

Roger Winter
Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance
U.S. Agency for International Development

Testimony before the
Committee on Foreign Relations Committee
Subcommittee on Africa
United States Senate

June 15, 2004

I thank the Chairman and Members of this Committee for holding this hearing. Your interest in Sudan is helpful and can have useful repercussions on the ground in Sudan at a time when the situation there is more fragile and more complicated than ever. Several Members of this Committee have been involved in Sudanese issues for many years, and I can assure you that that fact is known and respected in the region. Your veteran wisdom, fresh ideas, and steady engagement on Sudan are welcome and appreciated by me, by my USAID colleagues, and by many Sudanese I have met in my regular travels to the region. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

It is tempting to describe this as two hearings in one: one hearing about the crisis in western Sudan, and one hearing about the progress toward peace in southern Sudan. Such a description would be dangerously wrong, however. The same Government of Sudan (GoS) that signed a long-awaited framework peace agreement on May 26 to end a 20-year civil war in the South that killed or uprooted more than 6 million people is the same GoS that still pursues a campaign of deadly destruction and relief deprivation against the people of Darfur in the West. The sense of injustice, discrimination, and marginalization among black African Sudanese that partly contributed to the insurgency that began in Darfur in February 2003 is not unlike the deep sense of grievance among black African Sudanese that triggered the newest round of war in the South 20 years ago.

An important link exists between the events in southern Sudan and Darfur, and therefore a link exists in U.S. Government policy. The new peace agreement in southern Sudan is an important achievement that the long-suffering peoples of the south deserve to celebrate, and the international community welcomes it. But it is a diminished achievement because of events in Darfur. We cannot allow the GoS to believe that agreement on a peace framework in the South purchases international tolerance for ethnic cleansing in the West. As testimony by the Department of State today makes clear, the U.S. Government will not normalize relations with Khartoum until the devastating GoS policies in Darfur cease.

USAID is committed to an aggressive humanitarian response to emergency needs in Darfur, and we are committed to supporting the difficult process of reintegration, rebuilding, healing and reconciliation in southern Sudan. But I must warn that our obligation to respond to the immense human needs in Darfur could undermine the necessary and justified surge of effort USAID needs to pursue in helping establish adequate governance and reintegration in southern Sudan.

I. Darfur

Overview

The situation in Darfur is the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today. It is already too late to save the lives of many people who will perish in coming weeks because emergency humanitarian assistance has not arrived in time due to GoS obstruction of international relief programs. USAID analysis of potential mortality rates in Darfur suggests that 300,000 or more Darfurians are likely to perish by the end of this year if restrictions on humanitarian access persist. By comparison, an estimated 30,000 to 100,000 died in the 1998 famine in southern Sudan's Bahr el-Ghazal Province that some members of this Committee will remember.

As the GoS and its *Jingawit* proxy forces continue a campaign of ethnic cleansing in Darfur that has forced an estimated 1.1 million people from their homes while inflicting widespread atrocities, serious food shortages, deliberate blockages of humanitarian aid, and destruction of shelter and medical care, it is possible to conceive of chilling scenarios that could push the death toll far higher than even the astounding level of 300,000. Some 2.2 million Darfurians are directly affected by the crisis. An estimated 1 million people are displaced and in great danger inside Darfur, while approximately 160,000 Darfurians have become refugees in neighboring Chad.

USAID as well as international and private humanitarian agencies have warned for months about the urgent necessity of delivering large quantities of relief supplies and expertise into Darfur before the onset of the annual rainy season in mid-June begins to make entire areas logistically inaccessible. It is now mid-June; the precipitation has arrived on schedule, and in a matter of weeks the rain will have rendered some roads impassable to delivery vehicles and transformed crowded and unsanitary displacement sites into breeding grounds for cholera, measles, dysentery, meningitis, malaria, and other diseases that will claim huge numbers of lives. This is a disaster in the making in part because prior to the rainy season the GoS consistently imposes restrictions that delay deliveries of life-saving services. As discussed later in this testimony, a few administrative restrictions have been eased in recent weeks but have not disappeared and have in fact been augmented by new restrictions, ensuring that timely humanitarian access to Darfur remains a serious problem.

That men, women, and children uprooted by the war and ethnic cleansing will die in enormous numbers is no longer in doubt due to advanced stages of malnutrition and

disease that cannot be reversed in time. What remains in doubt is how high the body count will climb, and whether or not the Sudanese government will finally make saving lives in Darfur the priority rather than a chit for negotiation.

