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THE U.S. RESPONSE TO THE POLITICAL CRISIS IN SUDAN

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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THE U.S. RESPONSE TO THE POLITICAL CRISIS IN SUDAN

Tuesday, June 25, 2019

House of Representatives,

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health,

Global Human Rights, and International Organizations,

Committee on Foreign Affairs,

Washington, DC

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:48 p.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Karen Bass [chair of the subcommittee] presiding.

Ms. BASS. This hearing for the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations will come to order. The subcommittee is meeting today to hear testimony on the U.S. response to the political crisis in Sudan.

Let me just thank everyone here for your patience. I am sorry that we are starting so late. I know you are aware that votes were called, which means everything stops around here and we had to go vote. But I do not believe that we will be interrupted any further.

Today, we are here to further explore the fluid situation in Sudan, the potential for a successful transition to a civilian-led government, and the policy options available to the United States. Sudan is at a critical junction and must decide if it wants to continue on the path of former leader Bashir or transition to a civilian-led rule as the transitional military council has promised.

Initially, when the TMC seized power, they opened the political space and met with civilian-led groups. The organized protests were led by Sudanese professionals—Sudanese Professionals Association made up of doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, and others. In January 2019, the SPA joined with other civil society organizations and political coalitions to sign the Declaration of Freedom and Change. This commitment to a peaceful struggle targeted broader goals, including ending al-Bashir's rule, forming a transitional government, ending violence against protesters, and restrictions to freedom of speech and expression and accountability for the crimes against Sudanese citizens.

But the situation has deteriorated. I look forward to hearing more from our witnesses regarding the U.S. response to the political crisis in Sudan and how the U.S. can address these blatant human rights violations and support efforts to get the country on the path toward democratic representative governance.

So, without objection, all members have 5 days to submit statements, questions, extraneous materials for the record, subject to the length limitation in the rules.

So I want to thank our distinguished witnesses who are here with us today for this hearing. I know that your staff have come to the Hill multiple times to keep us informed about events in the country, but the time has come to really understand how the U.S. is engaging the country during this political crisis.

Let me say also that this is the first hearing. We anticipate having additional hearings. We did this very quickly, which is why we have one panel which is a government panel. Usually we have more than one panel and that we always include people who are from the country, but we were not able to do this on quick notice. So I do not want you to think that this is the last time we are going to have this discussion nor do I want you to think that we intentionally excluded people who are from Sudan.

So there are many of us here in Congress who pay close attention to what is happening in Sudan. Considering all of the recent events in the country, the increased insecurity and the increased human rights violations, we think it is critical to get this update on events in the country, how the U.S. is responding and how the U.S. is adjusting its policy based on this new space the country is in.

So I would like to know about the Assistant Secretary's trip to the country, the role of the new Special Envoy, how has the U.N. drawn down effective humanitarian operations, and about the drawdown of personnel at the U.S. embassy in Khartoum. Do you expect additional ordered departures? Are staff who remain in the country safe?

I will tell you that several of us were planning on traveling to Sudan next week and our trip was canceled because we were told that it was not safe to be in the country. Members of Congress from both of sides of the aisle are engaged on Sudan and we want to make sure that we have a strong, unified message to help citizens of Sudan realize their goal of a civilian-led transition to power.

I now recognize the ranking member for the purposes of making an opening statement.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Bass follows:]

Congressmember Karen Bass
AGH Subcommittee Hearing
"The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan"
June 25, 2019

This hearing for the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations will come to order.

I note that a quorum is present.

The subcommittee is meeting today to hear testimony on the **"The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan".**

Today, we are here to further explore the fluid situation in Sudan, the potential for a successful transition to a civilian-led government, and the policy options available to the United States.

Sudan is at a critical junction and must decide if it wants to continue on the path of former leader Omar al-Bashir or transition to a civilian-led rule as the Transitional Military Council (TMC) as promised. Initially, when the TMC seized power they opened the political space and met with civilian led groups.

The organized protests were led by the Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA), made up of doctors, lawyers, journalists, teachers, engineers, and others. In January 2019, the SPA joined with other civil society organizations and political coalitions to sign the Declaration of Freedom and Change. This commitment to a peaceful struggle targeted broader goals including ending al-Bashir's rule, forming a transitional government, ending violence against protestors and restrictions to freedom of speech and expression, and accountability for the crimes against Sudanese citizens.

