees and victims of conflict across Africa.

This concludes my remarks. I would be happy to try to answer any questions that you might have.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. We appreciate the work being done by the bureau. I think that we might begin with the conflict in Chad, as you have mentioned, and we tend to agree, that there seems to be no solution in the near future.

Now, the crisis has been going on for about 4 years, and even if the Dafurians did return, there is nothing to return to in these villages. And of course, we declared the crisis a genocide, but we think that more responsibility should go along with the declaration.

What is the State Department's plan for resettlement of Darfuri-an refugees? As the numbers increase and as it has been mentioned in previous testimony, the area they are going to in northern Chad the water tables are dropping more, denuding what is left of vegetation, and the trees are being eliminated. What kind of discussion has been going on as to alternatives to the current situation in Chad, for example?

As I said, as the numbers continue, the resources become scarcer. Is there any discussion with UNHCR about trying to move these camps to other locations, or what is the situation?

Mr. FITZGERALD. Thank you.

Yes, in eastern Chad the situation is certainly extremely difficult. There has been talk and we have been working with UNHCR on the possibility of relocating the camps; in fact, the Chadian Government has agreed with that idea.

Again, as I mentioned in my testimony, the difficulty with moving these camps is that many of these folks don't want to move away from the border because, frankly, they have relatives very close and some of them do go back into Sudan. I am not sure if you were up in Oure Cassoni in the northernmost part, but you are literally 100 meters from the Sudanese border.

Another difficulty, of course, is finding a suitable place farther away from the border where there is enough water. That is a key problem. We continue to work again with UNHCR and with the Chadian Government to find new places for these Darfur refugees and also for protection of the Chadian IDPs, a growing problem.

One of the things I mentioned in my testimony, too, was the renewed interest by the French Government in a protection force. I think that is absolutely critical. For us to begin any sort of resettlement program, it is absolutely essential for us to expand humanitarian space to be able to reach these folks on the ground.

Right now, we are in a phase 4 security situation—a U.N. phase 4 security situation—which means that UNHCR and most of the NGOs which follow its lead typically only travel in convoys, only for limited periods of time and never overnighing at the camps. And it is very difficult to remain on top of a refugee situation and to provide the protection that you need without more access and, again, without this humanitarian space.

I look forward to—there is an expanded contact group meeting on Monday which Secretary Rice will be attending—I look forward to the discussion. They will be taking up Darfur, but as well, the CAR and Chad. So I look forward to some good news out of that.

Thank you.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Congress has taken an interest in the fact that the majority of the world's refugees have lived in camps for a minimum of 10 years and longer for many more. Many of these refugees are unable to work, go to school, practice professions or engage in market activities and they are thereby dependent on foreign assistance for long periods of time.

In previous foreign operations appropriations bills, Congress has designated funds for developing effective responses to protracted refugee situations and to the development of programs that would support refugees living and working in local communities.

What kind of resources has the U.S. committed to this purpose?

Mr. FITZGERALD. We have committed a great deal of resources to this. Our view is that this income-generating project, efforts and things like that—take the case, for instance, in Liberia, in particular, where we began a big effort a few years ago to boost the skills of those who would be returning as repatriated refugees. And, in fact, many of those folks have come back to be psychosocial counselors. They were working with the Center for Victims of Torture, for instance, and have been the mainstay in the communities back in Liberia.

But also vocational efforts. I know, in northern Uganda, we have been focusing on folks going back to southern Sudan, which is again a very underdeveloped area—auto mechanics, vocational training—it is a key part not only of keeping their hopes alive while in the camps, but equips them to actually go back.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, thank you.

Just finally, in your testimony, you mention that the spirit of the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees, which promoted African hospitality, is slowly disappearing. As a matter of fact, even with the creation of the OAU back in the late 1940s, it was made clear at that meeting that acceptance of refugees should not be considered as a hostile act from the country sending them. It was just, "Bring us your refugees, we will take care of them; when the conflict is over, they can go back."

We are seeing that this is starting to disappear. We see Kenya closing its borders. The only country in Africa that seems to welcome refugees is South Africa. Mr. Mandela made it clear that South Africa's population was only 26 million at the end of apartheid; it is now 43 million because they have let their borders be open to countries.

He said, "We are doing badly, but others are doing worse." He did not say that they should not accept refugees. He even said that it may take two generations, rather than one, to achieve parity with Blacks in South Africa. So, of course, if every country had a Mr. Mandela, we would be a great world.

Getting back to the point, though, what actions have been taken by the U.S. Government to try to remedy the closing of borders, the less-than-hospitable behavior now in countries, and how can the U.S. be of more assistance to those nations as they deal with the increased numbers of refugees crossing the border?

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. Chairman, thank you for that question. It is an important one in this day, as we do see some of the previous hospitality disappearing.

I don't want to overstate that, too. We have a number of countries—Tanzania remains a host to more than 400,000 refugees. Uganda, frankly, for the southern Sudanese, President Museveni has stated specifically, "They can go home when they want to go home. They are certainly welcome to stay in Adjumani [Refugee Camp] if they want."

We continue to work on the bilateral basis, through UNHCR, typically, to work very closely with these host governments and remind them of their responsibilities.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Fitzgerald, for your testimony.

I would like to begin by commending PRM for their extraordinary leadership in the area of trafficking. I recently joined Assistant Secretary Ellen Sauerbrey at a conference in Louisiana at which several leaders from a number of foreign countries, mostly Latin countries, were meeting to talk about how to better coordinate efforts to mitigate and hopefully end human trafficking with a particular emphasis on refugees and IDPs and other people who are at risk. That is greatly appreciated, the integration of that mission and mandate by you and Secretary Sauerbrey.

Thank you for that leadership; it is making a difference. I am sure it is being extended to other countries in Africa and Asia and wherever else trafficking is causing people to be victimized.

You might want to comment on that.

Secondly, let me just say Oxfam pulled out of Gereida, the largest of four camps, this weekend because of security; and I hope that will be on the agenda Monday, as indicated by the Secretary and in every other contact. It seems to me that Bashir is extracting additional pain or imposing additional pain by attacking the humanitarian workers and the doctors. Obviously, they get hurt, but then all of the tens of thousands of people they minister to and provide sustenance to and medical help to lose and lose big.

So it seems to me this has to be a major effort by the AU, by the U.N., by the EU and by the United States, the whole international community. Again, another serious loss of humanitarian workers, Oxfam pulling out of Gereida just this past weekend, and you may want to comment on that.

Let me just ask you about material support, if I could. We all know that there is a great concern, and I know you were trying with DHS to initiate waivers for people, especially the Burmese and Colombians, but as was pointed out in Anne Richard's testimony, which she will present later on today, there are also people from Liberia and Sierra Leone, mostly women who have been victimized, who regrettably are also being caught up in that unintended consequence of the REAL ID Act. I frankly think that is a misread of the legislation.

It seems to me there needs to be an agreement that these victimized people were never meant to be precluded admission into the United States. I hope that you will take a look at those women mentioned in Anne Richard's statement in Liberia and Sierra Leone. I think she has highlighted something that we need to focus on, and perhaps you would want to respond to that.

And let me also ask you about Darfurian/Chadian camps. What we are doing to bring them out of those camps?

Mr. FITZGERALD. I am sorry.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. The resettlement of Darfurians out of the camps in Chad, what efforts are being taken to effectuate that?

Let me ask you as well, the discussion that was had earlier with Ms. Cheng-Hopkins about the IDPs, and you referred to the “cluster approach” as well. In his testimony, Joel Charny for Refugees International points out there is a problem with the issue of dealing with IDPs in PRM. He calls it a good thing, administrative obstacle, because you are charged with helping refugees.

Is there an obstacle that is insurmountable, or do you see that your mandate is sufficiently elastic to include IDPs? He points out that OFDA-funded nongovernment organizations have the best immediate capacity to respond to the needs of IDPs.

Is there a need to better coordinate so that, again, approximately one out of every four—4:1 ratio, I should say—of people suffering in Africa are IDPs; they are not refugees in the technical sense of that word. How do you respond to that?

Mr. FITZGERALD. Okay.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. And I have two more after that.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Okay. Thank you very much for your compliments about human trafficking.

Assistant Secretary Sauerbrey, when she came on, has made certain issues key issues for her; one is education, another obviously is human trafficking. Congresswoman Watson mentioned statelessness. Assistant Secretary Sauerbrey is very interested in finding ways to end that problem.

As far as human trafficking goes, I was at a site just outside of Dar es Salaam that was funded by the IOM, the International Organization of Migration, and I must say, in the African context, a lot of times local, indigenous, frequently faith-based organizations are the best ones to run these sorts of things. We saw that in Uganda in the PEPFAR program. And, in fact, the indigenous organizations are the best. In this case, it was a very small organization, but they had excellent relations with the police and had built up a network whereby typically young girls were coming from the country to study, ostensibly going to school with relatives or other people who paid for their schooling. But when they showed up, they were pressed into labor and many had been turned in by bus drivers and the like and given to the police, and the police knew exactly where to take them. A very, very successful story. I think that is being duplicated across the continent in many, many ways.

I would also point out that in the latest human trafficking report, Malawi, perhaps one of the poorest countries in the world, has shown that it is not how much you have in resources, but it is your commitment to stop trafficking that will enable you to succeed. And Malawi is the only African country that is a Tier 1 country in the African [trafficking in persons] report.

As far as Oxfam pulling out of Sudan, that is a big blow.

The United States continues to fund ICRC. I was recently in an ICRC meeting where they are not thrilled about having to take over the camp management of Gereida and other areas, but they

have done it because they realize the number of humanitarians on the ground is diminishing. Clearly, there has to be security. You are not going to be able to provide assistance without security. We need to get a force on the ground as quickly as possible.

I am encouraged that the Sudanese Government has agreed to the hybrid force. Again, I think, as you mentioned, all the world—the EU, the AU, international community as a whole—has to keep the pressure on Sudan to make sure that happens.

On Liberia—I have forgotten the question.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. The issue is—Anne Richard was the one who raised this; I will read briefly her statement, because it is very troubling.

It says, “In Liberia and Sierra Leone, rebel groups have broken into homes and taken residence there, during which time they raped the females of the household and also forced them to cook for them and do their laundry.”

Mr. FITZGERALD. The department feels very strongly about the difficulty of the material support provision. We are pushing for a legislative initiative. I know that the administration’s bill has been circulated to a number of Congressmen. I am hopeful it has been taken up, because clearly we need a remedy.

I will point out that technically a lot of our Darfurian refugees would fall under material support provisions as well.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Finally, you may want to touch on the “cluster” issue again. I know it is World Refugee Day, although we are focusing on Africa, one area I have been concerned about is Montagnards, and I know the Lautenberg interviews have ceased, and they have been told to go to our Embassy and seek an interview there.

I think, given the most recent crackdown by the Vietnamese Government—the Vietnamese, last April, signed a manifesto calling for freedom and democracy in human rights in a nonviolent way. One by one, those people have been picked up and put into prison and tried by kangaroo courts.

Father Ly, for example, had about the shortest trial I have ever heard of and was sentenced to 8 more years of prison. I met with him when I was in Vietnam recently; and he wants democracy, that is what he is pushing for. He has now been incarcerated, again. I think the situation in Vietnam is fraught with danger for the Montagnards and anyone else who cares about freedom and human rights.

Soon I will be dropping the Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2007. We have passed it twice in this House; both times it has been stopped on the Senate side, and I find it galling that the help that we provide in this legislation as a civil society to human rights organizations—the rule of just law and the like—was stopped by Senators McCain and Kerry who put holds on the bill twice.

I am going to try again. We may pass it here in the House only to have the same outcome. It seems to me that the Montagnards are extremely disadvantaged, and I hope that the Lautenberg provisions and the interviews would be afforded to these people so they can find freedom, because otherwise I think they will find themselves in prison or harassed and discriminated against severely.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Very quickly, on an earlier question you mentioned about USAID and PRM, I would like to say that our relations are extraordinarily good, on the working level in particular. Sometimes it could be seen as an artificial demarcation, but in fact we typically continue to fund ICRC and UNHCR in IDP situations. And, likewise USAID. Again we coordinate very closely, in particular in recent months on eastern Chad, on precisely what sort of support we are going to give to avoid duplication. We don't have enough money to be duplicating our efforts.

And regarding Montagnards, I will have to take that for the record because I don't have the background.

[The information referred to follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM MR. WILLIAM E. FITZGERALD TO QUESTION
ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

The State Department is also deeply concerned about the recent increase in the government's harassment, detention, and arrest of high-profile political dissidents in Vietnam. The State Department, at the highest levels, has been raising these cases with every level of the Government of Vietnam. It seems clear that these individuals are being targeted because of their political activities; many have been charged with "propagandizing against the state" under Article 88 of Vietnam's criminal code, rather than because of their religious affiliations. Regarding the Montagnards, although they continue to enter Cambodia from Vietnam, their numbers have not increased in recent months. We have no indication that those who do leave Vietnam are departing because of the recent crackdown on political dissidents. We can assure you that any and every Montagnard who fears persecution, for whatever reason, will continue to have full access to the U.S. resettlement program. Montagnards and any other persons from Vietnam who flee to Cambodia continue to have access to UNHCR for consideration of their refugee claims. Those individuals recognized as refugees by UNHCR in Cambodia and referred to the U.S. for resettlement consideration continue to have their claims adjudicated according to Lautenberg Amendment criteria. Our information right now is that while Montagnards have continued to enter Cambodia, this movement has not accelerated in recent months, and is not related to the recent crackdown on political dissidents.

