

Testimony for the Record by the United States Agency for International Development

A Critical Moment: the CPA, Darfur, and the Future of Sudan

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For five years, we have discussed the roadmap of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and what we are doing to support its milestones. Now that discussion is changing. In eight months, millions of Sudanese will decide their future as a nation. Next year, our current roadmap will end, and our path ahead could go in many different directions.

What does the future hold? The United States is committed to supporting the Sudanese as they invest in a better tomorrow for all of Sudan, and we have already contributed billions of dollars in humanitarian, security and development assistance toward that end. In Darfur, the Three Areas, and southern Sudan, our assistance has saved lives, improved living conditions, and given people hope that the opportunities of coming generations will be better than the last. The challenges are daunting, but we have a stake in Sudan's future, and we plan to continue our walk alongside our Sudanese partners through the end of the CPA roadmap and beyond.

Just weeks ago, the Sudanese people voted. The overall lack of an adequate enabling environment in Sudan largely prevented a credible electoral process from taking place. A national security act that bestows security forces with extensive powers to arbitrarily detain citizens without charge facilitated the detention of activists and the breaking up of campaign gatherings during the pre-election period. Political parties had limited abilities to exercise their freedom of assembly, and the press remained heavily censored. As a result, most major northern parties boycotted the elections, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement withdrew its candidates from the presidential and most northern races. The elections took place despite these challenges.

The Carter Center said the process did not meet international standards, and observers noted widespread procedural irregularities that provide important lessons for all of us as Sudan moves toward the final phase of the CPA. We have yet to complete inaugurations and the final round of postponed elections-including in Southern Kordofan, where popular consultations are to take place-so it may be too early to make a final assessment. USAID will monitor what occurs once the National Assembly convenes, and a new government is formed. Will it really be a new unity government of multiple parties all working together? Or will it be politics as usual?

But, in setting a context for the flawed elections last month, we should not lose sight of the fact that, just six years ago, Sudan was in the throes of a brutal, bloody, two-decade civil war, that southern Sudan is still one of the most inaccessible regions in the world, and that its people speak dozens of languages and have had little or no experience with participatory democracy. Despite the significant shortcomings, the elections brought about increased levels of political competition and civic participation in the pre-electoral period, and witnessed commendable efforts by the vast majority of poll workers, voters, domestic observers and party poll agents to make polling successful and largely peaceful. The Sudanese people, many for the first time in their lives, had a say in who represents them.

Now we must look toward the next, most critical milestones, the popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile and the landmark referenda on Sudan's future status, and do what we can to ensure a peaceful post-2011 Sudan or an orderly transition to two separate and viable states at peace with each other.

THE SOUTH

Building capacity in the south has been the cornerstone of USAID's strategy in Sudan since 2004. USAID's goal is to help establish a transparent, just, democratic government able to deliver basic services to its people, whether southern Sudan chooses unity with the north or independence in 2011. The Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) did not exist before 2005. Every government structure and system has had to be crafted from scratch. The committed men and women who serve in the government are not career politicians, nor have they benefited from the lessons, assumptions, and experience of a life lived in a democratic, transparent state. Initially, the GOSS had no offices, no pens, no paper, and no staff to undertake the most basic tasks needed for a government to function. But with our assistance, the key GOSS ministries have established systems for hiring people, for formulating budgets, and for establishing office systems. This has required tremendous dedication on the part of GOSS officials, who have been willing to roll up their sleeves and persevere through each one of these processes. Considerable progress has been made in establishing functioning institutions where there previously were none. Ministries are functioning, revenue is coming in, payments are being made, and a legal framework is being built.

Today, USAID is working with the GOSS to intensively address logistical and training needs to prepare for the upcoming referenda and mitigate conflict. We have concentrated our support on public sector financial management, and we are helping establish legal and regulatory frameworks that will facilitate growth in the private sector.

At the same time, USAID is continuing its development programs in the south to improve people's lives and provide them with an opportunity to make their needs understood, and working in close coordination with the GOSS to ensure that the gains are sustainable.