The U.S. Government has repeatedly pressed the GoS to stop the violence in Darfur and allow full humanitarian access since the conflict's impact on the civilian population became apparent last year. The President, the State Department and USAID have issued strong statements on the matter. The President, Secretary of State and the National Security Advisor have all raised Darfur directly and forcefully to President Bashir and Vice President Taha. Senator Danforth, Administrator Natsios, then Acting Assistant Secretary Snyder, myself, and other senior U.S. Government officials have repeatedly stressed the United States' concern over the situation in Darfur when meeting with senior Sudanese government officials in Khartoum or Naivasha. Unfortunately, the GoS has chosen instead to pursue a policy of violence and ethnic cleansing against the civilian population.

USAID staff conducted a mission to the region as early as April 2003, just two months after the violence began. I accompanied the first humanitarian delivery able to reach Darfur in August 2003. Administrator Natsios led a delegation to Darfur last October, and I led yet another delegation to Darfur in February 2004. I returned to Khartoum with a USAID colleague in March to help press for a humanitarian cease-fire, and the U.S. Government played a significant role in the Darfur cease-fire negotiations held in N'Djamena, Chad in early April. When the cease-fire took effect on April 11, USAID mobilized a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) that same day in anticipation of improved humanitarian access to Darfur.

The U.S. Government has already committed or pledged to commit nearly \$300 million since February 2003 to fund the difficult challenge of providing emergency humanitarian assistance in Darfur and eastern Chad.

Violence and Ethnic Cleansing in Darfur

Insurgent activity began in the Darfur region of western Sudan in early 2003 in response to local political and economic grievances against the government in Khartoum. The GoS has responded by unleashing a campaign of ethnic cleansing targeting Darfur's predominantly black African population. The local population has not been spared by the fact that their Muslim religion is rooted in the same basic tenets as that of the government in Khartoum. Sudanese government air and ground forces, allied with *Jingaweit* militias, have systematically attacked hundreds of villages—including aerial bombardments and helicopter gunships--in a vast pattern of destruction readily familiar to anyone who has witnessed or analyzed similar attacks perpetrated by GoS troops and *Murajaleen* militia in southern Sudan during the past 20 years.

Various international human rights groups estimate that 15,000 to 30,000 civilians have died in Darfur during the past 16 months. A cease-fire signed by the Sudanese

government and the two Darfurian rebel groups on April 8 reduced but failed to eliminate the violence and did not reverse the underlying GoS policy of depredation against the population. In North Darfur, an aerial bombardment on May 28 reportedly killed 12 or more persons, and civilians report continued attacks and harassment in that region. In parts of South Darfur, *Jingaweit* attacks reportedly killed at least 56 persons in late May, and local populations report that *Jingaweit* have continued to perpetrate rapes and assaults in the area. In West Darfur, insecurity persists along the Sudan-Chad border and large numbers fled new violence in late May, creating a new refugee outflow into Chad in early June. Some villagers in West Darfur report that fear of *Jingaweit* attacks along the roads have made them virtual prisoners in their own homes. Victims throughout Darfur consistently have reported since the onset of violence that government troops participate in attacks with *Jingaweit* militia and oversee militia activity.

Deliberate wholesale destruction is evident on the ground. Our surveillance of villages spanning much but not all of Darfur has confirmed that 301 villages have been destroyed and 76 have been damaged. We continue to collect data such as this on a regular basis, finding more destruction each time. One international human rights agency has reported that in West Darfur alone, *Jingaweit* attacked and burned 14 villages in a single day. The long list of destroyed villages manages to convey a sobering sense of the enormous scope of the violence and the crippling long-term nature of the devastation: in one village we know about, all 1,300 structures are destroyed; in another village, all 466 structures are destroyed; in yet another settlement, 628 of 720 structures are destroyed; and the list goes on. In some cases we know the names of the destroyed villages, while in some other cases the village name is unknown to us even though the destruction left behind is evident. In village after village, the attacks by *Jingaweit* and GoS troops have burned crops, killed or stolen cattle, and destroyed irrigation systems, thereby devastating much of Darfur's economic base and potentially discouraging eventual population return and reconstruction.