To get a first hand look at the situation facing Montagnards in the Central Highlands of Vietnam, Assistant Secretary Sauerbrey traveled to Vietnam and Cambodia in early February. She wanted to learn why some continue to flee to Cambodia and understand what happens to those who return to Vietnam. In addition to speaking with officials in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, and Phnom Penh, Assistant Secretary Sauerbrey traveled to Gia Lai Province in the Central Highlands to speak with provincial and district level officials and visited a school constructed with U.S. funding through UNHCR. She also visited a village where she spoke privately with six Montagnard individuals who had fled to Cambodia and since returned home. She also met with many Montagnards at UNHCR facilities in Phnom Penh.

Assistant Secretary Sauerbrey observed that most of the people making the dangerous journey are doing so for economic reasons. She concluded that economic development and access to education are the keys to helping the Montagnards carve out a place for themselves in Vietnam's new economy. The Department is very aware, however, that some Vietnamese still do flee to Cambodia because of a well-founded fear of persecution. For this reason, the US Government has urged the Cambodian Government to ensure UNHCR has access to all asylum-seekers.

International monitors have spoken with a majority of the returnees to Vietnam since 2005, and found that they have not reported facing persecution upon return. Individual returnees are given detailed information about how to contact the U.S. mission in Vietnam should they face problems upon return. The Department's goal is to continue to offer resettlement to those Montagnards who have a valid refugee claim, whether in Cambodia or Vietnam, as well as, to ensure effective monitoring of returnees in the Central Highlands.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Ms. Watson, do you pass at this time?

Thank you very much.

I just have one, because time is out, yes/no answer, we know—does the State Department have a long-term plan for helping Darfurians? We know, to date, there are three refugees from Darfur in the United States. There are millions of displaced Darfurians. Is there a plan that you are going to implement—just yes or no—to your knowledge?

Mr. FITZGERALD. Yes.

Mr. PAYNE. Great.

We will now have the final panel. Unfortunately I am at a mark-up where they will be voting across the hall on the Education and Labor Committee, and I am going to have to leave temporarily for the vote there. But—I will leave this committee in the hands of our vice chair, Ambassador Watson, but I will introduce the final panel and then leave and hope to get back before they finish.

Our first witness on Panel II is Ms. Anne Richard, who serves as vice president of Government Relations and Advocacy for the International Rescue Committee in Washington, DC. She leads IRC's relations with the Executive Branch, Congress, and the NGO community. She also guides the IRC's global advocacy effort.

From 1999 to 2001, Ms. Richard was the chief advisor for budget and planning for Secretary of State Madeline Albright. She is a former Robert Bosch Fellow to Germany and former International Affairs Fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations and was part of the team that created the International Crisis Group. We look forward to her testimony today.

Our second witness is Joel R. Charny, vice president of Policy for Refugees International. In his tenure with Refugees International he has conducted humanitarian assessment missions to Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, the Chinese border with North Korea, Indonesia and Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the tsunami, and the Central African Republic.

He is the author of *Acts of Betrayal: The Challenge of Protecting North Korean Refugees in China*, and has also authored articles for the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Boston Globe* and *The Economist*.

Also joining us is Neal Porter, the director of international services at the Center for Victims of Torture. He was head of the office for a USAID contractor on a civil society building program in Croatia and Procurement Manager and Director of Monetization with the United Methodist Committee on Relief, UMCOR, in Bosnia.

Most recently, he worked as the development officer with the Children's HeartLink. Mr. Porter holds an MA in international affairs and a master's in public and private management from Yale University.

Our final witness is Daoud Hari, who is one of three Darfurian refugees settled in the United States of America. So you are very fortunate, since out of the millions of Darfurian refugees, we have found fit to bring three into the United States, but I hear we are going to do better.

We appreciate your courage. You are a firsthand survivor of genocide in Darfur; we empathize with you.

In 2003, the Janjaweed militia took the life of his brother, destroyed his village and caused him to flee to Chad. While in Chad, Daoud worked as a freelance interpreter; he was interrogated,

threatened and imprisoned by the Sudanese authorities for his work. He has resettled to the United States in March 2007 and currently resides in Asbury Park, New Jersey.

We will hear the witnesses in that order, and I yield the chair to Ambassador Watson, our vice chair.

Ms. WATSON [presiding]. I want to welcome the panelists and thank you for your endurance, and we look forward to hearing from you. I would like to reverse the order. If Mr. Smith would agree, I thought we ought to hear from Mr. Hari first. He sets the stage for what this hearing is all about, and then I would like to hear from the NGOs.

We'll go back and start with Ms. Richard.

Mr. Hari, can we hear from you first, please?

STATEMENT OF MR. DAUD I. HARI, RESETTLED DARFURIAN REFUGEE

Mr. HARI. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chairman, to give me this opportunity to talk on World Refugee Day. Thank you for inviting me to speak today on World Refugee Day. I want to thank the whole community and particularly Chairman Donald Payne and Chris Smith for your hard work to helping to protect Africa refugees.

My name is Daoud Hari. I am one of the million refugees from Darfur, one of the world's greatest humanitarian crises. However, I am one of the luckiest refugees from Darfur since the United States selected me for resettlement this year.

I am only the third Darfuri refugee in the United States. I arrived here last March, end of March 2007.

From 2004 to 2006, I work as an interpreter for the international media and NGOs in Chad and traveled to Darfur because I wanted to help get the word out about the genocide and refugee crisis of my people. I risked my life through this work and was arrested and tortured by the Government of Sudan with the Chicago Tribune reporter, Paul Salopek.

After 35 days in jail, we owe our freedom to many in the United States politicians who forced the Government of Sudan to liberate us. However, my problem got worse when I returned to Chad, which forced me to flee to Ghana to be processed by the United States as a refugee.

I know what life is like for refugees in the camps. Myself, I lived in 13 camps in Chad from 2003 to 2004. We refugees had major problems with access to clean water, health care, firewood, education. Security was our biggest problem in Chad.

The Janjaweed attacked the refugee camp and people were kidnapped, raped and killed. There was no hope for me and other refugees to have real freedom and safety.

These problems in the camp continued even until when I left Chad in 2006. I knew this from my travels with journalists and NGOs. The number of Darfuri refugees in eastern Chad and the Central African Republic was increasing daily, and many were threatened and killed by the Janjaweed and Chadian civilian IDPs.

I met with countless women who lost her husbands and children, who lost their parents in the genocide. I remember one refugee woman who fled Darfur to Chad carrying her 7-month baby boy for

a day and a half. She was crying constantly. Her baby boy was dead, killed by the Janjaweed. And this woman could not believe that her baby boy was dead and did not want to bury him. Her baby boy was the last hope she had on this planet.

I hope the world listens and understands the crisis of my people. The solution for refugees is not keeping them in the camps for years. Refugees need and deserve opportunities to integrate and participate in society and find real safety and improve their lives. Refugees also need resettlement to other countries as a solution. I thank America for protecting me, but I cry and pray for other refugees in need of protection.

Thank you for listening to me. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hari follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. DAOUDE I. HARI, RESETTLED DARFURIAN REFUGEE

Thank you for inviting me to speak today on World Refugee Day. I want to thank the whole Committee and in particular its Chairman Donald Payne and Representative Chris Smith for your hard work helping to protect African refugees.

My name is Daoud Ibrahim Hari. I am one of the millions of refugees from Darfur, one of the world's greatest humanitarian crises. However, I am one of the luckiest refugees from Darfur since the United States selected me for resettlement this year.

I am only the third Darfuri refugee in the United States. I arrived here on March 15, 2007.

From 2004 to 2006, I worked as an interpreter for the international media and NGOs in Chad and traveled to Darfur because I wanted to help get the word out about the genocide and refugee crisis of my people. I risked my life through this work and was arrested, imprisoned and tortured by the government of Sudan with *The Chicago Tribune* reporter Paul Salopek on assignment for *The National Geographic*. After 35 days in jail, I owe our freedom to the many United States politicians who forced the government of Sudan to liberate us. However, my problems got worse when I returned to Chad which forced me to flee to Ghana to be processed by the United States as a refugee.

I know what life is like for refugees in the camps. I myself lived in 13 camps in Chad from 2003 to 2004. We refugees had major problems with access to clean water, health care, firewood and education. Security was our biggest problem. The Janjaweed attacked the refugee camps and people were kidnapped, raped and killed. There was no hope for me and other refugees to have real freedom and safety.

These problems in the camps continued even until when I left Chad in 2006. I know this from my travels with the journalists and NGOs. The numbers of Darfuri refugees in Eastern Chad and the Central African Republic was increasing daily and many were threatened and killed by the Janjaweed and Chadian civilian IDPs. I met with countless women who lost their husbands and children who lost their parents in the genocide. I remember one refugee woman who fled Darfur to Chad carrying her seven month baby boy for a day and a half. She was crying constantly. Her baby boy was dead, killed by the Janjaweed. This woman could not believe that her baby boy was dead and did not want to bury him. Her baby boy was the last hope she had on this planet.

I hope the world listens and understands the crisis of my people. The solution for refugees is not keeping them in camps for years. Refugees need and deserve opportunities to integrate and participate in society and find real safety and improve their lives. Refugees also need resettlement to other countries as a solution. I thank America for protecting me but I cry and pray for other refugees in need of protection.

Thank you for listening to me. Please continue to help refugees. I look forward to your questions.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you, Mr. Hari, for your remarks.

What are some of the misconceptions we, in the the United States, might have? I hear you say that you cry for your relatives and other people who are still there. Are we dealing with misconceptions about how things are going?

Mr. HARI. I don't know in United States what have to do, but they wouldn't have to do a lot for those villages to keeping their life safe, to feeling safety and protected and security.

In eastern Chad last 2006, June, July, I was with NBC, BBC, I saw this one camp refugees have—2,000 refugees camp, and beside them they have 27,000 IDPs checking IDPs. Those are coming from the same areas as the Janjaweed, and the NGO there is not able to get international resources for those number of people. There is not enough water, not enough NGO and there is no health care, so the children will die every day. So the United States can do more to give at least those people health care and the shelters and the protection from the Janjaweed every day.

Ms. WATSON. Let's go now to Ms. Richard.

STATEMENT OF MS. ANNE C. RICHARD, VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & ADVOCACY, INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

Ms. RICHARD. Thank you all very much. I am thrilled to be here today and that you have chosen to put a spotlight on African refugees today on World Refugee Day. I bring greetings from our President, George Rupp, and Senior Vice President, George Biddle, who are traveling in Sudan this week. They are meeting with our staff in Khartoum, and also going to Darfur. It is a very challenging environment; it is very important work. They will meet with our staff and talk to them about the challenges that they are confronting.

They do such important work. So, that is where my bosses are today, and I am very happy to represent the IRC here today.

What I wanted to talk about briefly—because IRC works in 25 countries overseas, in 22 cities across the United States, including in New Jersey and California—I wanted to put a little spotlight on what has happened in Congo, and a little bit about northern Uganda. Also, the very able staff of the subcommittee asked me to talk a little bit about the Somali Bantu and the Lost Boys of Sudan.

So, very quickly, on the Congo mortality survey that the IRC had done, I wanted to alert you to the fact that we are doing a fifth one. This survey, which was last done in 2004, revealed that more than 4 million people have died as a result of the conflict in Congo, and that 98 percent of the deaths were due to easily preventable and curable diseases. They were sort of a byproduct of the violence.

The survey found that as many as 1,200 people were dying a day in excess of normal mortality and that added up to more than 30,000 a month. Many, many of the victims were children. It is very heart-rending to read these rather technical medical articles about this, because what you realize is that children are dying of things that children in the United States are easily cured of.

So one of the things we need to know is: Since the election, since some stability has been brought to Congo, has the health situation improved? And we will be looking to review the results of the survey that will be unveiled this fall. We would love to come and talk to you at that time about what the survey results show.

We are hoping for some improvement in mortality rates. But at the same time I would say that if there is improvement, I hope that will not translate into neglect of the Congo. Because we feel that this is a very important situation. It is a major crisis that has

been largely unfolding out of sight of the American public's attention.

Similarly, we are hopeful that peace talks in Juba, south Sudan, between the Government of Uganda and the rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army will come to fruition and that there will be a chance for the many displaced people in northern Uganda to resume normal lives.

For two decades now there has been conflict in northern Uganda. You all, I know, are very cognizant of this fact, but few Americans really follow this. What we have found is that it is not a priority of the U.S. Government right now. We would love to see more support for the peace talks from the U.S. Government, and that is something that I hope you can join with us to engage more with the State Department, to put more of a focus on this potential for peace.

I am very happy to report on the story of the Somali Bantu refugees. These were people living in Somalia on the margins of society that the U.S. Government agreed to resettle, starting in 2003. In 2002 and afterwards, the IRC worked with this population in Kenya, in a camp in Kenya; and these refugee populations really required a great deal of health care and attention in the camps, but also, in order to be resettled in the United States, they needed to learn a great deal about American language, culture and practices before they could come to the U.S.