But the situation has deteriorated

I look forward to hearing more from our witnesses regarding the United States response to the political crisis in Sudan, and how the US can address these blatant human rights violations and support efforts to get the country on the path toward democratic representative governance.

So... without objection, all members may have five days to submit statements, questions, extraneous materials for the record, subject to the length limitation in the rules.

I recognize myself for the purpose of making an opening statement.

I would like to thank our distinguished witnesses who are here with us today for this hearing. I know that your staff have come to the Hill multiple times to keep us informed about events in the country but the time has come to really understand how the United States is engaging the country during this political crisis.

Press freedom is essential to any democracy.... For years Sudanese journalists have worked under a controlled environment where speaking against al-Bashir's government led to censorship, arrest, and assault. Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Service is known for censoring newspapers that discredit the government and the Committee to Protect Journalists has documented this behavior.

Leading up to al-Bashir's removal, journalists were continuously arrested by Sudanese authorities.

- Reportedly, Osman Mirghani, editor-in-chief of the newspaper Al-Tayar was held in a freezing cold cell for more than a month.
- Last year, Sudanese authorities arrested Amal Habbani, a freelance journalist and contributor to news outlet Al-Taghyeer. She suffered serious injuries after being beaten with electric sticks.

The Sudanese government has also clamped down on internet freedom to combat protestors from live streaming attacks on civilians by Sudanese authorities. In early 2019, Sudanese authorities restricted access to social media and other messaging services. This affected journalists' ability to post uncensored news online when the government restricted print newspapers.

The internet "blackout" is affecting most of the country's citizens and has now been turned off for 21 days. Internet access must be reinstated. I urge those behind this to unblock internet access immediately. Governments must understand that prohibiting access to the internet does not mean that citizen's will stop exercising their civil rights.

I urge the Sudanese government to stop the censoring of print newspapers, unblock access to the internet, and stop detaining and harassing journalists, activists and any citizen exercising their right to free speech and protest peacefully.

This political crisis in Sudan is becoming a humanitarian crisis and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses what the humanitarian needs are and how the United States is responding and coordinating with other partners in the region or the international community.

The situation in Darfur must also be addressed where the UN is reporting increased killings, abductions, sexual violence and other abuses. UNAMID has reported that the Rapid Support Forces have harassed civilians in the area, looted homes and livestock, and are the cause of many reported deaths and injuries. Although, most of UNAMID's facilities have been closed as part of a drawdown, they are now being occupied by the Rapid Support Forces. I believe UNAMID's presence is more helpful than harmful in helping stabilize the region and recommend they stay to help the citizens of Sudan.

I know that the people of Sudan are frustrated because of the blatant lack of human life shown by Sudanese authorities. The rising cost of bread and fuel led them to the streets to peacefully protest. And blatant human rights violations including press freedom and assembly restrictions made them stand up and say enough is enough. We hear you and we stand with you in your call for the respect of your human rights and your call for democratic, representative government.

The international community must continue to strongly urge the Transitional Military Council to negotiate with the Sudanese people to incorporate a civilian-led transitional rule.

There are many of us here in congress who pay close attention to what is happening in Sudan. Considering all of the recent events in the country, the increased insecurity, and the increasing human rights violations, we think it is critical to get this update on events in the country, how the US is responding and how the US is adjusting its policy based on this new space the country is in.

I want to know:

- About the Assistant Secretary's trip to the country
- The role of the new special Envoy
- How has the UN drawdown affected humanitarian operations?
- And about the drawdown of personnel at the U.S. embassy in Khartoum, do you expect additional ordered departures, are staff who remain in the country safe?

I have made several statements regarding the situation in Sudan hear in Congress and around DC at speaking policy events. But I am here to ask.....what else can we do to build an international coalition supporting a civilian-led transition, and what other options do we have to press the TMC to hand over power?

Those are just some of the questions I have and look forward to hearing your thoughts....

Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle are engaged on Sudan and we want to make sure we have a strong unified message to help the citizens of Sudan realize their goal of a civilian-led transition to power.