Victims of the attacks by *Jingaweit* and GoS military regularly describe massacres, executions, and rapes committed in plain view. GoS planes have bombed villages and attacked them with helicopters. We have received reports that some victims were buried alive and others were mutilated after death. At one isolated location visited by USAID staff in Darfur last month, local leaders reported that more than 400 local women and girls have been raped by attackers in recent months; some women reportedly were raped in front of their husbands, compounding the shame and humiliation inflicted by the attackers. We continue to receive reports of *Jingaweit* branding their rape victims, presumably to make the act of rape permanently visible and discourage husbands from taking their wives back. A health survey in parts of West Darfur in April found that 60 percent of the deaths there of children older than age 5 were caused by wounds inflicted in the violence. These acts raise questions about the community's long-term ability to survive and reestablish itself.

Many of the estimated 1 million residents of Darfur who are now internally displaced have been denied safety even in displacement camps where they have gone to seek refuge. Pro-government security personnel have blocked some uprooted families from

entering particular towns. Armed *Jingaweit* apparently under GoS instructions claim to be “protecting” camps of displaced persons who fled *Jingaweit* attacks days earlier. Camp occupants continue to suffer killings, rapes, and theft of relief items. Displaced persons say that they cannot venture outside their camps or villages for fear of being assaulted by *Jingaweit*. Because many men fear death if they leave, many families rely on women to perform journeys because women need fear “only” rape, according to interviews with displaced families. Some communities have refused to accept sorely needed humanitarian assistance because they fear that distributions of relief items might attract *Jingaweit* atrocities. A United Nations (UN) official recently reported that he has never encountered displaced populations as frightened as the people he met in Darfur last month.

A troubling new development is the GoS effort to force frightened, displaced families to return prematurely to their unsafe villages, where they are at the mercy of the same *Jingaweit* militia that attacked them originally. We have received other reports of families returning to their homes under duress after receiving GoS assurances of reintegration assistance that in fact does not exist. Involuntary returns to locations that are unsafe, utterly destroyed, and currently beyond the reach of international aid would constitute yet another violation against the people of Darfur and would compound the current humanitarian emergency.

Humanitarian Situation in Darfur

The lack of humanitarian access to desperate populations in Darfur remains a matter of highest priority to USAID, the U.S. Government broadly, and, we hope, to others in the international community. While the GoS belatedly has eased or removed some restrictions on relief programs in the past month, many GoS administrative obstacles remain in place that translate directly into less aid and greater probability of suffering and death for populations desperately in need.

The GoS promised in late May to accelerate visas for relief workers seeking to enter Sudan and has lately fulfilled that promise for USAID personnel; some other humanitarian agencies report, however, that their relief workers continue to endure extended waits for visas. While the GoS says it has waived requirement that relief workers traveling from Khartoum to Darfur must apply for travel permits, some agencies continue to encounter travel permit delays as well as registration problems authorizing them to establish operations in Darfur. Sudanese authorities have eased their requirement of 72-hour advance clearance on all air passengers into Darfur by reducing it to 48-hour advance notice, but travel on the ground within Darfur remains subject to tight government controls.

Although the GoS has backed away from restrictions it planned to impose on aircraft used in humanitarian flights, GoS customs delays on vehicles, radios, food, medicines and other supplies imported by relief agencies have seriously hindered humanitarian operations. One international humanitarian organization reported on June 7 that it has

had 31 tons of medical supplies and medicines awaiting GoS clearance to enter the country since March 2, nine tons of emergency health kits awaiting import clearance since May 1, and 13 vehicles needed for emergency health programs bottled up by authorities at Port Sudan for durations ranging from weeks to months. The relief agency in this particular case has made explicitly clear that these delays will cost lives in Darfur by depriving the population of basic medicines and depriving health workers of the mobility they need to assess conditions at isolated locations. In another report, an international relief agency stated that 200 metric tons of food and medical supplies that arrived in Port Sudan in mid-April had not been released because the GoS claims it is not an emergency shipment since it arrived by sea rather than by air.

Sudanese officials have informed the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) that the government might insist on conducting its own time-consuming tests on imported medicines that are urgently needed to save lives in Darfur. The GoS requires international relief agencies to use Sudanese truckers to haul relief commodities even though domestic trucking capacity is insufficient and domestic trucking prices are three to four times higher than a year ago. Relief efforts have also been hampered by GoS policies requiring international humanitarian agencies to partner with local organizations possessing limited capacities and questionable neutrality to do the work that needs to be done.