At one point, IRC was training teachers to help with this acclimation, and nearly 5,000 Bantus, nearly the entire adult population of the camp, were enrolled to learn the English language, and the type of information they would need to fill out forms to come to the United States.

They came to the United States in 2003; the big peak was in 2004 and 2005. Once they got here, our resettlement colleagues helped, and along with volunteers, took the families on shopping excursions, gave lessons on food preparation, storage and cleanup. Showed the families how to lock doors, turn on sinks, stoves and lights, use a washing machine. They had an incredible learning curve to learn how to live in the United States. But our colleagues believe that the resettlement of this population has been successful; it was due largely to the resilience of the Somali Bantu people and also to the generosity of everyday Americans.

More recently in the news have been the Lost Boys of Sudan. That is a story getting attention through film, through literature, I was happy to read recent articles about how some of the Lost Boys have graduated from college this past spring—just in the last month.

So the promise of resettlement that the U.S. offers is still very much alive. We hope we can get your help to bring more refugees—for whom there is no other option—to the U.S. to be resettled.

Finally, at the end of my formal statement that, with your permission, I will submit for the record, I talk a little bit about how I have the sense that Africa—what is happening in Africa, and the needs of Africans—is getting more attention in the United States. While it has always been an uphill battle to get the media to pay attention, it seems there are more churches, synagogues, commu-

nity groups and especially college students who are seized right now with an interest in Darfur, yes, but also other parts of Africa.

I would be very curious to hear whether our attempts to generate this is having any impact here on Capitol Hill. This subcommittee cares about Africa and demonstrates that throughout the year, not just on World Refugee Day. We are hoping that we can also reach some of your colleagues who are less informed about what is happening there than you all are. That is something that we really push at the IRC now, trying to reach out to the public and getting them to learn more and care more.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Richard follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MS. ANNE C. RICHARD, VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS & ADVOCACY, INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

THE VIEWS OF AN OPERATIONAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Thank you for holding this hearing, putting a spotlight on refugees in Africa and for the invitation to appear today. The International Rescue Committee will celebrate our 75th anniversary next year. We got our start rescuing people fleeing Nazism in Germany. Today, we resettle refugees in 22 American cities and also work overseas in about 25 countries. In Africa, we work in 14 countries¹; we have 9,829 staff members—most of whom are nationals of African countries—and millions of beneficiaries.

As US legislators, you are in a powerful position for the world's most distressed people. When the United States acts, things happen. For this reason, I appreciate your decision to hold a hearing today, on World Refugee Day, on this important topic.

Refugees and other displaced peoples

Right now there are about 35 million displaced people in the world. This is roughly the population of a medium-sized country. One in every 170 persons in the world has been uprooted by war. This is the largest category of vulnerable people in the world. About one third of them are officially recognized refugees because they have crossed an international border. The other two thirds are so-called internally displaced persons, or IDPs, because they are still within their own country.

Of the world's 12 million or so refugees, about 3.2 million—a little over 25%—are in Africa. In addition, Africa has about half of the world's 25 million IDPs.² Sudan still has the highest number of IDPs in the world—5 million; northern Uganda has 1.7 million; the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has 1.1 million. In addition to these situations, internal displacement took place in 2006 in Chad, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, and Somalia.

So we are talking about some 15 million or more Africans who have fled violence, conflict, or persecution in their home cities or villages. Many are in need of help. National governments have the primary responsibility for taking care of displaced people within their own borders. But this does not always happen, and the displaced depend on the international community to provide help, especially to those who live in extreme poverty or fear or have few resources.

In some camps in Africa, we are witnessing the second and third generation of residents. Children have spent their entire childhood in the camp. They are fed and sheltered but this is really no way to live one's life—parents don't have jobs, children don't have futures and whole families are dependent on help from others.

This is where the IRC steps in to provide help and protection. Our new motto, "From Harm to Home," really captures the goal of many of our activities. We want to see the displaced return to someplace that they can call home, whether going home means the repatriation of refugees to their homeland after a peace agreement or a fresh start in a safe, stable place in a neighboring country or in a completely new place, such as an American city.

¹Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. In 2006, we left Eritrea and we transitioned out of Congo (Brazzaville). We are assessing whether to go back into Somalia.

²Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Geneva.

Sudan

The IRC has worked in Sudan or with Sudanese people since 1980. The IRC works with Sudanese refugees in Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Chad. We also help the displaced throughout Sudan—IRC has an office in Khartoum and we divide our operations into three regions: West Sudan (Darfur), North and East Sudan, and South Sudan. The IRC's long-term goal is to improve the Sudanese people's ability to exercise their fundamental rights, access basic services and manage their own livelihoods.

Because we are an operational NGO, I will leave to others to analyze and discuss the political and diplomatic situation in the country. My remarks will focus on the humanitarian response, the world's largest, aiding 5 million people inside Sudan. Another half-million Sudanese are in surrounding countries. We manage camps for the displaced and provide water, sanitation, health care, and education programs.

Darfur

The IRC has worked in Darfur since 2004. IRC operates out of five field sites in Darfur: Nyala and Kass in South Darfur; El Fasher and Kutum in North Darfur; and Zalingei in West Darfur. We provide services to about 790,000 people. The IRC also supports six health clinics in the Hashaba rural area of North Darfur, which provide services to over 85,000 conflict-affected persons there. (Heavy fighting has rendered the rural clinics largely inaccessible since June 2006, yet IRC's community health workers continue to treat patients there.)

IRC runs programs in the areas of: Primary and Reproductive Health, Environmental Health (water and sanitation), Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence, Child and Youth Protection and Development, Camp Management and Community Services, and Protection and the Rule of Law.

We are one of the few implementing agencies on the ground with a focus on assistance specifically for survivors of violence against women and girls. Our staff uses a community-based approach to build and enhance local knowledge, capacity and skills to prevent violence from happening in the first place and to provide essential support to survivors. Women and girls use IRC's psychosocial support, skills building, and referral services approximately 16,000 times a month at ten camp-based Women's Community Centers. This program indirectly benefits over 470,000 people in North, South, and West Darfur whose female relatives receive emotional and physical support.

We also operate six Justice and Confidence Centers where trained paralegal volunteers provide legal advice and reconciliation services as well as raise awareness amongst the communities of the rights and responsibilities stemming from international and national human rights standards. To date, IRC has trained over 10,000 people on human rights and national and international law.

Chad

IRC has been in neighboring Chad since early 2004. In Chad, IRC provides life-saving assistance at the Oure Cassoni refugee camp through provision of water, health, and camp community services, including education and child protection. This camp is in a remote area of Chad, near a village called Bahai and not far from the border with Sudan. It is a very challenging environment. Nearly 90% of the camp's 26,000 residents are either women or children under age 18. Although the camp borders a lake, water in the lake must be chemically treated before drinking and can dry up during the dry season. IRC designed and implemented a water treatment plant. IRC has supported the construction of hundreds of public latrines and supported families to build their own, private latrines.

There are also upwards of 150,000 Chadians who have been displaced by internal conflict. There is an under-reaction of humanitarian donors to this crisis. We have seen that refugees from Darfur who cross into Chad get three times as much aid as displaced Chadians. More needs to be done.

In a perverse situation, over 45,000 Chadians have fled Chad to seek sanctuary in Darfur! Our staff has referred to the crisis of displacement in Chad as the worst protection crisis in the world.

Recent Developments in Darfur

In Darfur, people continue to flee their homes in large numbers. Since the signing one year ago of the largely ineffective Darfur Peace Agreement, there have been around 450,000 more civilians displaced—many for the second or third time. 140,000 have fled since the start of 2007³. April and May have seen renewed, intensified aerial bombing campaigns and attacks on civilians.

³UN figures

These new displacements have severely impacted an already strained humanitarian response. Many of the camps around Nyala and El Fasher towns are now operating at or above capacity, yet people continue to arrive. In North Darfur in particular, there is increasing pressure on scarce and depleted natural resources and water shortages have been reported in several camps.

Since the start of 2007, aid agencies' ability to access people in need has fallen to its lowest level in three years. Targeted attacks on aid workers and operations are increasing and now occurring on a daily basis. During April⁴ alone, there were at least 25 incidents of hijackings, attempted hijackings or looting of humanitarian vehicles, in addition to armed robberies of INGO compounds and violent assaults on staff. Three aid workers were shot and wounded, and more than 20 temporarily abducted—one for a period of six days. Many more face regular harassment and intimidation. This trend has continued.

The violence has spread right throughout all three Darfur states. Even the camps where more than 2 million people have sought refuge are increasingly at risk. Armed men routinely enter the camps, to intimidate and harass civilians and to steal humanitarian vehicles and supplies. Agencies frequently have to withdraw from such camps for days or weeks at a time. The prevalence of vehicle hijacking means agencies are now reliant largely on helicopters, with many roads too dangerous to use, leaving whole swathes of rural Darfur—where the needs are often greatest of all—effectively out of bounds to aid agencies.

International aid agencies provide an estimated 80% of all current assistance in Darfur, yet are frequently forced to suspend activities and relocate staff as a result of this violence. Morale among aid workers is low. The quality of assistance has been severely undermined. We also have to contend with bureaucratic requirements (such as customs regulations and visa requirements) that sometimes act as an impediment to aid delivery. The joint communiqué signed between the UN and Government of Sudan on March 28, 2007 has helped somewhat, but greater coordination is needed between the Government agencies so that they are all implementing the communiqué consistently. Sudan remains a very challenging place in which to operate.

The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) is responsible for protecting civilians, but is itself increasingly under attack. April was the bloodiest month of the conflict so far for the AU, with seven peacekeepers shot dead. While IRC and other aid agencies remain fully committed to assisting the people of Darfur, should the violence and lack of access continue the consequences are likely to be tragic.

South and East Sudan

The signing of two peace agreements in the South and East of Sudan⁵ over the past two years represents great diplomatic achievements and offers a return to stability and peace in these very poor and troubled areas.

Our hope is that, as peace is restored in southern Sudan, displaced people will be able to return to revitalized communities. What we have seen so far, however, is of concern. While considerable funds were pledged by international donors to support development in the south, many of these pledges have yet to materialize. Plans for millions of refugees to return home to the South are in doubt because the places to which they would return lack basic health and education facilities and little opportunity for returning refugees to earn a living. Peace in the south is also fragile; there are tribal tensions, land and water disputes, cattle looting, a flourishing arms trade, corruption, crime and the presence of irregular armed groups—a volatile environment. Tensions also arise as returning refugees place strains on relatively weak communities.

In the East, local groups have been promised greater political representation and millions of dollars in development aid. In both the South and the East, the engagement of and follow through from the international community is needed if peace is to become a reality.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The 2003 peace agreement in the Congo ended years of civil war. Yet, sporadic violence continues to force people to flee. Recent months have seen a landmark election as well as outbreaks of hostility in the capital Kinshasa. The U.N. peacekeeping mission in Congo, known as MONUC, is charged with keeping the peace but has

⁴ Figures cited are from United Nations and INGO reports

⁵ The Comprehensive Peace Agreement, or CPA, between North and South was signed on January 9, 2005; the East Sudan Peace Agreement was signed in October 2006 between the Government of Sudan and the East Sudan Front.

never had sufficient means or political backing to fulfill its mandate. Resources available to MONUC remain inadequate for the scope of Congo's needs.

IRC has worked in Congo since 1996 and runs programs in six provinces (North Kivu, South Kivu, Orientale, Kasai Occidental, Katanga). IRC operates 190 health facilities in 11 conflict-affected zones with 1 million inhabitants, and is especially focused on improving the health of women and children. IRC also runs a civil society development program to help communities. The IRC is the lead agency for the demobilization of child soldiers in Orientale Province. In South Kivu, IRC provides immediate assistance in response to outbreaks of violence and provides health care, shelter, and water and sanitation facilities to the displaced.

IRC has recently begun implementing a major Community Driven Reconstruction program through funding from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development. IRC is the lead agency in a consortium of three international NGO's in this \$49.3 million, three-year program.

In addition to the services we provide to refugees and the displaced in the Congo, the IRC has played a key role in documenting the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis through a series of four mortality surveys. The survey of 2004 is among the largest ever conducted in a conflict zone and was published in the British medical journal *The Lancet*. It has since been widely cited by key humanitarian and advocacy agencies, the media and in academic literature. The survey found that more than 3.9 million people died as a result of the conflict between August 1998 and April 2004, with 98 percent of deaths being due to easily preventable and curable diseases. The survey found that as many as 1200 people were dying a day (in excess of normal mortality), or more than 30,000 a month. Many of the victims were children.

It's tragically simple: war led to the collapse of much of Congo's health system and economy, which resulted in disease and food shortages. Violence and insecurity has kept people away from clinics, and medical staff away from those in need. It's a recipe for disaster.

Right now in Congo a team of my colleagues are carrying out the fifth nationwide mortality survey, which will cover the period from January 2006 to April 2007. Five teams consisting of 16 primary researchers and 105 Congolese health workers worked to survey the population in 31 randomly selected health zones across all of D.R. Congo's eleven provinces. A total of 12,400 households were interviewed about war-related mortality.

The results of this latest survey, which are expected some time this fall, are needed to let us know whether or not the situation in Congo is improving, and particularly how the conflict-ridden east of the country is faring.