I now recognize the Ranking Member for the purpose of making an opening statement.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you so very much, Madam Chair, and I want to thank you for convening today's hearing on the ongoing political crisis in Sudan, a political crisis which has urgent and broad humanitarian and human rights implications.

On several occasions, both you and I have visited Sudan, including trips to Darfur, and we do believe that the people of Sudan deserve better. We have also come to understand the country's importance as a critical link between North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Horn and that what happens in Sudan has implications for other countries including and in particular South Sudan, which you and I visited together in June 2017.

Thus, today's topic extends beyond a single country, it also extends beyond a single crisis. Indeed, for most of my nearly 40 years in Congress, Sudan has been in political crisis. Today's pattern of repression followed by protests followed by coup followed by suppression is a pattern we saw play out throughout much of Sudan's modern history including in 1964 and in 1985.

Counting the removal of longtime strongman Bashir this past April by the military, there have been some five coups since independence in 1956. It is thus hard not to think of a political crisis when one hears the name "Sudan." For those of a certain age, Hollywood has even kept alive the Sudanese political crises of the 19th century. We all remember Charlton Heston depicting General Gordon on the big screen in some five remakes of the adventure story, "Four Feathers," depicting the revolt of the Mahdi. Such depictions though sensationalized and dramatized nonetheless have some value, for that late 19th century movement of the Mahdi reverberates today with much of the Sudan's modern history being intertwined with the question of how a modern State interacts with political Islam.

Today's hearing also underscores the involvement of this subcommittee which since 2005 has held roughly a dozen hearings. I have chaired them. You have chaired them, Madam Chair. And my good friend, the late Donald Payne, did it as well.

This subcommittee has also been engaged in the question of sanctions relief for a regime that has been a State sponsor of terrorism. Whatever the trajectory which began in the last administration and continued into this one toward lifting sanctions has been halted by events since last April 11th when Bashir was removed from office by Sudan's military.

That kindled in me a hope, personally, for I had met Bashir in 2005 in Khartoum and I found him to be absolutely inflexible in his opposition to any reform. All he wanted to talk about was sanctions relief in our conversation which went on for well over an hour. I asked him if he ever visited—"When was the first time you went to Darfur, Mr. President?" There was no answer to that. I was on my way there right after that meeting.

For a brief period this spring, we had hope that his removal would lead to a transition to civilian-led democratic government which respected human rights and thus, ultimately, would lead to sanctions relief. But those hopes have been delayed, if not belayed, indefinitely. On June 3rd, demonstrators who had kept vigil in Khartoum were violently dispersed with some 120 killed.

Thus, in the context for today's hearing we shall hear from the Administration witnesses as to what our policy response should be. Given the history of Sudan, what might we do differently this time to encourage a movement toward true civilian rule? While much of Sudan's history is intertwined with political Islam from the Mahdist movement to the Muslim Brotherhood, there are also those committed to democracy and respect for religious freedom including especially within the Muslim community.

What can be done to encourage those individuals, parties, and counter trends? Further, what milestones must be met in the transition to democracy and sanctions relief? We know the conditions which, first, the Obama administration and then the Trump administration set as preconditions for any relief, and in that regard I am grateful that the Trump administration included respect for civil and political rights as important markers to be met and for Deputy Secretary John Sullivan forcefully raising the issue of respect for religious freedom in a speech he gave in Sudan in November 2017.

What of holding Sudan to the terms it agreed to as part of the comprehensive peace agreement with South Sudan in 1905, including popular consultation with respect to South Kordofan, the Blue Nile States, and deciding the status of Abyei, terms which have never been fulfilled? Finally, how do we address the ongoing humanitarian crisis? It is estimated that the need for humanitarian aid has increased 40 percent since 2018, and the humanitarian crisis is linked to the political.

While we work toward solving the political crisis, how do we meet the immediate humanitarian needs? No one should starve or have lack of medicine. I yield back.

Ms. BASS. Thank you, Mr. Smith.

I want to introduce our two panelists now. Makila James is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and has served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Africa and the Sudan since September 17th, 2018. Prior to taking up these responsibilities, she was on the faculty of the National War College and served as the director of the International Student Management Office at the National Defense University. Ambassador James has also held a variety of positions in Washington and overseas, including as the U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Swaziland from 2012 until 2015.

