



Testimony on Darfur before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs

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As Prepared

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shelby, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Administration's Sudan policy and specifically our efforts to peacefully end the tragic humanitarian situation in Darfur.

Sudan is a top priority for the Administration. We appreciate the generous support of Congress as we work to resolve the situation in Darfur which, among many things, has helped us sustain the African Union (AU) peacekeepers in Darfur and most recently, achieve United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1769 authorizing the deployment of 26,000 UN peacekeepers.

But, as demonstrated by the tragic events of September 29 with the attack on the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) camp in Darfur that resulted in the death of at least 10 AU peacekeepers, there is still a long way to go to achieve peace in Darfur. I look forward to our continued close relationship with Congress as we work together to bring peace to the region.

Critical Juncture on Darfur

Mr. Chairman, we are at a critical point in our efforts in Sudan. The large, robust peacekeeping force for Darfur that we have all worked for over the last few years is finally on the verge of deployment - its first elements are slated to go in before the end of the year. The renewed talks that aim to achieve a lasting political solution in Darfur are expected to begin on October 27 in Libya.

This progress, while long in coming, is due in large part to increased international pressure on Sudan, led by the United States. At the UN General Assembly last week, President Bush stated that "America has responded [to the suffering in Darfur] with tough sanctions against those responsible for the violence." The new sanctions he imposed on May 29 targeted 30 Sudanese Government-owned or-controlled companies and three individuals, including two Government officials and one rebel leader.

These new sanctions, and stepped up enforcement of existing sanctions on Sudan, are working. To move forward from here, we are working closely with the UN and AU to implement the agreements, even as we continue to closely monitor the actions of all parties.

We appreciate the efforts of some groups to seek additional ways to increase pressure on Khartoum. We are confident that our May 29th sanctions have and are working. We are at a critical moment and it is important to avoid any action - including legislative measures - that might set back the progress we have made thus far. In considering our position, we also have to bear in mind that the Government of Sudan has accepted UNAMID and the need to negotiate a peace deal. At the moment, the main issue is whether rebel factions will be an obstacle to a peaceful negotiated settlement.

We are also concerned that some initiatives to increase economic pressure on Sudan will damage our relationship with our key partners rather than increase pressure in Khartoum, and may further complicate efforts to carry out our substantial assistance programs. A welcome and useful initiative at this juncture would be for Congress and other concerned groups to issue statements calling for the rapid deployment of the UN/AU hybrid force and calling on all parties to participate in the political process.

Situation in Darfur and between North-South

Today, I will review the present situation in Darfur, our efforts to achieve full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which ended more than 21 years of warfare between North and South Sudan, and what further steps are needed to realize our goals. Efforts to end the violence in Darfur and implement the CPA must go hand-in-hand, and we must be willing to exercise pressure to achieve success on both fronts. At the same time, we must also be wary of initiatives that advance peace in one part of the country at the expense of another.

Let me first turn to Darfur. The situation on the ground is chaotic. Tribal conflict, survival-motivated violence, Janjaweed attacks, clashes between rebel and government forces, and rebel attacks on AMIS continue. Since the beginning of 2007, nearly 248,000 people have been newly displaced from the fighting. This is in addition to the over two million people currently living in camps or settlements for the displaced, and the over 235,000 refugees in neighboring Chad.

On September 29 and 30, the 7,000-strong African Union Mission in Sudan suffered its greatest loss since its initial deployment in 2004. Armed men from rebel factions viciously attacked the African Union base camp in Haskanita, killing 10 peacekeepers, looting supplies and vehicles, and destroying the buildings.

The 150 or so primarily Nigerian peacekeepers fought back, repulsing the first wave of attackers, but in the end were overpowered and forced to evacuate in the early morning hours. We honor the service of those peacekeepers that lost their lives and our hearts go out to their families. We express our outrage and call upon all parties to adhere to a ceasefire and cease hostilities immediately. Military action will only weaken the position of the party responsible.