- Southern Sudan has among the highest maternal mortality rates in the world—one woman dies for every 50 live births. Infant mortality is also unacceptably and shockingly high, at 1 death for every 10 live births. For years, USAID has worked to improve these indicators, expanding urgently needed services to 13 counties in the south. As a result, more than 2 million people in southern Sudan have improved access to high-impact maternal, child health, and family planning services.
- Less than half of people living in southern Sudan have access to potable water and only 7 percent have access to proper sanitation. This threatens the lives of southern Sudanese—especially children—so USAID is working to improve water supply and sanitation facilities in four southern states and the Three Areas through borehole drilling, hand pump repair, and latrine construction, as well as hygiene promotion. USAID is also marketing purification tablets in 16 urban and semi-urban market towns to promote better household hygiene and create demand for sanitation.
- Improving access to education is vital to building Sudan's long-term human capacity. USAID programs focus on primary education, girls' education, teacher training, and institutional development. Activities target out-of-school youth, women, girls, and other vulnerable and marginalized groups. They also enhance GOSS capacity to sustainably manage the education system and establish more equitable gender-based policies in education. As a result, Sudanese citizens have greater access to improved education services and English language instruction. They also have more confidence in the government's ability to deliver these services. Primary school enrollment has increased markedly—from 1.1 million in 2007 to 1.4 million in 2009.
- To improve the south's devastated infrastructure USAID is rehabilitating hundreds of kilometers of roads and building electricity-generating systems across southern Sudan and the Three Areas. In 2009, seven permanent bridges were completed along the Juba-Nimule road, the entire road was maintained, and critical repairs were completed. As a result, travel time has been reduced from 6 to 3.5 hours between the two towns, and daily traffic has nearly doubled. In 2010 and 2011, the road will be paved, creating the south's first paved road outside the state capital of Juba. This year, USAID began implementing a five-year, \$55-million project designed to ramp up agricultural productivity, increase trade, and improve the capacity of producers, private sector, and public sector actors in southern Sudan to develop commercial smallholder agriculture. A primary focus is helping smallholder farmers' and producers' associations to enhance production, facilitate marketing, extend agricultural credit, and promote post-harvest storage and processing technologies in high-production areas near improved road networks in southern Sudan.

However, make no mistake: the situation in the south remains volatile. Community insecurity and inter-ethnic clashes worsened in 2009, killing more than 2,000 people and displacing at least 250,000 others. An alarming new aspect of the conflict is that women, children, and elderly are now routinely victims of the violence. There are several reasons for these clashes. Southern Sudan is only very slowly emerging from nearly a half century of violent conflict. The GOSS is not yet functioning at a high enough capacity to protect the people who live in rural and remote areas. Rule-of-law institutions including the police, courts, and prisons are understaffed, ill-equipped, and only functional in major urban centers. Poverty and lack of economic opportunity is widespread, and small

arms are widely prevalent among the civilian population, especially the youth in cattle camps. Armed youth are well-organized and well-equipped, with some operating in criminal gangs that lack respect for government authorities or traditional leaders.

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) also continues to terrorize the people of southern Sudan, killing over 200 people and displacing 70,000 during the past 18 months alone. We appreciate the efforts of Senators Feingold, Brownback, and Inhofe to sponsor the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act and hope that the LRA will soon cease to be a threat to the men, women, and children of southern Sudan.

USAID continues to respond to emergency needs resulting from ongoing conflict and associated displacement in southern Sudan. Humanitarian programs include provision of primary health care, nutrition, agriculture and food security, water, sanitation, and hygiene services. They focus on mitigating tensions caused by a lack of resources or their inequitable distribution and ensuring the successful return and reintegration of more than 2.2 million people to southern Sudan and the Three Areas. USAID continues to prioritize delivery of essential basic services in areas of high population returns, while incorporating disaster risk reduction activities to better address long-term recovery challenges. Working closely with the GOSS, USAID humanitarian programs provide a vital link between relief and long-term development initiatives, while minimizing potential gaps in assistance.

To build up the capacity of southern Sudan, USAID is also a central contributor to the Juba Diplomatic Expansion, mentioned by Special Envoy Gration in his testimony. This diplomatic expansion in the Juba Consulate General will include staffing and material assistance aimed at expanding our existing foundation of long-term U.S. presence in the south, no matter the outcome of the January 2011 referendum. During the lead up to and immediately after the referendum, USAID personnel from the Civilian Response Corps will likely deploy as interagency subject matter experts to complement ongoing efforts to strengthen Government of Southern Sudan capacity during this critical period.