Worsening mortality data may suggest that not enough is being done to protect and aid the Congolese. On the other hand, an improving situation may inadvertently suggest that the crisis in Congo is over. IRC staff believes that it will be several years before anyone can make that claim. Again: the international community must remain engaged. Too often donors celebrate the conclusion of successful elections with a cut in support and reduction in peacekeepers, and then wind down of relief and development activities. Please don't let this happen.

Northern Uganda

For the past 20 years, the people of northern Uganda have been caught up in the middle of a conflict between the Government of Uganda and the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Up to 2 million people—eighty percent of the population of the north—have been displaced and forced to live in camps. Currently some 1.2 million people are displaced.

The situation in northern Uganda is well known to members of this subcommittee but not well known to many Americans. The LRA has used horrific tactics that include forced abduction and conscription, mutilation, torture, rape and sexual assault. Abduction and forced conscription of children has ruined lives and torn families apart. Violations of basic human rights have proliferated both inside and outside of displaced persons camps. It has been a little-noticed humanitarian catastrophe.

The IRC runs programs in the districts of Lira, Pader and Kitgum. In Kitgum district, IRC provides basic health services to more than 152,000 displaced people in ten "core" camps and their environs. In addition, IRC supports HIV/AIDS testing and prevention activities, water and sanitation projects, children and youth protection programs, skills training and other programs to help earn an income—benefiting about 200,000 people. All of these programs are intended to help the displaced to become self-reliant. In Pader and Lira, the IRC emphasizes education programs for children, especially girls, and tries to get children back to school and away from exploitative child labor.

Last year, the LRA and the Government of Uganda signed a cessation of hostilities agreement, but a final peace settlement has yet to be negotiated. Peace talks between the Ugandan government and the LRA resumed in April, offering renewed hope to the people of Northern Uganda. These talks represent an unprecedented opportunity to end this long-running war. Under the auspices of south Sudan's leadership, and with the involvement of the U.N Secretary-General's Special Envoy Joachim Chissano, both sides have returned to the conference table. The stakes are high: if this opportunity for peaceful settlement of the conflict fails, the conflict may reignite. US support for the peace talks has been weak; we ask this subcommittee to do everything it can to pressure the White House, staff of the National Security Council, and State Department to take a greater interest in the peace talks.

Resettlement in the United States & "Material Support"

As of the end of May 2007, the United States had resettled 8,276 African refugees during the 2007 fiscal year. The IRC was responsible for 970 of these refugees.

In recent years, perhaps the most talked about groups of refugees coming to the United States have been the Lost Boys of Sudan and the Somali Bantu.

The Bantu were brought to Somalia as slaves in the 1800's from Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania. After slavery was abolished in Somalia, the Bantus still lived on the margins of society. When Somalia descended into anarchy in 1991 and many Bantus were killed, raped or beaten, they fled to refugee camps in Kenya where the same kind of abuse and persecution continued.

After Mozambique and Tanzania refused to resettle them and with no chance of safe repatriation to Somalia, the US government agreed to resettle 12,000 to 13,000 Somali Bantus in the United States on humanitarian grounds, starting in 2003.

By September 2002, more than 12,000 Bantu refugees had been transferred from the Dadaab Refugee Camp to the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, where the IRC manages the health care system and provides adult education services. Kakuma was a safer location for US authorities to conduct an application and screening process.

The IRC quickly constructed new sanitation and bathing facilities, and our clinics and feeding centers soon filled up with the new arrivals, many suffering from malaria and malnutrition. We also created a special "survival" literacy course to help introduce the Bantu refugees to the language, culture and practices of a place vastly different to the one they would be leaving.

The IRC trained some 85 teachers from the Bantu community and within two months, nearly 5,000 Bantus, almost the entire adult population at the camp, were enrolled. For most of the Bantu, illiterate and unexposed to modern conveniences, the classes were both bewildering and exciting. They learned the English alphabet and how to write the kind of family information that would be required on many US forms. They learned basic salutations, how to ask for directions, and how to report an emergency.

And then one day, after a year of seemingly endless interviews, checkups and vaccinations, they started coming to the United States.

Soon after their arrival, resettlement caseworkers and volunteers took the families on shopping excursions and gave lessons on food preparation, storage and clean-up. They showed the family how to lock doors, turn on sinks, stoves and lights, and use a washing machine and vacuum cleaner. They explained the concept of banks and paying bills. They registered the children in local schools, arranged for tutoring and enrolled the family in English classes.

In as little as two months, and sometime less, many of the Somali Bantu had secured entry level jobs and began working their way up the economic ladder and achieving independence.

Since 2003, IRC has resettled 1,766 Somali Bantu. Most arrived in 2004 and 2005. Only a few new cases have been added to this group since that time, however some continue to arrive. For example IRC had a new Somali Bantu case allocated to us only a couple weeks ago that we resettled in Baltimore. The generosity of everyday Americans has contributed to the successful resettlement of many resilient Somali Bantu families.

Perhaps even better known are the Lost Boys of Sudan, whose courage, determination and sheer physical endurance captured the imagination of the public. As children, they had walked up to 600 miles to Ethiopia to flee civil war in their homeland in the late 1980s. When warfare erupted there, they returned to Sudan and then headed hundreds of miles north to the safety of Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya.

In 1999, the State Department made the remarkable decision to accept nearly 4,000 of these young men for resettlement across the US. You may have been reminded of them through recent films like "God Grew Tired of Us" or works of lit-

erature such as Dave Eggers's novel "What is the What" and non-fiction accounts by several other authors.

The Lost Boys of Sudan—and they're men, really—are working hard to get ahead. They put a particularly high premium on education, and many of them seek degrees while working full time in demanding jobs. This past spring, IRC offices across the United States joined in the celebration as several of these young men graduated from college.

The people being identified for resettlement now are often not the people whose stories are in the news. You may read a lot about Iraq and Darfur, but we are not resettling refugees from there at the moment. IRC is resettling Somalis who have been living in refugee camps for upwards of ten years. We are also resettling people who fled Burundi as a result of conflict in 1972! This lack of media coverage presents a challenge: the caring public is seized by what is happening over there, but hears very little in terms of people arriving here in the United States. This makes it harder to build grassroots support for refugee resettlement programs.

IRC's resettlement offices are funded from a mix of sources: the federal government, including the State Department and Department of Health and Human Services, state governments, local sources of funding, and grants and private contributions. Our resettlement offices really run on modest annual budgets, yet they regularly succeed in successfully resettling thousands of refugee families each year, and help them integrate in their communities and become contributing members of their new neighborhoods.

An even greater challenge is coping with the impact of recent anti-terrorism legislation. Laws intended to protect the United States from terrorists are preventing refugees from being resettled here. The USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 and the REAL ID Act of 2005 expanded the definition of terrorist activity and the categories of terrorist organizations. These provisions were meant to protect America from genuine terrorist threats. But in recent months, the Department of Homeland Security has interpreted these laws to keep out not only terrorists but also the victims of terrorism and oppression.

Refugees and asylum seekers who have been persecuted for their religious or political beliefs and seek sanctuary in the United States are being turned away if they ever provided any assistance whatsoever to a terrorist or terrorist organization—even if that assistance was provided under duress or given in the form of a ransom to kidnapers. While the US certainly should keep all terrorists and their supporters out of the country, refugees are not terrorists. They are victims of terror. Refugees share our values and have suffered for it. They deserve our help and sanctuary. Refugees should be protected rather than treated as a threat.

You may have heard of this problem with regard to Colombians who have paid ransom to hostage takers, or Burmese refugees who had contact with rebels. This provision has also affected African women who have been victims of sexual violence. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, rebel groups have broken into homes and taken residence there, during which time they raped the females of the household and also forced them to cook for them and do their laundry. The provision of such "assistance" has been deemed material support to terrorists, and these refugee cases have been put on hold by DHS.

The White House has taken a series of steps to address this problem through waivers, but a permanent solution is needed. Congress can provide this permanent fix in legislation. Without it, the US refugee admissions program will never recover from the severe cuts in numbers of refugees admitted that took place after September 11, 2001. Each unused slot represents a man, woman, or child who has suffered religious, political, or other persecution and will be denied the opportunity for a new life and new hope in the United States.

Violence against Women and Girls

During most conflicts around the world, women and girls are targeted for sexual violence. Women and girls who live in conflict-affected regions are especially vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation.

What is not well understood is that violence against women plays a role in every major aspect of a woman's life—affecting her physical and mental health, exposing her to HIV/AIDS, threatening her ability to work, travel and take care of herself and her family, and potentially damaging her relationships with the society around her. The health consequences, in particular, are severe and far-reaching and include maternal and infant mortality.

In an effort to raise public awareness about this epidemic of violence and to spur policy-makers to action, the IRC is collecting signatures on a petition in the United States and a complementary petition in Europe. The petition calls for greater government support for programs to prevent and respond to violence against women

and girls. This includes initiatives that allow survivors of sexual violence to recover their dignity, health, livelihood, and families, greater access for women and girls to education and training so they can support themselves, sustain a livelihood, and contribute to their communities, and community programs that also target men and boys so that they can begin to break the cycle of sexual violence.

We expect to present a petition with thousands of signatures to Congressional leaders in the autumn. We are cheered by the many people, among the public and here on Capitol Hill, who have already signed and support this initiative.

Support for Post-Conflict Development

Another challenge we face is ensuring that resources are available after a conflict ends. This is the concern I've already mentioned related to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South and East Sudan. Too often, there is a significant funding gap that develops when traditional emergency donors leave a former crisis area (such as USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, or the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration) and more development-focused agencies and donors move in to set up development programs (such as USAID's regional development bureaus). In fragile states, especially those emerging from decades of conflict, the emergency may be over but that doesn't mean that national governments have the capacity to provide direct services to citizens. Liberia is a case in point. Liberia is no longer within the top 20 failed states⁶ and it is rated as one of the most improved states in the current ranking. But life is still extremely difficult for the average Liberian. The Liberian Government has made it clear that it is unable to cover the basic costs of running health care and educational services. The government must continue to rely on help from NGOs (NGOs and other groups run approximately 75% of the health system in Liberia).

View from Washington D.C.

In my job here in Washington, D.C., I try to find ways to get policy makers and citizens to learn more and care about Africa, especially Africa's neglected or forgotten crises. Despite the glut of depressing news that daily fill our newspapers and computer screens about far-flung crises, I can report some modest reasons for hope. First, Americans in large numbers want to help refugees and displaced people, and this issue enjoys bipartisan support. We have real champions here in Congress, on both sides of the aisle. Congressional leaders sponsor legislation, increase funding and travel to international hot-spots to see first-hand the problems that we and other NGOs are trying to address, often supported by US aid dollars. There are also some champions in the media. In the past two years, IRC has presented our "excellence in media" award to Terry George, the director of the film "Hotel Rwanda," and Nicholas Kristof of the NY Times for his coverage of humanitarian crises. Celebrities are also helping to raise awareness about some of these crises. Thanks in part to these efforts, there is a growing interest among Americans—churches, communities, citizens' groups—and especially American youth in doing more to help. Although we are grateful for the attention brought by celebrities, this is also a problem: movie stars should not be filling the void in the foreign policy debate and generating policy solutions; this is the responsibility of policy-makers in this very city, in this very room.

Not too long ago, colleagues in Kinshasa asked us to try to organize a grass-roots organization to care about the Congo. I admit to greeting this idea with skepticism: while we have supporters across the United States, the IRC is not a grass-roots advocacy organization. Nonetheless, several of my colleagues⁷ decided to pull together as many concerned NGOs, church and student groups, ex-Peace Corps Volunteers, academics and expatriate Congolese as they could find. The result is Congo Global Action, a fast-growing coalition that will advocate for Congo and urge increased local and international response, beginning with governments. Keep an eye out for them—they will be visiting your offices in the near future! One more attempt to draw the attention of Americans to crises in Africa.

And this—drawing attention to Africa—is also the point of your hearing today. Thank you for holding this hearing, for the work you do throughout the year, and for the opportunity to appear today. I speak for the entire board and staff of the International Rescue Committee in expressing our deep gratitude.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you.

Mr. Charny.

⁶ *Foreign Policy* magazine's Failed States Index, 2007.

⁷ Notably Herve de Baillenx, Gerald Martone, and Shannon Meehan, aided by intern Cynthia Berning.

**STATEMENT OF MR. JOEL R. CHARNY, VICE PRESIDENT FOR
POLICY, REFUGEES INTERNATIONAL**

Mr. CHARNY. Thank you, Ambassador Watson. I would like to thank the chairman, Congressman Payne, and the ranking member, Congressman Smith, for holding this hearing today on African refugees on the occasion of World Refugee Day.

I think your interest and engagement is obvious from the questions that you posed, and we really appreciate the involvement and commitment that you have shown to these issues.

There are approximately 3 million refugees and 11 million internally displaced people on the African continent, which represents about 40 percent of the total number of people displaced by conflict in the world. And I want to just briefly cover four issues and concerns. Obviously, I will be summarizing my testimony and request that the full testimony be placed on the record of this hearing.