Ramsey Day serves as Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Africa Bureau. Prior to joining USAID in January 2018, Mr. Day was the Senior Director for the Center for Global Impact at the International Republican Institute where he led the Institute's project designs, strategic planning, and monitoring and evaluation efforts. He also worked in Amman, Jordan as the IRI country director from 2014 to 2017, leading programs in public opinion research, good governance, and political party building.

With that, Mr. Day.

STATEMENT OF RAMSEY DAY, SENIOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR AFRICA, UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. DAY. Good afternoon, Chair Bass and Ranking Member Smith and members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today alongside my friend Makila.

USAID greatly appreciates the subcommittee's support for the people of Sudan and for drawing attention to this important issue. USAID remains deeply concerned over the brutal crackdown by Sudan's security forces on unarmed civilians who for months gathered peacefully in the streets of Khartoum and across Sudan, seeking to establish a representative and inclusive government after 30 years of oppression, division, and corruption under Omar al-Bashir.

After decades of unwavering partnership between USAID and the people of Sudan, we are gravely concerned this nonviolent, well-organized, and massive effort by the Sudanese people to demand a democratic and representative government has been met with violence. United Nations human rights experts warn of Sudan sliding into a human rights abyss and have joined other voices calling for an independent investigation into violations against the peaceful protesters, which the Transitional Military Council, or TMC, has adamantly rejected.

Darfur has still not recovered from the mass killing, mass displacement, and genocide that began in 2003, the aftermath of which USAID responds to with humanitarian assistance on a daily basis and nearly 1.8 million people displaced by conflict and security in Darfur, many of whom have been displaced for well over a decade.

I remain deeply troubled that one of the key factors exacerbating the instability in Khartoum is the presence of the inactivity of the Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, which evolved from the very forces that already committed mass atrocities in Darfur. As a show of good faith that it can operate in the interest of the Sudanese people, the TMC must allow for an independent and credible investigation of the human rights violations committed in Khartoum and hold accountable those responsible for the violence.

On June 3rd, the TMC unilaterally announced that elections would be held in 9 months. USAID agrees with our State Department colleagues that such a timeline is unacceptable and would virtually ensure that the military and security forces who overthrew Bashir will remain in power, continuing the blatant violations of human rights and silencing of the peaceful demands of the citizens.

The upheaval in Khartoum is also intensifying the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, just as the United Nations-African Union joint peacekeeping operation in Darfur, or UNAMID, is in the process of drawing down toward a planned exit a year from now. UNAMID continues to play an important role in the protection of civilians and a role that simply cannot be filled by the RSF. The international community assesses that more than eight million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in Sudan, including one million refugees most of whom are from South Sudan.

The United States remains the largest donor of humanitarian assistance in Sudan. Over the last 2 years, the U.S. Government has provided nearly $340 million in humanitarian assistance, reaching more than 2.5 million people. Current programming focuses on emergency food distribution, improving health and nutrition, and increasing access to safe drinking water.

The TMC's decision to cutoff the internet and telephone networks has significantly hampered humanitarian operations. USAID will

continue to call on the TMC to ensure unfettered access for humanitarians to help the Sudanese people in need of lifesaving assistance. However, humanitarian access remains uneven and unpredictable. The reduced staff capacity of several Sudanese ministries and other government offices has in some cases slowed humanitarian access, but the operating environment varies greatly by location. The current restrictive and bureaucratic process for facilitating humanitarian operations must be improved to ensure timely delivery.

USAID also provides approximately five million dollars in development assistance to the Sudanese people which supports conflict mitigation at the community level and bolsters civil society including women, youth, and persons with disabilities. While we certainly have concerns about a rapid move to elections, USAID stands ready to support civil society to engage in a credible electoral process.

The people of Sudan have been united by a vibrant, inspirational, and massive public demonstration for democracy and civilian rule which has eluded the country since 1989. A transition to civilian rule with an empowered civil society inclusive of all Sudanese is essential to stopping the cycle of conflict and oppression and chart a new course for the people of Sudan on their journey to self-reliance.

I appreciate the opportunity to be here and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Day follows:]

Statement by Ramsey Day
Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Africa
United States Agency for International Development
Before the
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
June 25, 2019

Chairwoman Bass, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. We greatly appreciate the Subcommittee's support for the people of Sudan and for drawing attention to this important issue.

