



**Press Statement**

**Sean McCormack, Spokesman**

Washington, DC

April 23, 2008

## **U.S. Welcomes Sudan Census**

The United States welcomes the start of the Fifth Sudan Population and Housing Census. The census is a milestone in the implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ended 21 years of civil war, and will provide important information for development planning. The United States contributed \$9.1 million towards census preparations.

We commend the efforts of the Government of National Unity, in particular First Vice President Salva Kiir, as well as those of the Government of Southern Sudan, the UN, and donor countries to make the census a success. Sudan's democratic transition requires the involvement of all Sudanese, and we encourage all its citizens -- including those in Darfur -- to stand up and be counted in this process. We note that the census is independent from the voter registration and elections process scheduled for 2009.

We remain concerned about census issues in Darfur, especially the counting Internally Displaced Persons, and we condemn threats by rebel groups against census enumerators. We call on all parties to work together to ensure a peaceful and safe conduct of the census.

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