The tragedy of this attack highlights the urgency to deploy the UN's heavy support package (HSP) and the UN/AU Hybrid peacekeeping mission (UNAMID) to Darfur as soon as possible. The United States has been leading this effort. We have been working with the United Nations to recruit the necessary troop contributors, and with a few exceptions, the UN has received an abundance of offers. We are also expanding seven of the African Union's base camps to hold two additional battalions that will serve as protection for the UN's HSP units.

Among other units, the HSP includes engineers from China that will help prepare the infrastructure for larger deployments of peacekeepers early next year. We are also providing training and equipment to African battalions that will deploy as part of the UN mission.

Again, the Sudanese Government has publicly accepted UN Security Council Resolution 1769 and has pledged cooperation with its deployment. We will hold them to this pledge. The key leaders of UNAMID are already on the ground. The UN/AU Joint Special Representative, Rodolphe Adada, and UN/AU Force Commander General Martin Agwai are already in place. We have warned the Government of Sudan that we are watching closely, and that we insist on nothing less than full cooperation, from flight and customs clearances for UN equipment, to the rapid provision of entry visas for deploying personnel.

The heart of the solution in Darfur is an inclusive political agreement, and the United States is sustaining its efforts to achieve that end. There can be no military solution. I was present in Abuja, Nigeria when the Government of Sudan and Minni Minawi, leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM), signed the Darfur Peace Agreement

(DPA) on May 5, 2006. The DPA is a fair agreement which addresses the core grievances of the people of Darfur. Unfortunately, at the eleventh hour, some parties became intransigent and refused to sign. We have all learned from that process.

The United Nations and African Union are providing renewed leadership and their efforts are making headway. New talks are scheduled to begin on October 27 in Libya. The UN and AU have incorporated the regional countries into the process, and are formulating a mechanism to formally include civil society, tribal leaders, and representatives of the internally displaced persons. The first order of business in Libya should be the strengthening of the ceasefire monitoring mechanism.

As I noted, at the moment, the splintered rebel factions are creating obstacles to a peaceful negotiated settlement. Several of the rebel factions have refused to attend peace conferences, citing untenable conditions, and others are wary of the process. Rebel factions that remain outside of the process are not acting in the interests of the people of Darfur they claim to represent. We are working with our international partners to press all the rebels to attend.

We have reached a sensitive time in our diplomatic engagement to achieve a restarted political process in Libya. The Sudanese government and the rebel factions must both be pressed to attend the talks, and we have been sending messages to that end. We will apply sanctions on any party that obstructs the peace process.

Let me now discuss the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which is central to our efforts to achieve the peaceful, democratic transformation of Sudan and resolution of the crisis in Darfur. The elections called for at every level in 2009, if implemented freely and fairly, can dramatically change the political landscape in Sudan and Darfur and the direction of Sudan's future. We must ensure that our efforts do not undermine the potential of this agreement.

While much has been accomplished during the nearly three years since its signing, the progress of the CPA has faltered in areas related to flashpoint issues along the North-South border, including Abyei, oil revenue sharing, and redeployment of forces. The United States is leading international efforts to address these challenges and put CPA implementation back on track.

We are sending a message to all parties, including those in Darfur, that the international community will stand fully behind the peace agreements it witnesses. Special Envoy Natsios is on the ground in Southern Sudan pressing this point. We have asked the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), to host a high-level meeting through its Partners' Forum to call the parties to the CPA to account for progress on implementation. The recent appointment of Ashraf Jehangir Qazi as UN Special Representative for Sudan will also bring renewed focus to CPA implementation.

The United States has and will continue to lead the world in responding to the situation in Sudan. We have provided over \$4 billion in assistance to Sudan since 2005. While we are successfully increasing pressure on the Government of Sudan, we must also recognize that these efforts and any future efforts may impact the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS). As part of the CPA, the GOSS receives tens of millions of dollars in oil revenue each month from the central government in Khartoum. This influx of resources is unprecedented in a post-conflict situation, and has allowed the GOSS to participate with the international community in the development and reconstruction of Southern Sudan.

We share the frustration of Congress and the American people who want to see an end to the suffering of the Darfur people. We, together with Congress' ongoing support, will continue to exert all our efforts until the crisis in Darfur is ended, and all the people of Sudan can live in peace.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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