USAID is outraged about the brutal crackdown by Sudan's security forces on unarmed civilians who for months bravely gathered peacefully in the streets of Khartoum and other Sudanese cities and towns, seeking to establish a representative and inclusive government after 30 years of oppression, division, and corruption under Omar al-Bashir. After decades of unwavering partnership between USAID and the people of Sudan, we are also gravely concerned that this non-violent, well-organized, and massive effort by the Sudanese people to demand a democratic and representative government has been met with violence. We appreciate the decisive action of the African Union to suspend Sudan's membership, and its strong message on the need to transition quickly to a civilian-led government.

The umbrella opposition coalition Forces for Freedom and Change was negotiating in good faith with the Transitional Military Council (TMC) on a transition to civilian-led government following Bashir's ouster in April 2019. However, attacks by TMC forces had the effect of 'clearing the streets' on June 3rd, the last day of Ramadan and, for most Sudanese, the holiest month of the year. In this brutal attack, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), and other security elements shot and beat unarmed civilians, reportedly killing more than 100, including children, and injuring hundreds, including an American citizen. According to credible reports, they burned tents where peaceful protesters were sleeping; attacked medical staff in hospitals assisting the wounded; raped women and men, including health workers; and blocked the Internet and phone services across Sudan, silencing the Sudanese public and cutting their connection to the world.

United Nations human rights experts warn of Sudan sliding into a "human rights abyss" and have joined other voices calling for an independent outside investigation into human rights violations and abuses against peaceful protesters, which the TMC has rejected. I remain deeply concerned about the violence since the start of this year. I would note that one of the key factors exacerbating this risk, in addition to existing instability, human rights violations, abuses, and oppression, is the presence and activity of the RSF, which evolved from the very forces that *already* committed mass atrocities in Darfur, who are now in the capital Khartoum. It is this force, with its reprehensible track record, that the TMC chose to deploy in their 'street clean-up'

efforts on June 3. We have seen this story before in Sudan—the devastating aftermath of mass violence, including dire humanitarian needs. Darfur has still not recovered from the mass killing, mass displacement, and atrocities that began in 2003, the aftermath of which USAID responds to with humanitarian assistance on a daily basis. Nearly 1.8 million remain displaced by conflict in Darfur.

As a show of good faith that it can operate in the interests of the Sudanese people, the TMC should allow for an independent and credible investigation of the human rights violations and abuses committed in Khartoum and hold accountable those responsible. We call on the TMC to protect the human rights of those in Sudan, allow peaceful protests and respect freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly. In addition, the TMC should negotiate with the Forces for Freedom and Change to expeditiously form a civilian-led transitional government.

On June 3, the TMC unilaterally announced that elections would be held in nine months. We agree with our State colleagues that such a timeline is not realistic for credible elections. We also agree that the Forces for Freedom and Change are their negotiating partner and a civilian-led transitional government should be formed with them.

Humanitarian Needs

Upheaval in Khartoum is exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in Darfur at a very precarious time, as the United Nations-African Union joint peacekeeping operation in Darfur, UNAMID, is in the process of drawing down toward a planned exit a year from now. We are fully against the May 13 decree from the TMC demanding that UNAMID bases are turned over to the RSF. UNAMID continues to play an important role in the protection of civilians in Darfur, a role that cannot be filled by the RSF.

Again this month, violence erupted, leaving a reported 17 people dead, 15 injured, and 100 homes burned in Central Darfur. Witnesses said the attackers were the Rapid Support Forces—formerly the Janjaweed responsible for genocide in Darfur—the same brutal forces who killed, beat, and raped people in Khartoum.

The international community assesses that more than eight million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, including one million refugees and asylum seekers in Sudan who need assistance, most of them from South Sudan. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the TMC's decision to cut off the Internet and telephone networks has significantly hampered humanitarian operations.

We will continue to call on the TMC to ensure unfettered access for humanitarian actors to effectively and efficiently help Sudanese people in need of life-saving assistance—regardless of who and where they are—in keeping with international standards of independence and impartiality. The current restrictive operating environment for humanitarian assistance must be changed now to ensure timely delivery.