These GoS-imposed delays and restrictions have conspired to limit the number of international relief agencies able to operate in Darfur and have curtailed the reach of those agencies that are present there. Although the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) mobilized on April 11 in response to the Darfur crisis, it was prevented from establishing a regular presence on the ground in Darfur until late May because of GoS policies that delayed each step of the process. Local GoS officials have interfered with USAID's DART information collection by restricting the questions our team could ask displaced populations about why they fled and who attacked them, at times banning our staff from taking pictures of relief operations, confiscating a satellite telephone, and abruptly cutting short a visit to a displacement camp. Last week GoS officials in Darfur implicitly threatened the security of the USAID DART during a food distribution.

As a result of GoS policies restricting relief activities, combined with other logistical and security constraints such as banditry, poor roads and rains, the bottom line is that humanitarian access remains a grave problem, and a humanitarian disaster is occurring as we speak. USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios described the Darfur situation in stark terms during a Donors Conference on June 3: "The grave situation that has unfolded in Darfur in western Sudan in recent months is the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today.... Even in a best-case scenario, under optimal conditions, we could see as many as 320,000 people die. Without optimal conditions, the numbers will be far greater."

USAID released a chart last month projecting potential mortality rates in Darfur. An updated version of the chart is attached. The projection indicates that, based on initial health surveys and our experience with previous famines in southern Sudan and Ethiopia, the death rate in Darfur might be in the process of increasing to four deaths per day per

10,000 people at risk by the end of this month—a rate considered to be four times higher than the emergency threshold. Absent adequate humanitarian response, the mortality rate could be expected to more than double yet again during July and climb relentlessly during the final half of the year to as high as 20 deaths per day per every 10,000 people. Under this scenario, as many as 30 percent of the affected population could die by year's end. Adding to our alarm is the fact that a more recent nutrition survey conducted in part of Darfur suggests that the mortality rate projected in the attached USAID chart might be too conservative. A health survey at locations in West Darfur concluded in late May that nearly 5 percent of all children under age 5 had died within the past three months at the surveyed locations—a mortality rate more than double emergency thresholds.

It is important to emphasize the awful truth that humanitarian conditions in Darfur are almost certain to get worse before they get better. The annual rainy season has arrived. Rains have begun to fall on hundreds of thousands of persons already physically depleted by months of displacement, fear, food shortages, and abysmal sanitation conditions in overcrowded displacement camps. USAID personnel on the ground continue to report large numbers of uprooted families living in the open air, without shelter or blankets for protection from the rain and temperature extremes. Camp sanitation problems from rotting animal carcasses and months of open defecation threaten to deteriorate further as the rains intensify. Internally displaced person (IDP) sites in Darfur require more than a ten-fold increase in latrines to meet minimum sanitation standards agreed to by relief specialists. Conditions are ripe for the spread of fatal illnesses such as measles, cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, meningitis, and malaria.

Even if security prevails and bureaucratic impediments imposed by the GoS suddenly vanish, relief officials already know that 54 of 80 IDP camps will become fully or partially inaccessible during the rainy season. We have seen clear evidence that at least one hastily established IDP site is located in a flood plain that is almost sure to be inundated in coming months. During the past two weeks, up to four inches of rain fell in parts of South Darfur, and up to three inches in sections of West Darfur. Meteorological data indicate that the rains are advancing northward deeper into Darfur a bit ahead of schedule so far this year. The illustrated charts attached to this testimony provide additional information about the number of days remaining before seasonal rains begin to cut off sites in Darfur and eastern Chad.

The approximately 1 million persons estimated to be internally displaced in Darfur are scattered among about 80 known camps as well as in homes and villages not yet identified, according to UN humanitarian assessments. Some 420,000 displaced persons can be found in West Darfur, nearly 300,000 in North Darfur, and some 230,000 in South Darfur, the UN estimates. The natural mixing of displaced populations with local residents has created difficulties for relief workers trying to target the distribution of food and relief commodities to the most vulnerable people.