The first issue, which really, interestingly, hasn't come up yet, is funding. Ambassador Watson, when you raised the issue of education, for example, we have to face the reality that UNHCR and the NGOs are often in a kind of triage situation, and they do have to say to themselves, look, it's got to be about food, it's got to be about medical care and shelter first and foremost. In that environment of lack of funding, that is when education indeed becomes a luxury. So I think part of the challenge on the education issue, quite frankly, is just to get more money to respond to displacement situations.

In reviewing the President's budget for 2008, we are concerned about the cuts proposed from current levels, and I think we are worried the U.S. may not be able to meet its traditional obligation or commitment to UNHCR in supporting at least 25 percent of its budget.

The State Department may also be forced to reduce funding to humanitarian programs of other international organizations, like the ICRC. So for fiscal year 2008 the InterAction coalition of non-governmental organizations has suggested that core humanitarian programs, meaning the migration and refugee accounts, international foreign disaster assistance account and the emergency refugee migration account receive an increase of over \$800 million to bring assistance to minimum standards.

It is essential that Congress work to increase overseas assistance overall so that the basic needs of refugees for food, water, medicine and shelter can be better met.

The second issue I want to raise is the need to invest in returns. We already alluded to the fact several times in this hearing that there are hopeful developments in Africa—in southern Sudan, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in Burundi and Liberia. People are returning. In northern Uganda they are getting close, they are almost willing to believe there is peace and are starting to leave the camps, as Ms. Cheng-Hopkins referred to.

But Refugees International has found in its field assessments that there is a serious lack of support for families who are taking the risk of returning home to rebuild. International aid agencies and the donors that support them are often able and willing to meet the emergency needs of the displaced in camps, and even more in more secure locations, but when it comes time to invest in

recovery, neither the agencies nor the funding is present at anywhere near the level required.

The inability to invest in the recovery process jeopardizes the peace and stability of countries that are only now just emerging from conflict. And southern Sudan is just a classic example of this phenomenon. We just don't have enough money to meet the challenge of investment in recovery in southern Sudan right now. And I think for all of us who devoted so much time to working on peace in the south, it is just essential that collectively—not just the United States, but internationally—we find the money to make serious investments in southern Sudan.

I might add, that is a responsibility for the Sudanese Government as well. They have oil money; that oil money should also go to building roads and building basic infrastructure in the south to support people as they return.

The third issue I want to raise is the whole internal displacement issue. Congressman Smith, thank you for raising that with both UNHCR and U.S. Government representatives. You have basically quoted my testimony so I won't repeat it.

I want to here raise an anecdote. In eastern Chad internally displaced people are gathering on the edge of refugee camps because that is the old—they are basically hoping for aid to trickle out of the camps to them; that is how desperate they are.

It is frustrating for me. This has been a major priority for Refugees International, getting a better response for internal displacement. I just don't see why in 2007 somehow internally displaced people in Chad are still invisible.

In the Central African Republic, where I served as a Peace Corps volunteer 30 years ago, we interviewed internally displaced people in northern CAR who were getting assistance from relatives and, in some cases, compatriots in the refugee camps in Chad. They are sending envoys to the refugee camps to get assistance. So clearly there are still gaps. Some of it is resources, but some of it is about just getting the system better organized. And the cluster approach is an improvement, but it is still not solving the problem.

The final issue I want to raise is the security issue and political engagement. I feel strongly that too often in Africa humanitarian assistance, as limited and underfunded as it may be, becomes the primary means for powerful countries to engage with African problems. At Refugees International we try not to be naive humanitarians. We know that addressing root causes and preventing future conflict are essential if the conditions that create displacement are to end. The United States needs to engage fully with Africa in partnership with its allies and the United Nations, committing serious diplomatic resources, not just humanitarian funding, to bring a halt to conflicts and their attendant human rights abuses.

Now we have a mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo right now. Yes, there is progress there, but in North Kivu they are still fighting. That fighting is being perpetrated primarily by—we will call him a warlord—Laurent Nkunda who is getting support, I am sorry to say, from the Rwandan Government.

Now the question then becomes, how do we engage with Rwanda, a very close ally of the United States in the Great Lakes region? How do we engage with Rwanda to get them to stop what is prov-

ing to be dysfunctional support and damaging support that is leading to displacement in the Kivus?

So the situation in the Congo is improving, but we can't just walk away from that. We need to engage at a diplomatic level with Rwanda to improve the situation.

The other key that hasn't been mentioned so far, I don't think, in the hearing this morning is U.N. peacekeeping efforts in Africa. Despite many difficulties, MONUC is more or less doing the right thing in the DRC. The UNMIS presence in southern Sudan is essential, and I urge the committee to work for continued United States support to maintain the necessary U.N. peacekeeping operations in Africa to try to prevent a return to conflict.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Charny follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. JOEL R. CHARNY, VICE PRESIDENT FOR POLICY,
REFUGEES INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA'S FORGOTTEN REFUGEES AND RETURNEES

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today on African Refugees on the occasion of World Refugee Day. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee, the Chair and Ranking member of which have long histories of working to protect human rights and dignity. You and many members of this Subcommittee have undertaken difficult missions to impoverished and conflict ridden areas to witness refugee situations up close and to convey the interest and support of the Congress and the American people for these victims of conflict. Your hearing today gives us all an opportunity to think about what we can do to improve and resource U.S. and international refugee policy and assistance programs so that they more effectively protect and aid innocent victims of violence and persecution.

I represent Refugees International, a humanitarian advocacy organization headquartered in Washington, which works to generate lifesaving humanitarian assistance and protection for displaced people around the world and to end the conditions that create displacement. RI is independently funded, neither seeking nor accepting funds from governments or the United Nations.

Overview

Displacement in Africa is a major priority for Refugees International. Even as I present this testimony we have teams assessing the situation in southern Sudan and the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In addition to these locations, areas of concern where RI has conducted missions over the past year include: the Darfur region of Sudan; eastern and southern Chad, focusing on Sudanese and Central African refugees as well as internally displaced Chadians; the Central African Republic; northern Uganda; the Ivory Coast, focusing on internal displacement and Liberian refugees; and Senegal, focusing on stateless Mauritians. Other countries presently producing large-scale displacement or with the potential to do so include Somalia; Zimbabwe; and Guinea.

In all, there are approximately three million refugees and 11 million internally displaced people on the African continent, which represents about 40% of the total number of people displaced by conflict in the world.

These numbers present a daunting challenge to the agencies trying to meet the assistance and protection needs of the displaced. Thanks to bi-partisan Congressional support, the United States has been a major contributor to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and its non-governmental partners. This year UNHCR requested donors to provide \$577 million for African refugees, returnees and the internally displaced populations that it assists. UNHCR's programs generally cover only the most basic needs: water, food, shelter and minimal health care. Items like shoes, clothing, school materials, education beyond the primary level, and shelter repair are rarely included. Psycho-social counseling, prevention of gender-based violence, skills training and income generation projects have too often been considered luxuries which the international community has been unwilling to fund.

This year the U.S. again plans to support 25% of UNHCR's Africa appeals, even though some past Congresses have suggested increasing this level to 30% given the scale of need in Africa and the problems UNHCR faces in funding its programs.

In reviewing the President's budget for 2008, however, we were alarmed at the cuts proposed from current levels. Our calculations suggest that unless overseas funding is increased by at least \$100 million, the US would only be able to provide about 15% of UNHCR's appeals, compared to our traditional 25%. The State Department would also be forced to reduce funding to the humanitarian programs of other international organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross. For FY08 the InterAction coalition of nongovernmental organizations has suggested that core humanitarian programs—Migration and Refugee Account, the International Foreign Disaster Assistance account and the Emergency Refugee and Migration Account—receive an increase of over \$800 million to bring assistance to minimum standards. It is essential that Congress work to increase overseas assistance in FY 2008 so that the basic needs of refugees for food, water, medicine and shelter can be better met.

Beyond this basic appeal for increased funding, I would like to stress the following issues provoked by a review of the challenges facing Africa's displaced:

The need to invest in returns

There is no shortage of misery in Africa, but the fact is that there are hopeful developments as well. For example, in southern Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, and Liberia political developments have created the possibility for refugees and internally displaced people to return home in large numbers. Northern Uganda is not yet quite stable enough, but people are beginning to leave the government camps for temporary shelters much closer to their homes where they can at least begin cultivating their fields again.

What Refugees International has found in its field assessments, however, is a serious lack of support for families voting with their feet and taking the huge risk of returning home to rebuild. International aid agencies and the donors that support them are often able and willing to meet the emergency needs of the displaced in camps and even in more insecure locations, but when it comes time to invest in recovery, neither the agencies nor the funding is present at anywhere near the level required. The inability to invest in the recovery process jeopardizes the peace and stability of countries that are only just now emerging from protracted conflict.

Southern Sudan is the quintessential example of this phenomenon. The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 marked the end of 22 years of conflict with the north, and laid the foundation for the return of hundreds of thousands of civilians who had been displaced throughout Sudan and into surrounding countries. Since security has progressively returned to many portions of the south, thousands of displaced, many of whom fled the region as small children, have seized upon this opportunity to venture back home independently, as well as with the assistance of UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration, the Government of South Sudan, and local churches.

But two decades of civil war in an unforgiving climate have reduced even state capitals to urban shells, while many small villages have been wiped off the face of the rural landscape. Unpaved roads, lack of clean water and sewage systems, and only minimal basic services, such as primary health care and education, mean that refugees and internally displaced people are returning to towns and villages with insufficient capacity to welcome and integrate them.

South Sudan is in desperate need of resources to support the return and reintegration process. International donors have been too quick to assume that emergency needs have declined and are reducing their funding for humanitarian assistance, while resources for recovery programs and long-term development are not yet available. Unless funds are immediately directed to support the transition from the emergency phase to self sustained recovery, the urgent needs of thousands of returnees will go unaddressed, creating conditions ripe for renewed humanitarian emergencies and renewed conflict.

Disparities in response to internal displacement

As indicated above, internally displaced people in Africa—people who have had to flee their homes due to conflict but have been unable to cross an international border—outnumber refugees by almost four to one. Yet the ability of international agencies to reach the internally displaced people and meet their basic needs remains problematic, especially when compared to the services and protection provided to refugees.

Two fundamental factors account for this discrepancy. First, while states are responsible for meeting the needs of their own people, these very states are often responsible for the conflict and oppression that is producing the displacement; they fail to respond to the needs of their own citizens on political grounds and block access by external agencies to them. Second, despite some progress in recent years at

organizing the international response to internal displacement, there is still no single agency that is ultimately responsible, leading to serious gaps in assistance.

On a mission to eastern Chad in late February, Refugees International found Darfur refugees relatively well cared for in camps, despite continued security problems, but displaced Chadians neglected. Indeed, Chadians forced to flee their villages had no choice but to congregate on the outskirts of refugee camps, seeking safety and hoping to benefit from whatever meager excess assistance might be available. Virtually no international agencies were directing support to the 170,000 internally displaced Chadians. RI found a similar contrast between the assistance provided to the 40,000 Central African refugees in camps in southern Chad and that provided to the more than 200,000 Central Africans internally displaced in the northwestern part of the country. Indeed, when traveling in the region along the border with Chad in March, RI learned that Central Africans in the region occasionally sent family members to the Chad camps to access food and other basic supplies to bring back to the CAR.

In terms of Subcommittee action on this issue, I encourage members to ensure that United States policy and actions reflect the imperative of devising a more effective response to the needs of internally displaced people. USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and the State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration have been discussing how to coordinate the U.S. response, but there is a built-in administrative obstacle as BPRM has the exclusive mandate to fund UNHCR, which is taking on an increasing role in responding to internal displacement crises. Yet it is often OFDA-funded non-governmental organizations that have the best immediate capacity to respond to the needs of the internally displaced. Subcommittee members should monitor this issue and ensure that the U.S. response is commensurate with the need, coherent, and effective.

Neglected emergencies

Refugees International is constantly struggling with the challenge of advocating for an overall humanitarian response in Africa that meets the needs of refugees and internally displaced people wherever they may be found. The international humanitarian response, including that of the United States, is perpetually uneven. On occasion, crises in Africa capture the public imagination, leading to a response that is relatively well resourced, such as the humanitarian program in the camps in Darfur. Despite all the difficulties of working in Sudan, and the slow start-up after the atrocities in the region in 2003 and 2004, malnutrition rates in these camps today are more favorable than those that prevailed in villages in Darfur prior to the conflict.

But for every relative success, there are countless thousands of displaced people that remain neglected in countries and regions that never enter the consciousness of the public or politicians. In March I visited one such country, the Central African Republic, on a painful return journey to a place where I was a Peace Corps Volunteer thirty years ago. In the CAR, an internal political conflict has led to the displacement of more than 200,000 internally and 70,000 refugees, out of a population of four million. Yet even though awareness of the situation had risen due to its nominal relationship to the Darfur problem, the presence of humanitarian agencies was virtually nil, with only Doctors without Borders, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the Italian organization COOPI implementing significant programs.

In the CAR, a relatively modest humanitarian investment of \$10 million coupled with some U.S. diplomatic leadership and development efforts this year and next could forestall or avoid a much more costly emergency response later. But it is difficult to generate the awareness and the political will required to make even this modest commitment possible.