USAID Response

The United States is the largest donor to the people of Sudan. We continue to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to Sudanese people in need, including in areas where people have long suffered the impacts of conflict—Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile. In FY 2018 and 2019, the U.S. Government has provided nearly $340 million in humanitarian assistance as of March 2019, reaching more than 2.5 million people in Sudan. Current programming focuses on emergency food distributions, meeting critical gaps in health and nutrition, and improving access to safe drinking water for vulnerable populations. To a lesser extent, and where appropriate, our teams are working to expand upon integrated food security, livelihoods, and protection programming.

Food security needs this year are higher than normal, exacerbated by poor macroeconomic conditions that are driving extremely high food prices. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) estimates that in 2019, nearly 5.8 million Sudanese people will experience Crisis (IPC 3) level of acute food insecurity, including more than one million people facing Emergency— IPC 4—levels of food insecurity. Inflation and high cereal prices have significantly reduced household purchasing power, while economic conditions have also led to decreased income-generating opportunities and the availability of goods and services. In addition to the spikes in need, cash shortages across the country continue to hamper humanitarian operations as relief actors struggle to access sufficient cash to pay staff and contractors, causing significant delays in programming.

USAID is also providing approximately $5 million in development assistance, which supports conflict mitigation at the community level and support for civil society, including women, youth, and people with disabilities.

As we consider how best the United States can positively influence events in Sudan at this crucial and volatile time, and make a positive impact on the lives of Sudan's 40 million people, USAID is well placed to expand and adjust our assistance.

For decades, we have supported Sudan's civil society, despite limited space in an authoritarian environment. Brave Sudanese people, including thousands of young women, who repeatedly defied the state of emergency and took to the streets demanding freedom from authoritarian rule, are some of the beneficiaries of the civil society support we have provided for years. This is why it continues to be essential that the United States provide support for civil society as a cornerstone of our foreign assistance.

We continue to help mitigate conflict at the local level by working with communities to address grievances and alleviate competition for scarce resources.

USAID is already expanding support to Sudanese civil society through existing mechanisms and new funding, including funds from USAID's Elections and Political Processes Fund and

$170,000 from the Human Rights Grants Program. We are also exploring other means to mobilize funding and programs to augment these efforts. While we have concerns about a rapid move to elections, we stand ready to support civil society to engage in a free and fair electoral process, should there be an agreement on an appropriate timeline. USAID has supported many elections in Africa and we know that genuinely free and fair electoral processes needs adequate time. We continually assess how best to use our existing conflict mitigation assistance to help support civil society and resolve community-level conflict.

Conclusion

The people of Sudan have been united by a vibrant, inspirational, and massive public demonstration for democracy and civilian rule—a government of the people that has eluded the country since 1989. A military government will not resolve Sudan's divisions, end decades of conflict, repair its broken economy, and transform Sudan into an inclusive, prosperous, and productive country. On the contrary, we have seen military rule in Sudan produce decades of war, violence, a genocide, and regional instability. A transition to civilian rule with an empowered civil society inclusive of all Sudanese is essential in order to stop the cycle of conflict and oppression and chart a new course for the people of Sudan and their neighbors.

We will do all we can to help the Sudanese people achieve their dreams of an open and democratic society and we thank the committee for working with us in this effort.

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much.
Ambassador James.

STATEMENT OF MAKILA JAMES, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EAST AFRICA AND THE SUDANS, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. JAMES. Good afternoon, Chair Bass, Ranking Member Smith, members of the subcommittee. I am really pleased to be here today to share the space with my colleague to talk about the situation in Sudan. I want to appreciate that this subcommittee and Congress as a whole has been very supportive in all of our efforts. We are all working toward a more peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Sudan.

Since the ouster of Omar al-Bashir on April 11th, we have been in close contact with your staff to provide updates on the very fluid situation. I want to convey our very sincere appreciation for the strong, bipartisan support for the statements surrounding the events on the ground. Our overarching policy goal in Sudan is to support the formation of a civilian-led transitional government that can begin to implement much needed reform and prepare the country for free and fair elections.

The Sudanese people have made their demand very clear. They want civilian leadership. We seek to help the Sudanese people avoid the many risks such as continued military rule, a return to conflict among militias or security forces, and the re-emergence of the National Congress Party and other political forces that seek to counter their aspirations. The reprehensible attacks by the security forces under Transitional Military Council control and led by the Rapid Support Forces beginning on June 3rd sought to thwart those aspirations. However, the people of Sudan have shown remarkable resilience and determination in the face of this brutal violence.