UN surveys indicate that relief programs to date, lacking necessary access to many populations, are addressing only a small fraction of the immense need on the ground. Approximately 90 percent of displaced Darfurians in need of shelter and latrines have

received neither, according to analysis by UN agencies. Two-thirds of the uprooted population have no access to potable water; more than half have no primary health care; about half of those in need are still cut off from emergency food deliveries. Overall, according to UN relief officials, assistance—perhaps merely a single food distribution in some cases—has reached only about half of all displaced persons in Darfur because of security constraints and GoS obstructions. The aid that manages to reach them does not fulfill their needs because those same obstructions have left relief organizations understaffed and under-equipped. Some humanitarian officials have advised placing a priority on relief distributions in West Darfur, where rains will likely cause the earliest flooding and road closures, followed by South Darfur and North Darfur in priority order based on normal rain patterns.

The GoS has taken no concrete steps to tap Sudan's million-ton domestic surplus of sorghum to feed hungry people in Darfur, unless donors purchase the surplus for that purpose. The World Food Program (WFP) projects that Darfur will require more than 21,000 metric tons of food aid per month this summer for 1.2 million beneficiaries, increasing to a monthly need of 35,000 metric tons for 2.2 million people by October. Due largely to USAID's Office of Food for Peace and its commitment of more than 86,000 tons of food assistance to Darfur, the WFP food pipeline is sufficient to meet needs through September, but only if we have humanitarian access and sufficient transport to deliver the food to those who need it. Deliveries currently are dependent on three cargo planes, a limited fleet of trucks, and a road network vulnerable to washouts. Humanitarian airlift capacity—currently about 7,000 metric tons per month—will have to double in coming weeks to mount airlift and airdrop operations capable of reaching 65 scattered locations where at-risk populations will soon be cut off by the rains. Even a doubling of airlift capacity may be insufficient. Protecting the increased food deliveries from theft will also be a concern.

USAID is supporting UN agencies examining the possibility of mounting a cross-border relief operation from neighboring countries to reach Darfur's people—an operation that would require the formal agreement of those governments. The cross-border options are problematic because of serious logistical, security, and local political constraints.

USAID has deployed a 16-person DART team of relief specialists to the region to oversee the work of USAID-funded partners, help set priorities, identify specific projects and partners for additional funding, conduct assessments, and monitor the delivery and distribution of relief supplies. Twelve other USAID staff are on stand-by to join the DART in Darfur. The DART is acutely aware of the need to closely consider the safety of beneficiaries in all our humanitarian planning, programming, and information collection.

The DART has completed 14 commodity relief flights that have delivered nearly 100,000 blankets, relief items to ease water shortages, and enough plastic sheeting to shelter more than 360,000 people once we are finally able to overcome GoS and logistical constraints on its distribution. Additional DART relief flights are planned. USAID's Food for Peace Office has provided more than half of all international food commitments to this

emergency, while USAID/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance has provided emergency assistance for health, nutrition, water, sanitation, shelter and other relief commodities.

Of special note is an ambitious measles vaccination campaign currently underway throughout Darfur with USAID support that is targeting 2.2 million residents for vaccination by the end of June in hopes of curtailing the worst effects of an inevitable measles outbreak during the rainy season. The stakes are high.

In eastern Chad, about 90,000 of the 160,000 refugees from Darfur are living in eight official camps established by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Chadian government. Two additional camp sites are under consideration. UNHCR continues to transport refugees from insecure border areas to the official camps. Several hundred new Sudanese refugees continue to flee into Chad each week, indicating that the refugee flow has not ceased as violence continues in Darfur.

The U.S. Government's financial commitment to the Darfur crisis is considerable. USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios pledged an additional \$188.5 million for Darfur at an international donors conference on June 3. This raises the U.S. Government's total planned contribution to nearly \$300 million for Darfur and eastern Chad since February 2003, of which about \$116 million has already been committed to specific projects or partners as of early June. The U.S. Government total includes funds from the Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration for Darfurian refugees in eastern Chad.

Mr. Chairman, I should conclude my discussion of Darfur by emphasizing that providing emergency assistance in this crisis is much more than a matter of giving financial support to projects that address identified needs—as important as that is. Achieving security and access on the ground are absolutely essential prerequisites that are missing up to this point for mounting an effective relief campaign, no matter how well-funded the campaign might be. At USAID, we are vitally aware that if thousands of lives and an entire society and way of life are to be saved in Darfur, greater international pressure must be brought to bear upon the Government of Sudan to halt the killing and rapes, reverse the ethnic cleansing and forced displacement, and eliminate GoS policies that obstruct relief efforts. We should avoid the trap of negotiating with the GoS for token, incremental concessions on the humanitarian front that leave overarching GoS policies of devastation in Darfur unchanged and undisturbed.