Other countries that are off the public and Congressional radar screen that would benefit from increased attention and investment include: Burundi, Chad, Guinea, and Sierra Leone.

Security and political engagement

Too often humanitarian assistance, as underfunded as it may be, is the primary means for powerful countries to engage with African problems. At Refugees International we try not to be naïve humanitarians. We know that addressing root causes and preventing future conflict are essential if the conditions that create displacement are to end. The United States needs to engage fully with Africa, in partnership with its allies and the United Nations, committing serious diplomatic resources to bring a halt to conflicts and their attendant human rights abuses.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is one place where U.S. diplomatic efforts are badly needed. Almost all new displacement in the country since the beginning

of 2007 has occurred in the volatile province of North Kivu, the result of a serious mistake by the Congolese government. Rebel troops which had been fighting in North Kivu since 2004 were recently integrated into the Congolese army, but allowed to remain as cohesive units based on ethnicity. The rebel general, named Laurent Nkunda, is closely aligned with Rwanda and has committed atrocities against civilians. But instead of arresting him, the Congolese government gave him legitimacy. His troops currently wreak havoc in North Kivu, attacking civilians in the name of pursuing the FDLR, a rebel group which also originated from Rwanda and includes remnants of the perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide.

The RI team currently in DRC reports that there have already been two waves of major displacement in North Kivu, which borders Rwanda and Uganda, and that a third is ongoing, signaled by the new arrival of displaced in host communities that have reached the limits of their welcome.

The key to resolving the crisis in North Kivu is Rwanda, a longstanding friend and ally of the United States in the region. Supporters of Laurent Nkunda operate freely within Rwanda, forcibly recruiting young men to fight on his side. In the meantime, Rwanda is dragging its feet on repatriating or resettling those members of the FDLR not implicated in the genocide.

The U.S. may be the only country that can constructively engage with Rwanda about its role in destabilizing eastern Congo. However, the main U.S. policy mechanism in the region, the Tripartite Plus Commission, is facilitating military action against the FDLR while ignoring Nkunda. While military pressure on the FDLR leadership is necessary to contain them, reliance on Nkunda, an accused war criminal, has unacceptable humanitarian consequences.

With greater diplomatic engagement on these issues with Rwanda, the U.S. could reduce the suffering of the Congolese people by addressing some of the root causes of insecurity with Rwanda. Until U.S. policy towards Rwanda evolves, we can expect violence in eastern DRC to continue, with more displacement, lives lost, and a continued need for funding to assist displaced people and support the UN peacekeeping mission, MONUC. Refugees International, therefore, asks Congress to hold a hearing on Rwanda's impact on eastern DRC, with a view on to facilitating peace rather than war in the region.

United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Africa have played an important role in creating improved security conditions that make it possible for refugees and internally displaced families to return home. Six of the UN's fifteen peacekeeping missions are currently functioning in Africa at a cost of \$3.4 billion: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia and Eritrea and southern Sudan. The U.S. has recognized the significant role that peacekeeping operations can have on ending conflict, bringing about the implementation of negotiated peace agreements, separating conflicting parties, disarming and demobilizing forces, particularly militias and irregular forces, and holding elections and restoring the rule of law.

Peacekeeping is expensive, but not as expensive or as damaging as war. The U.S., unfortunately, while supporting the creation and operation of these missions, has fallen behind in paying its agreed share of the costs. The President's budget for FY 2008 requested only \$1.11 billion for contributions to international peacekeeping (CIPA) while the State Department estimated the need as \$1.8 billion. The countries that provide peacekeepers for these missions expect to be reimbursed for their costs, but without full payments the U.N. cannot pay these countries in a timely manner, thus making it harder to recruit new military forces and police.

Addendum

The Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs requested Refugees International to provide data on the impact of refugees on the overall financial situation of the host countries in east Africa. Refugees generally exist in unstable regions, so it is inherently difficult to assess the primary causal factor --- does poverty produce conditions conducive to political instability, conflict, and displacement or are the latter the root causes of the poverty that results?

In east Africa to arrive at rough estimates of refugee and displacement figures we used the United Nations Refugee Agency estimate of June 2006 (which is their latest published statistical data), as well as their recent press releases, to reach a figure of almost one million refugees and some 5.8 million internally displaced. Please note these are estimates only. To consider the economic situation in these countries we compared their gross national income, based on the Atlas method, as well as population and economic growth data derived from the World Bank database *World Development Indicators, April 2007*.

The Subcommittee asked us to comment on the impact of refugees and displacement on economic growth and development. I note that different sources (such as State Department Country Reports, World Bank Little Fact Book on Africa) report widely different estimates of growth and per capita income for some of these countries, with the widest divergence on economic data occurring in the two countries with significant oil resources and exports, namely Chad and the Sudan. Since the dissolution of the central government of Somalia, very little data is available from the World Bank or the U.S. Department of State.

The World Bank reports that life expectancy in Africa averages 46 years and gross national income at \$600 per capita, while the average growth rate is 5.6%. Internal displacement through conflict can have a significant impact on agricultural production, as has happened in the Central African Republic, or can even lead to the emptying of regions of the country, as occurred in southern Sudan through the twenty-one years of conflict which produced over 690,000 refugees and millions of displaced. From Refugees International's experience, the longer the displacement or refugee status lasts the more difficult will be the period of reconciliation and rehabilitation for the country.

DISPLACEMENT AND ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR EAST AFRICA

Country	Population	Citizens living as Refugees	Internally Displaced Persons	Refugees Hosted	Gross national income per Capita	Life Expectancy	Estimated Growth Rate
Chad	9.7 million	8,000	110,000	280,000 (233,000- Sudan 48,000 CAR)	\$400	44	5.6%
C.A.R.	4 million	14,300	212,000	10,000	\$350	39.4	2.2%
Djibouti	793,000		-	10,000	\$1,010	53.4	3.2%
Kenya	34.3 million		-	280,000 Somali/Sudanese		49	5.8%
Somalia	8 million	300,000	700,000		n.a.	48	n.a.
Sudan	35.5 million	550,000	2.4 million in Darfur; 1.2 million other	88,000 Eritreans and Ethiopians	\$530		6%
Uganda	28.8 million		1,325 million	280,000 (215,000 Sudan 25,000 Rwanda 29,000 DROC)	280	50	5.6%

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much, Mr. Charny.
Mr. Porter, please.

STATEMENT OF MR. NEAL PORTER, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL SERVICES, THE CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE

Mr. PORTER. Thank you, Ambassador Watson, Ranking Member Smith and other members of the subcommittee for the opportunity to speak with you today, on World Refugee Day.

My testimony today will focus on the Center for Victims of Torture's community mental health programs that target refugees and returnees in Africa.

The universal experience among refugees today is exposure to traumatic events and severe human rights abuses, including torture. It is estimated that between 5 and 35 percent of today's refugees experience some form of human rights abuse, including torture. CVT's own research with our clients in Minneapolis and St. Paul indicates that those rates are actually much higher.

Psychological problems that result from torture and war trauma include severe depression, incessant nightmares, panic attacks, guilt, self-hatred, suicidal thoughts. Torture can often result in PTSD. Those most affected by traumatic experiences find it difficult, if not impossible, to resume daily activities and rebuild their lives. The inability of individuals to function can incapacitate whole communities.

Providing healing services to address the mental health problems as just described is a strategic investment for the United States and its allies. Not addressing the psychological consequences of torture and war trauma means that those cycles of violence, rage and revenge can continue.

CVT's mental health programs in Africa are due to the foresight of the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration. In 1999, BPRM asked CVT to conduct an assessment of the mental health needs of Sierra Leonean refugees' health needs living in camps in Guinea. BPRM was concerned over reports that refugees were too traumatized to take advantage of services and programs offered by other international agencies, such as people being too depressed to bring their children in for prosthetics.

Even for CVT, an organization that works with torture survivors on a daily basis, the level of violence we found among Sierra Leonean refugees was nearly incomprehensible. We knew we had neither the staff nor the resources to provide for all the needs of the refugees who would benefit from mental health services. So CVT developed a model to provide direct mental health services to those who suffered torture and to develop local capacity for the community to meet its own mental health needs.

CVT provides mental health interventions at different levels, depending on the level of trauma, including family, individual and group therapy. We also conduct large group activities in communities, in camps and communities of return to bring attention to the prevalence and effects of torture, to inform teachers, religious figures and other community leaders how they can help others and to identify potential clients.

The heart of CVT's mental health projects in Africa is training. This training program is experiential, with paraprofessional peer counselors learning alongside professional CVT clinicians while working with clients in both individual and group settings. Peer counselors undergo an intensive 2-week orientation and basic training period and subsequently receive monthly formal trainings from CVT clinicians and ongoing feedback after every counseling session and activity. The training for peer counselors is long in duration because CVT's goal is to develop highly capable local resources for healing and advocacy.

Since 1999, CVT has trained over 160 peer counselors, many originally hired as refugees and many of whom still work with us today. To date, CVT has provided mental health services to over 10,000 refugees and returnees in West Africa.

To measure the effects of the program, peer counselors conduct periodic follow-up assessments to record and measure indicators of clients' improvement. Analysis shows improvement that is both statistically significant and meaningful in indicators ranging from reductions in depression, anxiety and somatic symptoms to an increase in the number of supportive relationships. Clients consistently report having increased hope, better coping skills and improved relations with others in the community after receiving help from CVT.

CVT's international programs reflect both the humanitarian and strategic benefits of healing refugees who have suffered horrific human rights abuses that occur from civil conflict.

On the humanitarian side, CVT provided direct trauma counseling and services to over 2,000 individuals in Sierra Leone and Liberia last year and helped thousands more through training and community activities that promote mental health through social connections and physical well-being.

On the strategic side, CVT is helping to rebuild communities and reclaim civic leadership in post-conflict areas. As citizens and decision-makers in these countries grapple with difficult issues such as justice, forgiveness, reparations and impunity, peer counselors trained by CVT are positioned to act as voices that can speak to the truth of the damage done and take leadership in the healing that must occur for any country to rebuild.

The leadership demonstrated by BPRM means that the rebuilding efforts in West Africa, the DRC and elsewhere in Africa will include healing the severe psychological wounds suffered as a result of political violence. CVT is a proud partner of BPRM in this effort.

We also wish to acknowledge the other ways in which the United States Government has been a leader in this work. The U.S. is the leading contributor to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, which supports more than 150 organizations worldwide providing psychological and other forms of assistance to torture victims, including two dozen African organizations. This leadership helped inspire more than 30 other governments around the world to pledge contributions to the U.N. Voluntary Fund.

The USAID also funds torture treatment programs around the world, thus healing the wounds of political violence and building indigenous civil society groups.

CVT urges members of this committee and all Members of Congress to recognize and applaud the leadership shown by these U.S. Government agencies. We also recommend that the provision of mental health services be a vital component to any post-conflict rehabilitation effort along with all of the other material assistance and repatriation services refugees need. By restoring those who have been intentionally disabled, we improve the likelihood of durable and positive solutions for all refugees, their communities and their societies.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak before you.
[The prepared statement of Mr. Porter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. NEAL PORTER, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL SERVICES, THE CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on World Refugee Day. My testimony today will focus on the Center for Victims of Torture's community mental health services to refugees and returnees in Africa. This work is a humanitarian response to the devastating affects of torture and political violence on individuals, their families and their communities. It is also a strategic investment to break cycles of decades-long violence so we can support what are often fragile peace agreements.

Torture and War Today

The universal experience among refugees today is exposure to traumatic events and human rights abuses, in particular torture. This is due to political instability, war, and repression in the home countries.

Wars today are conducted very differently than a century ago. During World War I, only 5 percent of the casualties were civilians. In World War II, that figure rose to 50 percent. In current world conflicts and war, over 90 percent of the casualties are civilians rather than combatants. (Summerfield, D. (1995). Addressing Human Response to War and Atrocity: Major Challenges in Research and Practices and Limitations of Western Psychiatric Models. *Beyond Trauma: Cultural and Societal Dimensions*. New York: Plenum.) It is estimated that between 5 and 35 percent of today's refugees are survivors of torture (Baker R. Psychological consequences for tortured refugees seeking asylum and refugee status in Europe. In: Basoglu, M (ed) *Torture and Its Consequences Current Treatment Approaches* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp 83–106.) Our own research has found rates much higher. For example, a survey conducted in 2004 found that 69 percent of Oromo male refugees living in Minnesota were tortured (Jaranson, J. M., Butcher, J., Halcon, L., Johnson, D. R., Robertson, C., Savik, K., et al. (2004). Somali and Oromo refugees: Correlates of torture and trauma history. *American Journal of Public Health*, 94, 591–598.)

I am not going to provide a history of the conflicts in the countries where CVT is currently providing mental health services: Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). You are well aware of the protracted civil wars in those countries. But I would like to put a human face on the experiences of the people.

Stories of Refugees

In 1993, ULIMO rebels raided the house of a 48-year old man living in Lofa County, Liberia. The rebels killed his father and mother, several of his sisters and brothers and other extended family members. Then he and his wife and children were taken captive by the rebels. He was beaten, tied and forced to carry loads for the soldiers. His wife was raped in front of him. He and his wife eventually escaped and fled to Sierra Leone where they lived as refugees until 1997.