We should seek to similarly be undaunted in supporting their goals of a peaceful transition to civilian-led transitional government that respects the human rights and fundamental freedoms. I personally visited Khartoum right after the Sudanese people unseated President Bashir, and I was moved, moved by the passion, the dedication, and the commitment of the people to bring change, and I saw the protesters in the street peacefully.

On June 10th, the Department appointed Special Envoy for Sudan, Ambassador Donald Booth, to lead the Department's efforts to secure a peaceful political solution to the current crisis in Sudan. He and Assistant Secretary Tibor Nagy recently traveled to Khartoum and Addis, and Ambassador Booth is currently in Khartoum today.

We have repeatedly and at the highest levels, both publicly and privately, called for the TMC to end immediately all attacks on civilians, obstruction of medical care, blocking of the internet, and undue restrictions on the media and civil society. We have urged TMC leadership to withdraw the RSF from Khartoum and turn over law enforcement to the police as a way of demonstrating that they are ready to negotiate in good faith.

The TMC is ultimately responsible for all the attacks on civilians by security forces and we have pressed them to allow a credible

and independent investigation and to hold those responsible for violence to account. To be clear, our previous engagement with the Government of Sudan known as the Phase II process has been suspended indefinitely. Our hope is to help the Sudanese people achieve a civilian-led transitional government that respects their rights and to then help that government, working with our international partners, to address the significant economic and political challenges it will inherit from the Bashir regime.

We believe that an agreement between the Sudanese military authorities and the opposition umbrella group called the Forces for Freedom and Change, FFC, on the formation of a civilian-led transition is the best possible outcome. The FFC is broadly representative and committed to peaceful engagement. We have encouraged the parties to buildupon the agreements made to date and to develop a transitional government system that is civilian-led, includes checks and balances to promote consensus, and that will form a government within a reasonable amount of time agreed to by all the parties before holding elections.

Succeeding in this process will require compromise and courage from Sudan's leaders. We and other partners can play a very supportive role. Sudan's military also has a role to play as a partner in a civilian-led government. They can choose to be a partner in the solution and agree with FFC and form a civilian-led government and work with them in a transitional government that ends conflicts, implements reforms, and leads to free and fair elections. This is the only pathway to a stable Sudan and a better relationship with the United States.

Last, we are coordinating with Africans and other international partners and stakeholders to align our efforts in support of a peaceful solution and a civilian-led government that heeds the demands of the Sudanese people. We support the role of the African Union and the strong response of the African Union Peace and Security Council following the bloody June 3rd attacks on peaceful protesters.

We have also welcomed the engagement of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy and the work of the Envoy he has appointed, as well as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, IGAD, to mediate between the parties in conjunction with the African Union. Ambassador Booth and other U.S. officials are in regular contact with the mediators to support their efforts, encourage productive dialog leading to an agreement, and to back them with the full array of options at our disposal including measures that target those involved in human rights violations and abuses and who undermine the establishment of a peaceful transitional government.

We are coordinating with the African Union, the U. N., the Troika (US, UK, and Norway), and other European partners and countries in the region, including important stakeholders such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. Senior officials have been in engaged in a frank and frequent dialog with them to coordinate efforts to send a common demand to the TMC to end attacks on civilians and to agree to the formation of a civilian-led transitional government.

[The prepared statement of Ms. James follows:]

Makila James
Deputy Assistant Secretary – Bureau of African Affairs
United States House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs
Sub-Committee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations
The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan
June 25, 2019
2172 Rayburn House Office Building

Good afternoon, Chair Bass, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Sub-Committee. I am pleased to be here with my colleague from USAID to discuss the crisis in Sudan.

I appreciate engagement by this Sub-Committee, and Congress as a whole, in supporting a more peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Sudan. Since the ouster of Omar al-Bashir on April 11, we've been in close contact with your staff to provide updates on the very fluid situation. I want to convey our sincere appreciation for the strong, bipartisan statements of concern surrounding events on the ground.