II. Southern Sudan

Overview

On May 26, the GoS and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) signed a framework for a comprehensive peace agreement. It was an historic moment greeted by jubilation and dancing in many southern Sudanese villages where violence,

death, destruction, family separation, and extreme isolation have been the depressing norm for much of the past 20 years. The people of southern Sudan deserve this moment of hope. Each new agreement brings the cessation of hostilities closer to a permanent cease-fire and a normal, peaceful existence in the South. While there were many partners in this effort, the role of the U.S. Government and the personal activism of the President, his Special Envoy Senator Danforth, and other senior U.S. Government officials have been critical to achieving this progress.

The framework peace agreement, however, is not the final stage and does not mean that permanent peace is assured. Much work needs to be done. The parties must now turn their full attention to reaching agreement on implementation modalities, signing a final comprehensive peace agreement, followed by faithful implementation of the entire peace process. The militaries must fully disengage. Local armed militias must disband or reconcile with their neighbors. Significant returns of refugees and displaced persons have already begun and will accelerate, requiring proper international support to minimize the inevitable problems and tensions associated with large population movements. Ambitious development programs are needed in an area that by virtually any measurement is one of the most destitute places on earth. And the need for effective governance and civil administration throughout southern Sudan—an area as vast as Texas but with terribly depleted human resources—is probably the supreme challenge if peace is to become permanent and a force for improved conditions among the people of the South.

The international community and southern Sudanese themselves are looking to the U.S. Government to play a lead role in supporting and nurturing the economic, social, and political construction of the new South Sudan. Having provided more than \$1.7 billion of humanitarian assistance during the past 21 years to help save Sudanese lives during a time of war, the challenge now is to sustain humanitarian assistance where needed while investing more heavily in southern Sudan's peace and long-term development. The goal should be nothing less than to bring the benefits of peace to every village and community in South Sudan.

Humanitarian Assistance and Development of Infrastructure in the South

Mr. Chairman, for many years I have come before this Committee to recite the grim statistics about life and death in southern Sudan. There is now an opportunity for southern Sudanese to establish a new and more positive database of peacetime statistics: the numbers of people returning to their homes, the numbers of schools opening, the numbers of health clinics established, the quantity of wells dug, the tons of crops produced, and the miles of roads improved. Tens of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons have returned in recent months to their home areas of southern Sudan, and returns are expected to accelerate with the signing of the peace framework on May 26. USAID plans expanded programs to help the government of South Sudan transform people's lives with improvements in education, health and water systems, economic recovery programs including food and agricultural projects, infrastructure repairs,

reintegration assistance for ex-combatants, and other sectors vital for reintegration and recovery.

One of the primary development priorities must be road improvements. South Sudan has virtually no paved roads except for a few kilometers of pavement in GoS-controlled garrison towns such as Juba, and many dirt roads are impassable during the rainy season and extremely difficult to traverse the rest of the year. The primitive state of southern Sudan's road network illustrates the daunting task of nurturing basic development in an impoverished, isolated and far-flung area the size of Texas after 21 years of war and generations of governmental neglect.

USAID has already committed \$7.5 million to an emergency road program and dike program that is attempting to open up major transportation corridors. The priorities at this time are de-mining of main roads and making modest repairs to render key roads passable in the rainy season. Better roads will foster economic activity by linking the major southern towns such as Juba—sealed off by the GoS military during the war—with the surrounding rural areas and with the economies of neighboring Kenya and Uganda. Road improvements are an important step in strengthening economic and social links between North and South Sudan—links that could bolster political stability. Improvements to the road network and construction of dikes will also facilitate the return home and reintegration of Sudan's estimated 5 million uprooted people and make the delivery of humanitarian and development assistance easier and less expensive. USAID projects that the emergency road program can result in a 70 percent reduction in the cost of freight deliveries, and would enable more food aid to arrive by road at a cost savings of 60 percent compared to air deliveries. Since 90 percent of all food aid provided to South Sudan comes from the United States, this translates into a more cost-effective assistance program. However, it is important to emphasize that landmines remain a major impediment to opening up roads; de-mining must proceed concurrently with road repair activities.

In addition to continued support for the emergency road and dike program, USAID is planning a three-year, \$60 million infrastructure program for South Sudan that will, among other things, support longer-term road improvements and maintenance as well as water and power generation. Further support is also needed for dredging and barge traffic on the mighty Nile River that bisects southern Sudan and connects South with North—an important artery for promoting trade and North-South links.