When CVT first met this man, he appeared physically to be in good health. But he had problems sleeping, had nightmares, expressed difficulty managing his anger, experienced intense sadness, avoided people and places that reminded him of what happened and seem quite isolated and disengaged. After he began group therapy, he revealed that he was having a lot of conflict with his 28-year-old son, who was also a member of his therapy group.

Another 16-year old boy sought out CVT's mental health services after hearing our weekly radio program on mental health issues and attending an awareness raising session our counselors conducted at his school.

The youth shared that he had witnessed a rebel assault including brutal killings and the burning of his entire village when he was four years old. Captured with his parents, he saw the rebels shoot his father dead two years later. The boy and his mother tried to escape, but were caught and beaten. He was forced to watch his mother's rape. A second escape plan was successful and they fled to a refugee camp in Guinea. Four years later, the camp was attacked and he and his mother were taken captive by rebel forces again. After receiving 12 lashes in front of her son, the mother was released and the boy was conscripted as a noncombatant. A 10-year-old child by then, he was forced to fetch water and firewood, do laundry and to dig graves and bury corpses; some of the bodies he buried were his friends. He managed another escape into the bush where he was fortunate to join a United Nations convoy to a refugee camp in Guinea and was later reunited with his mother. A month after their reunion, his mother died.

When this youth came to CVT, he shared that he had trouble sleeping and concentrating, poor appetite, nightmares and flashbacks along with a strong tendency to isolate himself while always feeling sad and discouraged.

Unfortunately, too many of the refugees we work with in Africa have told similar experiences. Certainly the physical symptoms will vary depending on the type of torture endured. But as you can tell by the brief case examples shared here, there is a remarkably common pattern of profound emotional reactions and psychological symptoms that transcends cultural and national differences.

Psychological problems that result from torture and war trauma include severe depression and anxiety; intense and incessant nightmares; panic attacks; guilt and self-hatred; and suicidal thoughts or tendencies. Torture can result in posttraumatic stress disorder, major depression disorder, and a combination of both disorders.

Those most affected by traumatic experiences find it difficult if not impossible to resume daily activities and rebuild their lives. The inability of individuals to function can incapacitate a whole community. We also know that the affects of torture and war impact future generations. Research has shown that the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors have higher levels of depression and thoughts of suicide.

In a 2004 report, the World Bank recognized poor mental health as a significant development issue especially in conflict-associated countries ("Integrating Mental Health and Psychosocial Interventions into World Bank Lending for Conflict-Affected Populations: A Tool Kit," September 2004.) The report noted the well-documented link between poverty and conflicts and said, "In addition, traumatic experiences directly related to conflict, often involving loss of family members, participation in or witnessing of violent acts, and conflict-induced physical disabilities, cause further distress and hamper post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts."

Despite widespread need and the lasting affect of political violence, very few resources are devoted to addressing the mental health problems caused by torture. Yet healing the wounds of torture is integral to the process of rebuilding a post conflict society. When political violence intentionally destroys a community, the society itself must heal before peace and democracy can flourish.

Let me take this moment to correct a common myth about torture. Torture is not an effective interrogation tool. It is a notoriously unreliable tool for gathering actionable information. Torture is fundamentally a political weapon used by repressive regimes to shape cultures through fear. Repressive regimes target leaders and use torture to send fear through that leader's family and community of followers and admirers. They destroy leaders and send them back to their communities, broken and depressed, as an example to others. Most of our clients tell us that they said anything their torturer wanted them to say to make the pain stop.

For this reason, torture is the most effective weapon against democracy. The impact of torture is felt for years, even after a dictatorial regime has fallen: leadership broken and lost, families and communities too frightened to engage in public life; and a profound lack of trust in public institutions, the police and courts.

Providing healing services after political violence is a strategic investment for the United States and its allies. Not addressing the consequences of torture and war means those cycles of violence, rage and revenge will continue.

About the Center for Victims of Torture

The Center for Victims of Torture has been providing direct care to survivors of politically-motivated torture since 1985. Nearly all refugees who are settling in Minnesota over the past few years are coming from countries ravaged by torture and war. For more than a decade the majority of new clients at CVT have come from Africa, 83 percent in 2006.

At clinics in Minneapolis and St. Paul, CVT's staff include highly trained health care personnel-physicians, psychologists, nurses, and social workers, supported by

volunteer health professionals, such as a dedicated team of physiotherapists and massage therapists, specialists in many fields, and over three hundred community volunteers. Our intensive treatment programs in Minneapolis and St. Paul are designed to aid survivors to become healthy, productive citizens again while also teaching us about the human response to intense trauma and effective ways of healing. We have an annual capacity in this intensive program for about 250 survivors each year. There are roughly 30,000 torture survivors living in Minnesota, 500,000 in the United States.

Clearly, the contrast between our capacity for direct service and the need is staggering. So we have extended our work through research and training of other health care professionals, both in specialized torture rehabilitation centers and in the mainstream. We are currently providing technical assistance and small grants to 33 torture rehabilitation programs in the US and 16 in countries across the world where torture has been widely practiced.

Our treatment programs in Africa are examples of how we incorporate our clinical knowledge of healing with research and training to care for thousands of survivors of torture and terror in West and Central Africa. These programs are also designed to help us understand how communities can recover from fear—the motivating source behind those who torture.

CVT's Projects in Africa

In the summer of 1999, the U.S. State Department, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM), asked CVT to conduct an assessment of the mental health needs of Sierra Leonean refugees living in camps in Guinea. BPRM was concerned over reports of refugees being too traumatized to take advantage of services or programs being offered by international nongovernmental organizations. Examples were given of people being too depressed to bring their children to be fitted for prosthetics, to follow-through with medical treatments or to benefit from skills training.

I want to acknowledge and thank BPRM for their foresight. They recognized the massive scope of the traumas experienced by Sierra Leonean refugees and the need for mental health interventions beyond traditional psychosocial programming offered by humanitarian relief agencies.

Even for CVT, an organization that works with torture survivors on a daily basis, the level of violence we found among Sierra Leonean refugees who fled to camps in Guinea was nearly incomprehensible.

One person told us, “For every person directly victimized, there were 30 others who witnessed the atrocity or were made to actually perpetrate it.”

We knew we did not have the staff or resources to provide for the needs of all the people in the camps who would benefit from mental health services. So we developed a model to provide appropriate mental health care for those most severely affected to those less affected in a way that would maximize resources.

We also knew funding for our work in Guinea would not be unlimited. So building capacity among the refugees was important. We wanted to leave behind skilled mental health counselors who could provide for the long term mental health needs long after our tenure.

Both objectives, providing direct mental health services to those who suffered torture and developing local capacity for the community to meet its own mental health needs, remains the overarching goal of our projects today in Sierra Leone, Liberia and the DRC.

We began working with Liberian refugees when the violence in their country flared and refugees fled to the camps in Guinea. In 2002, as Sierra Leonean refugees returned home, we moved with them to the Kono District, one of the hardest hit regions affected by conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia. When Liberian refugees returned in 2005, we moved to Bong and Lofa Counties, near the borders of Guinea and Sierra Leone and home to the highest number of returnees. We closed our work in the Guinea camps in 2005.

In the Fall 2006, we began operations in the southeastern district of Katanga in the DRC.

Delivery of Mental Health Services

We have three levels of mental health interventions. The first level is to address those people with psychotic mental disorders. We provide individual and family therapy to address their trauma and help them regain the ability to function within their family and community.

Once a client is identified, they will receive an intake assessment so CVT clinical staff can develop an individual treatment plan. Individual counseling is provided to clients who are either unable to attend group counseling sessions or have a greater

need to address their problems in private. Clients are usually seen for one hour, for 1—5 sessions, and then join a small group if they are able.

The 16-year old boy I described earlier received 5 individual counseling sessions to reduce the severity of symptoms he experienced. For those most affected by trauma like this teen, individual sessions can assist them with developing a trusting therapeutic relationship.

The second level of service is designed for those with severe depression, anxiety, traumatic stress symptoms and decreased social functioning. We use small group therapy (10 to 12 individuals) and in some cases combine that with individual and/or family therapy. Most of our mental health services are provided through small group therapy.

The groups take place on a weekly basis for approximately 10 weeks, and are divided into different populations including adults, children, men and women, girls and boys. Clients benefit from the increased socialization with others who share similar stories. Each year thousands of clients benefit directly from CVT group counseling.

Let me note that most refugees are remarkably resilient. While we believe anyone in need of mental health services deserves them, we do not want to imply that all refugees are in need of “treatment.” Most refugees, given a reasonably good environment, are able to rebuild their lives and contribute to their family and community’s well-being. CVT is focused on individual refugees with significant post-trauma mental health problems who are in need of assistance to rebuild a productive life.

The third group we target our services to represents those experiencing the least psychological and functional impairment, which comprises the majority of the refugee population. The interventions we use at this level include large group activities such as sports and play for children and community-level events, such as psychoeducational dramas or traditional ceremonies. These activities are primarily psychoeducational and often incorporate traditional healing customs.

Training and community awareness raising activities are held in communities to bring attention to the prevalence and effects of torture, to help community members such as teachers, religious and local leaders know what they can do to help others, and to help identify potential clients. Over 26,400 people participated in CVT community sensitization activities in 2006.

One such activity occurred in Sierra Leone last year on June 26, International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. In Buedu, community members and CVT organized a commemoration at the site of a mass grave, where dozens of corpses had been unceremoniously dumped during the war. Religious leaders led traditional ritual, Muslim and Christian prayers in a deeply moving memorial service for the victims of torture buried at the site and for those who disappeared. The ceremony was a public recognition and honor of those who were lost.

Training Peer Counselors

The heart of CVT’s mental health projects in Africa is its training. This training program is experiential, with para-professional Psychosocial Peer Counselors (PSCs) learning alongside professional CVT clinicians while working with clients in both individual and group settings. Once selected and hired from a target population, peer counselors undergo an intensive two-week orientation and basic training period. Then they observe and assist as the professional clinician runs a 10-week group counseling session. When the peer counselor is ready, he or she co-facilitates a 10-week session with the professional clinician, and then leads a third 10-week session as the clinician observes and assists. At that point, their performance is reassessed, and, if appropriate, peer counselors begin to lead sessions on their own.

Every month CVT clinicians also conduct formal trainings to the peer counselors on a variety of mental health and counseling subjects. In addition to formal training sessions, informal training and supervision takes place on a daily basis, with clinicians modeling, observing and giving feedback to them after every counseling session and activity.

The training for peer counselors is extensive and long in duration because CVT’s goal is to develop highly capable local resources for healing and advocacy, based on in-depth knowledge and skills. To date, CVT has trained over 160 peer counselors, originally hired as refugees, many of whom have been training with CVT since 1999.

In fact, CVT’s training is such a high standard that the first group of Sierra Leonean refugees trained as peer counselors in the Guinea camps obtained accreditation from the Milton Margai College in Freetown, Sierra Leone. In addition to their CVT training, they attended supplemental courses and received the equivalent of an Associates Degree in Counseling or a Certificate of Counseling. Similar accreditation is underway for the peer counselors working in Liberia and will be planned for the DRC as well.

External Relations

CVT works closely with local government ministries and others to provide training and referral services. In addition, CVT has expanded its links with specific NGOs working on related issues, including collaborating with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Liberia to provide training and psychosocial support for TRC participants, International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Search for Common Ground/Talking Drums Studio (SCG/TDS) as part of a Sexual and Gender-Based Violence program in Kailahun; WITNESS program in Sierra Leone to raise the awareness of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission; and in Liberia, with American Refugee Committee (ARC), to provide trauma counseling training to their Gender Based Violence program staff. CVT also provides training to other NGOs in refugee camps and communities to help them identify torture survivors, avoid re-traumatization and refer them when possible.

Results

Since 1999, CVT has provided mental health services to over 10,000 refugees and returnees in West Africa. To measure the effects of the program, peer counselors regularly check in on clients who have received services from CVT. They conduct one month, 3-month, 6-month, and 12-month follow-up assessments to record and measure indicators of clients' improvement. Results are compared to intake assessments and then analyzed statistically. Analysis shows improvement that is both statistically significant and meaningful in indicators ranging from reductions in depression, anxiety, and somatic symptoms, to an increase in the number of supportive relationships. Case studies also reflect the success of the CVT program. Clients consistently report having increased hope, better coping skills, and improved relations with others after receiving help from CVT.

Benefits

CVT International Services programs reflect both the humanitarian and strategic benefits of healing survivors of the horrific human rights abuses that occur from civil conflict. On the humanitarian side, CVT provided direct trauma counseling services to over 2000 individuals in Sierra Leon and Liberia last year, and helped thousands more through training and community activities that promote mental health through social connections and physical well-being.

On the strategic side, CVT is helping to rebuild community and reclaim civic leadership in post conflict areas. As citizens and decision-makers grapple with difficult issues of justice, forgiveness, reparations, and impunity; the peer counselors trained by CVT will be positioned to act as voices that can speak to the truth of the damage, and take leadership in the healing that must occur for the country to rebuild.