THE THREE AREAS

Stability is the most essential aspect of a peaceful transition in the Three Areas of Abyei, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan. In peaceful times, communities on both sides of the border share natural resources, trade and economic interests, movement of pastoral populations, and an array of local cross-border political and security arrangements. During the civil war, southern Sudanese communities that border the north suffered tremendously from repeated attacks by the Sudan Armed Forces and by northern tribal militia groups resulting in killings, burned villages, stolen cattle and repeated displacement. These grievances have yet to be reconciled. High expectations for visible benefits of peace remain unmet, and tensions and instability remain high.

However, progress is being made. Two years ago, people and local authorities in Kurmuk, Blue Nile, were disillusioned by the lack of peace dividends and tangible improvements in political integration, economic opportunity, and access to services promised by the CPA. At that time, it was quite possible that Kurmuk could return to war because many residents believed that they were better off before the peace. In 2008, USAID began a robust program that made \$6 million of small, in-kind grants to Sudanese authorities, organizations, and companies for a range of activities including infrastructure (air strips, staff residences in isolated areas), reconciliation meetings, and expanded social services such as education (a large new secondary school), health (two training institutes), and water. We sought to concentrate activities in one place, implement them rapidly, support state and local government ownership and eventual management, and link to civil society to build capacity and accountability. This model resulted in a critical mass of visible improvements in Kurmuk that has changed the mentality of citizens who are now more contented with peace and with the performance of their local and state governments. Many of Kurmuk's residents now believe their government is committed to peace and development. They are also more confident that they and their government are better prepared to take on future challenges.

Simultaneous with southern Sudan's referendum on unity in January 2011, the people of Abyei will vote in their own referendum on whether they want to be part of southern or northern Sudan, regardless of the outcome of the south's referendum on unity. Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan will remain part of northern Sudan, but they will go through popular consultations to ascertain the will of the people on constitutional, political, and administrative issues. Both of these processes have the potential to have game-changing effects on the country. Abyei is a critical, resource-rich area, and its status will be critical to planning the future. And the popular consultations, if implemented well, could stand as an example of federalism and popular engagement that could guide Sudan in creating a new constitution when the interim constitution expires in 2011.

In addition to our ongoing humanitarian and development assistance programs, USAID has planned a comprehensive program to support these political processes, including technical assistance for administering the referendum and implementing popular consultations, promoting and enabling civic participation, and conducting international observation. The involvement and support of Sudan's national and state governments are critical for international efforts to be effective.

DARFUR

Since 2003, the crisis in Darfur has affected an estimated 4.7 million people, including 2.7 million people that were driven from their homes. The conflict in Darfur has evolved to include more local, intra-communal conflict and opportunistic banditry, with primarily economic rather than political motivations, in addition to attacks between armed movements and the government, and rebel-on-rebel attacks. USAID and the international humanitarian assistance community continue to provide immediate, life-saving assistance to conflict-affected populations as security and access permits. However, many needs remain, particularly in remote, rural areas outside of the camps. USAID provides support to conflict-affected people both within and outside camps through nongovernmental organizations, U.N. agencies, and U.N.-managed cluster-based humanitarian coordination mechanisms. We encourage partners to actively coordinate to ensure that assistance is complementary, comprehensive, and consistent, and that assistance provided meets appropriate international standards. USAID partners provide emergency relief supplies and implement emergency programs in a variety of sectors, including health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene, food security, agriculture, shelter and settlements, economic recovery, protection, and coordination.

However, ongoing violence continues to significantly hinder delivery of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people in Darfur, as do bureaucratic impediments imposed by the Sudanese Government. The increased frequency of kidnapping, carjacking, robbery, and inter-ethnic violence has caused a number of international humanitarian organizations to either temporarily suspend their programs in Darfur or relocate international staff from remote field locations to urban centers. In addition, despite peace negotiations, the Sudanese Government and armed opposition groups have restricted humanitarian access to civilians affected by significant conflict in the Jebel Marra region of Darfur in early 2010.