Commitment to Transitional Zones

While support for reintegration, development, and stability is important throughout the South, there are three areas of the so-called transitional zone between North and South that are particularly strategic and where the U.S. Government is particularly committed in the aftermath of the recent peace negotiations. Discussions about the Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile Province, and Abyei in South Kordofan Province were particularly delicate during the peace talks, and these three regions are now particularly crucial for

post-war stability. USAID was deeply involved in negotiations over access to the Nuba Mountains in 2001 that provided an impetus for a Nuba cease-fire and larger peace negotiations. When the framework peace talks stalled last year over the future of Abyei, it was a U.S. Government proposal that helped break the deadlock and move the peace process forward.

Health and agricultural programs are planned or already underway with USAID support in all three regions. Infrastructure programs will improve roads, drill new boreholes, and help establish schools and clinics. Necessary de-mining activities in Southern Blue Nile need U.S. Government, as does the nascent civil administration in the three transitional areas.

Government Administration and Reconciliation in the South

For those seeking evidence that true peace can take root in southern Sudan after so much violence, a remarkable event occurred in the town of Akobo in Eastern Upper Nile a week after the peace framework was signed last month. Eastern Upper Nile has been one of the most volatile regions of southern Sudan in recent years, and Akobo has changed hands several times during the conflict. On June 2, pro-government forces approached Akobo and yet another battle appeared imminent with the SPLM/A troops controlling the town. Akobo community leaders intervened by separating the opposing forces and engaged in discussions with both sides to resolve tensions and persuade the combatants to adhere to the new peace agreement. Local Akobo chiefs continue to lead discussions to reconcile members of the pro-government militia with the SPLM/A and the local community. Similarly, in the village of Mading near Nasir in Eastern Upper Nile, community leaders after the signing of the peace framework peacefully switched their allegiance from the GoS to SPLM, and SPLM authorities assumed control of the town from GoS soldiers and militia with no shooting. These are but two hopeful indications of the changing mood toward peace and the impact that the signed agreement can have in villages where the war has been waged.

However, I do not want to give the impression that events on the ground in southern Sudan have been uniformly positive. Forces allied with the GoS attacked in the area of Malakal, in Upper Nile Province's Shilluk Kingdom, in March and April. Between 50,000 and 120,000 people have been newly displaced and many villages were destroyed. Some 25,000 ethnic Shilluk have fled to Malakal town, and thousands more to the Nuba Mountains, Kosti in White Nile Province, and elsewhere. Displaced families have reported burning of villages, killings and rapes by militias, looting, and destruction of schools and clinics. Compounds of international relief organizations in the town of Nyilwak were burned as well, according to UN sources.

USAID remains concerned about continuing reports of localized conflict and persistent obstacles to the delivery of humanitarian relief to Southern Blue Nile and to the Eastern Front area near the Eritrea border. We are also acutely aware that the Lord's Resistance Army, a Ugandan insurgent group infamous for its brutality and abductions of children,

continues to operate from bases in southern Sudan and must be brought under control to achieve security and stability along southern Sudan's border with Uganda.

Despite these obstacles, the signing of the peace protocols on May 26 means that the work of building the capacity of the new Government of South Sudan (GOSS) must start now. This is the most formidable task facing southern Sudan and is the top priority for USAID now that a peace agreement is signed. The peace protocols specify that the SPLM shall form the government in the South for a period of six-and-a-half years, followed by a referendum on unity with or separation from the North. The SPLM leadership has acknowledged the need to transform itself from a rebel group into a functioning government.

The SPLM has made progress transitioning into a civil authority, but it will continue to be a long and difficult process. The war might be over, but its repercussions are long-lasting. The legacy of more than 2 million dead from the war, 5 million displaced, and at least two generations without formal education has left a huge hole in southern Sudanese society. The pool of educated southern Sudanese prepared to assume the responsibilities of government and civil administration is numerically extremely limited. USAID is working to connect the new South Sudan with the Sudanese diaspora who have resettled abroad and have managed to obtain education and skills that are desperately needed to help rebuild the South.

