

Statement of Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Charles R. Snyder,  
Bureau of African Affairs, Department of State, Washington, D.C.  
before the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
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Sudan: Peace but at What Price?

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: I am honored to have the opportunity to appear before you to discuss our government's efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive north-south peace accord, and to address the grave humanitarian and human rights problems in Darfur. We are exerting strong leadership on both issues and have made tremendous progress toward ending the North-South conflict over the past three and a half years. We intend to use some tools that have proven most effective to address the humanitarian and human rights crises in Darfur. The situation in Darfur requires urgent attention, and will, if not resolved, negatively affect prospects to conclude and implement a comprehensive peace accord between the Government of Sudan (GOS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). Given the right resources, I am confident that we can end the tragedy in Darfur.

The signing of the three protocols on power sharing, the two disputed areas of the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile, and Abyei were a major breakthrough in efforts to achieve a north-south peace accord. Both sides agree that all the substantive issues have now been resolved. What remains is to work out the details of a formal ceasefire and related security arrangements, and implementation modalities. In their signing a declaration on June 5 in Nairobi, Vice President Taha and Chairman Garang committed themselves to do this quickly. We are, therefore, hopeful that a final comprehensive peace accord will be signed within the next 8-12 weeks. The situation in Darfur complicates this process, however, and clouds prospects for implementation of a peace accord. We are pushing the parties to sign a final peace accord as soon as possible while simultaneously working to end the violence in Darfur.

The GOS and SPLM will meet on June 22, again under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Agency on Development (IGAD), to work out a formal north-south ceasefire agreement including details relating to disengagement and redeployment of forces, and disarmament, demobilization, and

reintegration. We are sending a strong team of experts to those talks to assist IGAD mediator Sumbeiywo. The security talks will be followed by a session on modalities to implement the accords that have been signed. Once these details have been worked out the GOS and SPLM will sign a comprehensive peace accord encapsulating all the agreements that have been reached.

Immediately following that, the six-month pre-interim period will begin, followed by the six-year implementation period. We are working now to identify the resources that will be needed to support implementation, as well as reconstruction and development. A strong commitment of support will reinforce U.S. leadership in the peace process and will enable us to push other donors to ensure equitable burden sharing among the international community.

The title for this hearing, Mr. Chairman, asks the question “what price peace?” The price of war has been enormous. We estimate that over two million people have died in the course of the north-south conflict, approximately 700,000 refugees have fled the country, close to four million are displaced within Sudan, and development has been severely retarded throughout the entire country. We cannot and will not lessen pressure on the Government of Sudan and allow what is happening in Darfur to continue in order to achieve a north-south peace accord. We have made clear to both the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement that peace throughout Sudan, including Darfur is essential to the implementation of a north-south accord. Continued instability in western Sudan would fatally complicate efforts to implement a north-south accord.

Even if this were not the case, the situation in Darfur would still merit the most vigorous possible effort by the United States. The violence and atrocities being perpetrated in Darfur simply must not be allowed to continue.

A humanitarian crisis of major proportions exists in Darfur. I want to review how this situation developed and inform you about the steps we are taking to address it. Darfur is an area where traditional conflicts between nomadic herders, who are largely Arab, and sedentary agriculturalists, who are largely African Muslims, have long existed. The government’s perceived marginalization of the region and favoritism towards Arab tribes have contributed to growing popular dissatisfaction among the three primary

African groups: the Fur, Zagawa, and Messalit. This dissatisfaction crystallized as the people of the region looked at the progress being made in the north-south peace talks and became increasingly focused on the need to address their grievances. There two armed opposition groups in Darfur: the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). Both groups draw some support as a result of western grievances, but neither group has a clear political agenda. Although it is clear that the Government of Sudan is responsible for the humanitarian and human rights crises, we should not assume that the armed opposition groups are entirely without blame.

