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MEDIA NOTE

U.S. Special Envoy Gration Witnesses Bilateral Agreement in Sudan

Today, U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration witnessed the initialing of a bilateral agreement in Juba, Southern Sudan, between representatives of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) on advancing implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

General Gration served as a facilitator and mediator in discussions between the two parties over the past three months as they worked through outstanding and unimplemented portions of the CPA.

The agreement initialed today, which will be forwarded to Sudan's Presidency for final ratification, commits the NCP and SPLM to a series of timed benchmarks for implementing key aspects of the CPA, including border demarcation and election preparation.

Special Envoy Gration served as a witness to the initialing of this Agreement by the two parties in his capacity as mediator, but the United States is not a party to this Agreement.

Despite the significant progress made to date, the parties have been unable to reach agreement on several issues, namely a final determination on the use of census data. For this reason, Special Envoy Gration will continue to act in his role as facilitator of this trilateral process and has agreed to return to Juba in early September for another round of consultations between the two parties.

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