Many analysts have fretted over the years that after Sudan's civil war ends, internal divisions in the South will take center stage and spark new cycles of conflict. The GOSS will immediately be faced with the need to establish democratic governance at the highest levels to encourage broad-based popular support and a sense of common cause among the South's political and ethnic groups. Policies will have to be developed regarding public finance and human resources, including revenue, taxation, budgeting, accounting, anti-corruption, civil service development, political appointments and elected officials. Design of a southern parliament will be yet another priority. All of these challenges will require negotiation among southern Sudan's various political groups and competent public officials able to draft legal frameworks based on southern consensus. For USAID this means that our support for southern Sudan must be wrapped in persistence and patience, because an entire system is being constructed largely from scratch.

Southern Sudan must create a constitution and move rapidly to ratify new laws. The current civil administration in the South has done significant work to fashion and implement 26 new laws, but these are still subject to ratification and do not cover all the issues requiring new legislation. There will also be many issues surrounding the implementation and codification of customary law.

In the United States, we take for granted that our judges have extensive legal training and are sufficiently numerous to fill every seat at the bench. In contrast, there are only 22 southern Sudanese lawyers for a judiciary system that will need to fill more than 100 judgeships along with the need for prosecutors and defense advocates. The demands on the justice system will likely be heavy as millions of southern Sudanese return to their

homes and, in some cases, become embroiled in disputes over land and property. Weapons prevalent in the post-war environment may be, for some individuals, the main method for resolving those disputes. Because the GOSS judiciary will possess few human resources to cope with the large number of people seeking justice after decades of grievances and neglect, USAID will support development of a para-legal system and an interim dispute resolution system.

Trafficking and abduction of women and children is a particularly egregious practice that has reflected the contours of the conflict in Sudan. Since 2002, abductions have significantly diminished with the cessation of hostilities. Former abductees are now returning home to join the families they had lost. Sudan, however, remains in the worst tier of the State Department Trafficking in Persons report. New allegations of trafficking and abductions are surfacing in Darfur, and much work remains to be done to reverse the effects of abductions and trafficking suffered in the South. USAID is deeply troubled by findings from staff interviews with numerous women and children, originally from the South, who have been returned from the North to the South. Many of these women and children stated that they in fact were not abducted from the South but were nonetheless taken by force to the South because they were southerners living in the North. USAID and our implementing partners will continue to expose and work to prevent these corrupt practices and fund programs that legitimately assist those who have been abducted to return to their homes and families.

Southern Sudanese need and deserve honest government officials. Leading American anti-corruption expert Robert Klitgaard recently completed, with USAID support, a series of meetings and workshops on honest and transparent government for SPLM leadership and county executives. The workshops generated a great deal of interest in instituting systems to prevent and reduce corruption. SPLM leaders have regularly stressed a theme of anti-corruption in their public presentations of late.

Part of a strong, democratic system is a vibrant civil society of professional associations, unions, human rights groups, faith-based organizations, community-based groups, and independent media. USAID will work to help grass-roots groups grow into strong organizations with the capacity to serve their members' interests, thereby laying a foundation for civil society to be an active voice in governance. USAID will support public opinion research and nonpartisan civic education on peace and governance. A Sudan Radio Service and the Sudan Mirror newspaper with an ever-widening circulation in the South already receive strong support from USAID. We have long backed projects encouraging South-South dialogue and reconciliation and are providing support for a conference later this month bringing together 350 traditional chiefs from throughout the South to meet with SPLM leadership to review the framework peace agreement and advance the notion of reconciliation among southerners.

The U.S. Government is the primary donor for these types of democracy and governance and transitional programs in the South. Many international donors may focus on northern areas where U.S. development assistance currently is difficult to implement because of our legislative restrictions. The U.S. Government is one of the few donors that has taken

proactive steps to fund development assistance in southern Sudan during the past ten years. We have already begun to create a network of trust, experience and lessons learned that other donors do not yet have in the South.

With humanitarian needs still quite large and with many militia groups still under arms and weighing the advantages of violence versus peace, it will be important that southern Sudanese see and experience a visible peace dividend, particularly in areas of particularly acute ethnic or political divisions.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, it seems almost incomprehensible that so many people in Sudan have suffered—and continue to suffer—so much. I believe that marginalized populations throughout Sudan, including the people of Darfur, have a vested interest in the successful implementation of the agreement to end the long civil war between the GoS and the SPLM. The provisions of that framework agreement, if faithfully implemented by the parties and seriously supported by the international community, could be an important step toward engendering the fundamental democratic transformation that is the best hope for the permanent improvements needed and deserved by the long-suffering Sudanese people.