The emergence of armed opposition in Darfur has profoundly shaken the GOS because it poses, in many respects, a greater threat than the activities of the SPLM in the south. The SPLM has never threatened the north militarily; it is a southern movement. Support for the JEM and SLM, however, comes from within the predominantly Muslim population of Darfur; radical Muslim cleric Turabi has links to the JEM. Moreover, over 50 percent of the Sudanese military is from the Darfur, and that region is not far from Khartoum. A successful insurgency in Darfur would fuel potential insurgencies in other parts of the north. This, I believe, explains why the Government of Sudan has adopted such brutal tactics in Darfur. The GOS is determined to defeat the JEM and SLM at any cost to the civilian population.

The effective military operations carried out by the SLM and the JEM, particularly the attack on the regional capital of El Fasher last year, raised grave concerns within the GOS. As a result, the government launched an all-out effort to defeat the armed opposition. As a major part of that effort, the government armed and supported Arab-based “jingaweit” militias have attacked and displaced civilians. These attacks are coordinated and supported by government security forces. African villages have been systematically attacked in a scorched-earth type approach. Villages are burned to the ground, water points destroyed, crops burned, and the people are forced from their land. The African population has been brutalized by the jingaweit through widespread atrocities including mass rape, branding of raped women, summary killings, amputations, and other atrocities. Estimates of civilians killed range between 15-30,000. As many as one million people have been displaced, and tens of thousands have sought refuge across the border in Chad. All of this amounts to “ethnic cleansing” on a large scale.

The United States has exerted strong leadership to stop the violence. We have consistently told the Government of Sudan – at the highest levels – that it must take the following steps on Darfur: end the jingaweit violence; agree to a ceasefire with the armed opposition and allow international monitoring of ceasefire; and allow unrestricted humanitarian access.

I want to detail actions we have taken:

- The President, Secretary of State, National Security Adviser, USAID Administrator have raised Darfur with President Bashir, Vice President Taha, and Foreign Minister Ismael.
- The President issued a strong public statement on April 7 in which he condemned the atrocities being committed and insisted that the GOS stop jingaweit violence.
- Senior U.S. officials have visited Darfur several times since last fall to call attention to the situation and to press the GOS to stop the violence.
- The United States played a decisive role in brokering a ceasefire between the government and the Darfur armed opposition that was signed in Chad on April 8.
- We then followed up the last week of May in Addis Ababa to help broker an agreement to deploy international monitors, led by the African Union, to Darfur.
- The United States pushed for a special briefing on Darfur in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on April 7; this helped pressure the GOS to sign the ceasefire on April 8.
- World Food Program Director and Acting High Commissioner for Human Rights Berti Ramcharan briefed the Security Council again May 7. The Council has also heard from NGOs in an informal session and has been briefed a third time.
- The U.S. took the lead by drafting a strong Presidential Statement that the Council adopted, after some negotiation, May 25. That statement

“expressed its grave concern over the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation” and “strongly condemn[ed]” the “indiscriminate attacks on civilians, sexual violence, forced displacement, and acts of violence, especially those with an ethnic dimension.”

- A U.S./UK sponsored UNSC resolution was passed June 11 to welcome the three protocols at Naivasha. At our insistence, the resolution also refers to the situation in Darfur and ensures that the UNSC will remain seized of this issue.
- At our initiative the UN chaired a June 4 Geneva meeting on Darfur with donors to send a concerted message to the GOS and to stimulate additional pledges to meet the urgent humanitarian assistance needs. The United States pledged \$188.5 million bringing our total US planned contribution to nearly \$300 million.
- At the UN Human Rights Commission (CHR) meeting in Geneva in April of this year, we co-sponsored a resolution calling for appointment of a special rapporteur for Sudan under Item 9. The head of our delegation made a strong statement in which he condemned the atrocities taking place in Darfur and held the international community accountable for lack of action. Ultimately, the CHR adopted a weaker decision, appointing an independent expert.
- And finally, as I mentioned earlier in my statement, I want to underscore that we have made clear to the GOS that we will not normalize relations – if there is a north-south peace agreement – unless the GOS takes the necessary steps to address the situation in Darfur.