Following the Sudanese Government's March 2009 expulsions of humanitarian organizations, the agencies that remained-and to some extent Sudanese Government ministries-adapted to ensure delivery of life-saving assistance in Darfur. Although swift actions successfully averted a humanitarian crisis, service provision in many sectors remains challenged primarily by the reduced presence of the United Nations and nongovernmental organizations in many locations and poor access due to continued insecurity. We do not have the eyes and ears on the ground in Darfur that we used to, which hinders our ability to monitor our assistance.

However, more than a year after the expulsions, we are trying to shift our focus from gap filling to the evaluation of program quality and ensuring effective need-based aid delivery within the existing humanitarian context. The Sudanese Government has demonstrated a willingness to support some humanitarian efforts through primary health care service delivery and safe drinking water provision. As other critical needs remain, additional engagement and support is necessary, and USAID continues to support the United Nations in advocating for increased Sudanese Government support in all humanitarian sectors, including protection.

The expulsions resulted in a significant loss of capacity for humanitarian protection activities in Darfur and measurably slowed ongoing activities such as women's centers and livelihoods activities. Remaining relief organizations have continued to conduct humanitarian protection activities, including support for victims of sexual and gender-based violence and development of child-friendly spaces, and the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) has made some progress in garnering state and federal support for programs in sexual and gender-based violence. In North Darfur, the Sudanese Government Humanitarian Aid Commission has authorized the re-establishment of nine women's centers, and UNFPA has government approval to revitalize a women's center in a camp in West Darfur, including a training curriculum on sexual and gender-based violence.

USAID continues to seek opportunities to expand humanitarian protection activities and encourages partners to mainstream these activities within their ongoing and proposed programs. Some examples of protection mainstreaming include distributing food aid to women and monitoring vulnerable children after distribution; ensuring that latrines are well-lit, lockable, and separated by gender; and providing training for livelihoods that do not require women to walk significant distances from the safety of their communities.

While continuing to provide crucial emergency assistance, USAID has also begun to look toward opportunities for early recovery in Darfur. In areas of relative security, windows of opportunity exist to build on our current programming with activities that are more developmental in nature. Our early-recovery initiative will start several quick-implementation projects that aim to rapidly deliver benefits for selected communities, while building experience among local partners that will allow USAID to more easily scale up into a larger development program when peace and security return and the situation stabilizes.

CONTINGENCIES

With all of these uncertainties, USAID has placed a high priority on planning for contingencies and improving our ability to respond to them. Around the world, our emergency programs are designed to be flexible, need-based, and ready to respond rapidly to issues as they emerge. International Disaster Assistance funds are, by their very

nature, flexible, allowing us to reallocate resources to respond to situations. After the March 2009 expulsions, for example, it was this flexibility that made it possible for us to rapidly shift funds to expand programs among our remaining partners.

We are also supporting an enabling environment for community security in southern Sudan. These efforts aim to address some of the root causes of conflict and put in place rapid, demand-driven responses to bolster understaffed and underequipped state and local government officials through the provision of equipment, training, and visible infrastructure projects. In Jonglei, a USAID-provided riverboat now allows a county commissioner to quickly visit villages that have become flashpoints for violence and work to resolve conflict before it erupts.

But perhaps most vital to our ability to respond to situations as they emerge is our long-term presence throughout Sudan's most volatile areas. Two years ago, Abyei erupted in violence that devastated the town and displaced more than 25,000 people. The Abyei area has long been a priority for USAID, and our ongoing presence there allowed USAID and its partners to rapidly assess the situation and provide essential emergency assistance to those most in need. With USAID funding, a group of USAID partners was able to mobilize and coordinate a response to mitigate the impact of the emergency because they were already on the ground, and because they had already spent years building trust among the local community.

Nobody knows for certain what the future holds for Sudan. In 2000, could anyone have predicted the extraordinary signing of the CPA and the relatively sustained peace that has followed? Could we have foreseen the sheer devastation that would visit Darfur and its people? Could we have anticipated an orderly census and elections and the opportunity for self-determination among a people who had only known war?

Twenty years of civil war not only destroyed farms, roads, and buildings, but also families, communities, and hope. Today, we continue our efforts to restore hope for the people of Sudan by giving them our commitment to work together to build a new future, full of promise and opportunity, and to walk with them to the end of the roadmap and beyond.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, for giving USAID the opportunity to submit this testimony for the record. We appreciate your attention to Sudan and your ongoing support to our work in Africa.