Our vision is to leave behind the beginnings of indigenous torture rehabilitation programs in these countries that can then be connected with 200 colleague treatment programs around the world. In the Kono District of Sierra Leone, the peer counselors trained by CVT are taking the first steps. They have formed a national nongovernmental organization, called the "Community Association for Psychosocial Services," or "CAPS," to continue providing mental health resources for local Sierra Leonean communities after CVT has left the country. With guidance from CVT international staff, CAPS has developed a mission statement, created an executive team and board of directors, recruited a lead coordinator, designed a logo and brochure, applied for and received local NGO status with the Sierra Leonean government, become accredited with the International Rehabilitation Council of Treatment Centers and wrote their first grant proposals, obtaining \$6000 from the Oak Foundation as well as a \$15,000 grant from the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. CVT has provided training for CAPS members on human resource management, leadership principles, developing and managing a non-governmental organization, proposal writing and strategic planning. Funding for our involvement will end in June 2008. Our focus in this last year of international staff involvement is to continue to help them develop their management and organizational skills to they can staff, raise funds and manage an effective and successful national NGO in Sierra Leone.

Conclusion

The leadership demonstrated by BPRM means that the rebuilding efforts in West Africa and DRC will include attention to healing the severe psychological wounds suffered as a result of the political violence there; CVT is proud to be a key part of this effort. In conclusion, we also wish to acknowledge other ways in which the U.S. government has been a leader in this work. The U.S. is the leading contributor to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, which supports more than 150 organizations worldwide providing psychological and other forms of assist-

ance to torture victims, including two dozen African organizations. The US government's leadership helped inspire more than 30 other governments to pledge contributions to the Fund in 2005.

The U.S. government also plays a direct role through USAID funding for torture treatment programs around the world. This funding strengthens the capacity of local organizations to deliver services to survivors in their countries, thus healing the wounds of political violence and building indigenous civil society groups.

CVT urges members of this Committee and all members of Congress to recognize and applaud the leadership shown by these U.S. government agencies. We also recommend that providing mental health services be a vital component to any post-conflict rehabilitation effort, along with all the material assistance and repatriation services provided. By reclaiming civic leadership, rebuilding community ties, and restoring those who have been intentionally disabled, we improve hopes for reconciliation and for development.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much.

We are going to go directly to Mr. Smith, and then we are going to go quickly to Sheila Jackson Lee. We are going to have votes in just a few minutes, so we will try to hear from both of you.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much, Madam Chairwoman.

Let me just, first of all, welcome Daoud Hari to this committee and applaud him on his heroism and tenacity. As you pointed out, you are one of the lucky ones, one of the few lucky ones; and my hope is that the durable solution of the settlement would be extended to far more Darfurian refugees like yourself.

I am glad you chose New Jersey and Asbury Park, which is not in my district, but it is pretty close. I hope you are enjoying it there, and I hope the community in Asbury Park has welcomed you with open arms, as I am sure they have.

But thank you again for being the face of someone who has traveled the most arduous path imaginable and has come up and gotten through it and overcame over all of those obstacles. So thank you for your witness today. It does help us to be more sensitive.

We can visit refugee camps like we all do, as I do, but to see someone who has gone through it all and can stand here and speak out for those left behind, thank you for doing that today.

I would like to ask Mr. Porter if I could—as I think you know, I authored four torture victims relief acts, starting with the very first one. And we have a reauthorization bill; it has passed the House and is awaiting action in the Senate.

My hope is that everything can be done to try to get the Senate to bring up that bill prior to June 26 so that the President could sign a piece of legislation as we remember and commemorate the victims of torture on June 26, to acknowledge the U.S. as the leader—we provide significant money, as you pointed out, to the U.N. Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture—and both domestic and international centers are well-funded by the U.S.

I think we should do more. The appropriation levels have not kept pace with the authorized levels. I think that is a missed opportunity, and my hope is that we can try to rectify that with the ability of the administration to put more money into this category of healing.

I also want to commend you on training the trainers, the peer counselors. You know, it is one thing to set up torture victims centers, as you have all over the world, including in Minnesota, to care for those who have suffered. But it is not practical to replicate that

all over Africa in large numbers. So you have done the next best thing. You have trained the trainers to bring this life-saving—this mental-saving work to so many people.

And you have also aided the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. You have helped in prosecutions.

So, again, I want to commend you. But please try to get that legislation. Whatever you can do in the next couple of days to get them to act so it doesn't die over there like so many bills have died in the Senate over the years.

Let me just thank all of our witnesses. You know, as you saw, many of us, including myself, took your testimony, used it to ask questions about the cluster approach, the IDPs. And I am wondering, Mr. Charny, if you can maybe speak further about the IDP issue.

The example you gave of people hoping for trickle-down assistance I think was a poignant one. All of us, I think, when we visit camps are always struck by the second, third, fourth-class status of the IDPs, vis-à-vis refugees who are already in a very disadvantaged situation themselves.

I think this hearing and your testimony again is a call to action, and I am wondering if the interaction has made IDPs as high a priority as you have, if you might want to speak to that. And thank you.

Mr. CHARNY. Yes, thank you.

It is a high priority also for interaction. We have been working on this issue both with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and in the context of the interagency standing committee. I mean, we are constantly raising this issue, and I suspected that you were going to follow up for more thoughts.

As I have reflected on this, I think part of it is that—I mean, if you think about Chad, we tend to—even UNHCR, as effective as they are, they tend to operate—somehow camps are a good—you know, sort of if we have camps, we can organize people, we can provide assistance. And I think one of the biggest challenges with internal displacement is precisely that people are displaced, they are part to find.

It actually takes a real commitment and willingness to go into what, unfortunately, are very dangerous places and try to provide assistance. I mean, just within the last week we had an MSF worker killed in the Central African Republic, again as part of a process of providing medical assistance to internally displaced people.

So part of it—again, for me, it is, first and foremost, organizational. You need to have a commitment on the part of the U.N. country team and nongovernmental organizations, that they make a collective commitment to say we are going to sort of look for these people even though they may be difficult to find and almost invisible and set up ways to provide services even if it doesn't involve camps. I think that is part of it.

I think part of it is resources. You know, UNHCR has said, well, we have to increase beyond refugees. We are going to need more money, and that is true as well. But I still think fundamentally it is about overall commitments on the part of the U.N. country team and NGOs to extend services where they are difficult to provide.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much.

And Ms. Sheila Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Chairwoman and Ambassador, thank you for your kindness very much. I would like to thank Chairman Payne as well for this day, World Refugee Day, and to thank all the witnesses.

You hear the bells ringing, so I am going to be speaking quickly, and I hope in the fast talk that you will hear a sense of pain, desperation and frustration. It certainly does not equate to the millions and millions of refugees all over the world.

I want to say to Mr. Hari, let me welcome you and thank you. It may be a little comfort, but I can at least give you the sense that more Americans are thinking about Sudan every single day, the American Save Darfur Coalition, college campuses, religious institutions, but we really want to do more. And, frankly, I have spent time in the refugee camps and simply in looking for some miracle; and I know that that means hard work. So thank you for being here, and let me welcome you to travel, and I welcome you to Houston, Texas, with your story.

But I want to focus on Mr. Charny in terms of the displaced persons and the question of what more we can do legislatively. As I look at the foreign affairs bill that is coming up, it looks as if we do have dollars for refugee migration, but it doesn't look like it is where I would like it to be.

But I would like you to answer specifically legislatively. I have heard my good friend speak of his legislation. But, legislatively, what twisting, what pathway should we take when we think of displaced persons, when we think of displaced children, and when we think of the violence that occurs on the refugees when they are in camps?

And might I just say that I have sat on the very dry ground of Chad in the refugee camps, and those camps do the best that they can with what they have. They do have water there, they have tents there, they have some form of medical care, but we know now that the impact on Chad has been enormous. What is it that you want to see the United States do?

Mr. CHARNY. I think the first thing, I am still not entirely convinced, despite the previous testimony, that there is complete unity of action and concept on the part of the U.S. Government on the internal displacement issue. So I would like to see almost a policy statement that says, this is how we are going to respond to internal displacement as the U.S. Government and these are the resources that we are going to commit to put behind that response.

I think the second thing which I am not sure is conducive to a legislative remedy, and I am going to listen to my colleagues and friends from PRM groan in advance, but I really think that UNHCR needs to—still needs not so much a push but to have their role in responding to internal displacement completely validated by the U.S. Government. I think they have gotten mixed messages. Because the caseload is potentially so great, we have kind of said, well, we support you, but we are worried about resources. Let's just say unequivocally the UNHCR is in the best position to respond to internal displacement, join with allied governments in trying to create the possibility of their responding more effectively.

Now, I am not an expert on devising legislation. But those are some of the ideas I would—

Ms. WATSON. Yes. I want to thank you, Mr. Charny. I want to thank my colleague, and I know she has more thoughtful questions. She always does.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I do. And as I yield back to you, Madam Chair, I just want to put on the record that our record in Iraq is more absurd and more devastating than one can imagine.

Ms. WATSON. Exactly.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Aid refugees, we hope to go up on the numbers, but it seems ironic that we are in Iraq, but we won't take people fleeing persecution.

I yield back, and I thank you for your insight.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much.

And I just want to task—before you leave, I just want to task our panel here.

Ms. Richard, you are with the International Rescue Committee. Could you write to us, to this committee, one or two pages on what we need to do?

[The information referred to follows:]

International Rescue Committee Checklist
 in response to Rep. Watson's request for suggestions for the:
 Africa and Global Health Subcommittee,
 House Foreign Affairs Committee

- √ Support legislation to fix "material support" provisions of anti-terrorism legislation that are keeping bona fide refugees from sanctuary in the United States.
- √ Hold hearing in the fall on situation in DR Congo, including results of IRC's fifth Congo Mortality Survey. In addition to IRC, witnesses could include representative from UN's integrated peacekeeping force (MONUC) and US government. Ask US government witness why US supports downsizing MONUC and aid to Congo when the situation is so fragile?
- √ Ask State Dept for a progress report on S. 2125, Democratic Republic of the Congo Relief, Security, and Democracy Promotion Act of 2006. Specifically inquire about funding levels and appointment of a special envoy.
- √ Push Administration to support Juba Peace Talks by dispatching a senior diplomat to observe and contributing to UN fund that supports the talks.
- √ As a group, visit resettled African families in nearby Maryland or Virginia. Invite journalists along to cover the visit.
- √ Support legislation on international aspects of Violence Against Women. Since this type of sexual aggression has become increasingly prevalent in conflicts, consider forming a senior delegation to visit programs to prevent and respond to violence against Women in places like Darfur, Uganda, DR Congo, Sierra Leone, and Liberia.
- √ Hold a hearing on relationship between violence against women and global health issues such as HIV/AIDS and maternal mortality rates.
- √ Bring attention to exploitation of natural resources in Africa in places like DR Congo (gems and minerals) and Sudan (oil).
- √ Review what types of programs and aid works and does not work in post-conflict countries, like Liberia and Sierra Leone. Track US government funding levels during a crisis and afterwards during the all-important transition to stability. For example, is aid to South Sudan less during peace than during war and is this a disincentive for peace?

- √ Request that State Department produce a plan on how to capitalize on the potential of the African Union so that it can respond better to crises on that continent.
- √ Authorize a US contribution to the UN Peacebuilding Commission.
- √ Communicate to the House State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee the need for increased funding for the budget accounts that assist refugees and internally displaced persons, particularly the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) account, Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) account, and International Disaster and Famine Assistance (IDFA) account.
- √ Examine how over-reliance on supplemental appropriations to fund humanitarian aid accounts is creating an annual two-stage budget process, thus making it even more difficult to provide life-saving assistance in the field without interruption.
- √ Authorize a contingency fund for use by USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, modeled on the State Department's Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (EMRA) account.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Charny, you mentioned something, and it would take too long to have you respond, but I think you got to a fundamental issue that we really ought to be dealing with. And I think you were alluding to it, Ms. Jackson Lee, and that is the root concerns, the engagement of our country in peace, doing more for peace. Would you respond? And you talked about dysfunctional support. So would you respond in writing to us?

Mr. CHARNY. Sure.

Ms. WATSON. We would appreciate that.

[NOTE: The information referred to was not received prior to printing.]

Ms. WATSON. We don't have time now. They are telling us—I think we have what, 5 minutes?

Ms. JACKSON LEE. 10.

Ms. WATSON. Ten. Okay, we don't have to rush down.

And, Mr. Porter, would you do the same?

[NOTE: The information referred to was not received prior to printing.]

Ms. WATSON. I am not going to ask Mr. Hari to do that. We know your plight, and we are trying to bring light to it.

I think we can do more as a country and, as the NGOs, you need to tell us. And I do know that the budget has been cut in that area when I think we need to do more.

I am joining Ms. Jackson Lee. The refugees—you know, we haven't concentrated on the number of refugees that have fled Iraq and going to the neighboring countries and overloading them. So we have some real concerns, and they go right to the root causes. What can we do more to stop the battles, stop the carnage, stop the genocide? And I think that we need—and I am going to talk to the

chairman when there is time to maybe have a hearing on what we can do before it gets to this point.

So, with that, and if you will respond to us in writing, we would appreciate your testimony. I want to thank you for your time and your input. We will follow up with you.

And we will adjourn. This hearing stands adjourned.

Mr. CHARNY. Thank you very much.

Mr. PORTER. Thank you.

Ms. RICHARD. Thank you all.

[Whereupon, at 12 o'clock p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