The steps that we have taken have already yielded some results, though not enough given the enormity of the crisis in Darfur. The ceasefire signed between the GOS and the Darfur armed opposition provides a basis to end the violence. The agreement specifically holds the GOS responsible to stop the activities of the jingaweit militia. The ceasefire agreement provides for international monitoring, and this is to be under the auspices of the African Union. With our logistical support, the first team of monitors has just deployed to Darfur. In addition to representatives from African countries, U.S. and European Union (EU) personnel are members of the team. We are

working with the AU to ramp up this team and to begin investigations on an urgent basis. Getting these monitors on the ground and helping them work effectively is of critical importance. You will recall the pivotal role that getting monitors into Sudan has played in maintaining the ceasefire in the North-South conflict and helping move political resolution to the conflict forward.

While there has been some diminution in violence and some improvement in humanitarian access, the situation in Darfur remains grave. USAID estimates that as many as 350,000 people could die over the coming months if humanitarian assistance is not put in place urgently. However, most of the violence is being perpetrated by the jingaweit. In addition, there have been several unconfirmed reports of aerial bombardment and/or use of helicopter gun ships. Getting international monitoring in place and stopping the jingaweit violence is crucial to facilitating unrestricted humanitarian access. International humanitarian workers simply cannot gain access to many areas while the violence is continuing. Moreover, those displaced fear receiving humanitarian assistance, because that provokes further jingaweit attacks to loot supplies.

The perpetrators of the violence and atrocities in Darfur must be held accountable. The Government of Sudan has a responsibility to end the impunity in Darfur. The perpetrators of the violence and atrocities in Darfur must be held accountable. We described in detail in our Sudan Peace Act report the atrocities that are taking place in Darfur. While the information available to us is far less precise than we would like, we are working hard to identify those responsible. We are exploring actions that we can take against these people, specifically by freezing assets they may have in the United States and prohibiting the issuance of visas to them. We are working hard with the UN and other partners to ensure that concerns about Darfur received appropriate mention in any Security Council statements on the situation in Sudan. It is also essential that the results of ethnic cleansing not be allowed to stand. The African ethnic groups forced from the land must be allowed to return voluntarily and their protection must be ensured.

The Administration considers resolving the situation in Darfur to be one of its highest priorities. The Memorandum of Justification accompanying the President's certification to the Congress consistent with the Sudan Peace Act highlighted the need for urgent action both to reach a north-south peace deal and to end the violence in Darfur. The Memorandum made clear that the

situation in Darfur was taken into account in the determination. It specifically noted “Government-supported atrocities in Darfur and hostilities in other areas have caused a major humanitarian crisis and stimulated renewed skepticism about Government intentions.” It pointed out that the government’s actions in Darfur weaken our confidence that it is committed to achieve peace throughout the country.

The progress in the north-south negotiations provides an important opportunity to intensify efforts on Darfur and to test the Government’s commitment to peace. Both Vice President Taha and Chairman Garang have told us they understand that a north-south peace accord cannot be effectively implemented without peace in Darfur and that they have pledged to work together to resolve the Darfur problem. We intend to hold them to this commitment.

A political process will be essential as part of the solution for the problem in Darfur. We are encouraging the Government and the armed opposition in Darfur to have serious political discussions aimed at achieving a negotiated solution. The agreements signed between the Government and the SPLM establish a national framework for resolution of local grievances by providing strong provisions for a federal structure and local autonomy.

The limited improvement in humanitarian access that has taken place and the fact that there is at least less violence than there was before provides some basis for hope. That said, it is by no means possible to say that we have turned the corner on Darfur, and we must maintain relentless pressure on both the Government and the rebels to take the necessary steps. The recent deployment of international monitors will help establish a new reality on the ground and, therefore, to help end the violence.

We have surprised the Government of Sudan by our tough actions on Darfur. Clearly, the GOS had calculated that our desire to see a north-south accord might lead us to adopt a softer approach on Darfur. That was a major miscalculation, and the GOS now understands that. Our linkage of normalization of bilateral relations with the GOS to GOS behavior in Darfur as well as to a north-south accord highlights our seriousness. I take this opportunity once again to reiterate our message to the GOS. Bipartisan congressional interest in this issue, as manifested by the helpful congressional resolution on Darfur and this briefing helps send a clear message that we do not intend to stand by while violence and atrocities

continue in Darfur. Our message to the Government of Sudan is clear: do what is necessary now, and we will work with you. If you do not, there will be consequences. Time is of the essence. Do not doubt our determination.