Our overarching policy goal in Sudan is to support the formation of a civilian-led transitional government that can begin to implement much needed reform and prepare the country for free and fair elections. The Sudanese people have made civilian leadership their clear demand. We seek to help the Sudanese people avoid the many risks – such as continued military rule, a return to conflict among militias or security forces, and the re-emergence of National Congress Party and other political forces that seek to counter their aspirations.

The reprehensible attacks by the security forces under Transitional Military Council (TMC) control – and led by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) – beginning on June 3 sought to thwart these aspirations. However, the people of Sudan have shown remarkable resilience and determination in the face of this brutal violence. We should seek to be similarly undaunted in supporting their goals of a peaceful transition to a civilian-led government that respects their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

I visited Khartoum a week after the Sudanese people unseated President Bashir and was moved by the passion, dedication and commitment to peaceful change shown by the Sudanese protestors with whom I met.

On June 10, the Department appointed a Special Envoy for Sudan, Ambassador Donald Booth, to lead the Department's efforts to secure a peaceful political solution to the current crisis in Sudan. He and Assistant Secretary Nagy recently travelled to Khartoum and Addis Ababa, and Ambassador Booth is currently again in Khartoum.

We have repeatedly, and at the highest levels, both publicly and privately called [for/on] the TMC to end immediately all attacks on civilians, obstruction of medical care, blocking of the internet, and undue restrictions on the media and civil society. We have urged TMC leadership

to withdraw the RSF from Khartoum and turn over law enforcement to the police as a way of demonstrating that they are ready to negotiate in good faith. The TMC is ultimately responsible for all attacks on civilians by security forces and we have pressed them to allow a credible and independent investigation and to hold those responsible for violence to account.

To be clear, our previous engagement with the Government of Sudan – known as the Phase II process – has been suspended indefinitely. Our hope is to help the Sudanese people achieve a civilian-led government that respects their rights, and then to help that government, working with our international partners, to address the significant economic and political challenges it will inherit from the Bashir regime.

We believe that an agreement between the Sudanese military authorities and the opposition umbrella group called the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) on the formation of a civilian-led transitional government is the best possible outcome. The FFC is broadly representative and committed to peaceful engagement. We have encouraged the parties to build upon the agreements made to date and develop a transitional government system that is civilian-led, includes checks and balances to promote consensus, and will govern for a reasonable amount of time, agreed to by the parties, before holding elections. Succeeding in this process will require compromise and courage from Sudan's leaders; we and other partners can play a supportive role.

Sudan's military has an important role to play as a partner in a civilian-led government to rein in militias and safeguard the country. They can choose to be a part of the solution: agree with the FFC and form a civilian-led government and work with them in a transitional government that ends conflicts, implements reforms and leads to free and fair elections. This is the only pathway to a stable Sudan and a better relationship with the United States.

Lastly, we are coordinating with African and international partners and other stakeholders to align our efforts in support of a peaceful resolution and a civilian-led government that heeds the demands of the Sudanese people. We support the role of the African Union and the strong response of the AU Peace and Security Council following the bloody June 3 attack on peaceful protesters. We have also welcomed the engagement of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy and the work of his envoy on behalf of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to mediate between the parties in conjunction with the AU. Ambassador Booth and other U.S. officials are in regular contact with the mediators to support their efforts, encourage productive dialogue leading to an agreement, and back them with the full array of options at our disposal, including measures that target those involved in human rights violations and abuses or who undermine the establishment of a peaceful transitional government.

We are coordinating with the African Union, the UN, our Troika and other European partners, and countries in the region, including important stakeholders such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. Senior officials have been engaged in a frank and frequent dialogue with them to coordinate efforts and send a common demand to the TMC to end attacks on civilians and to agree to the formation of a civilian-led government. As we speak, Ambassador Booth is travelling on a whirlwind tour that included stops with me for meetings in London and Berlin in addition to travel to Oslo, Khartoum, Cairo, Abu Dhabi and Riyadh, all happening just days after his trip to Khartoum and Addis earlier this month.

In conclusion, I would like to offer a note of hope. The Sudanese defied all odds in unseating a dictator and offered a glimpse – in that square outside the military headquarters – of Sudan's vast potential for tolerance, creativity and unity. Sudan's current leaders have a clear choice -- they can rein in spoilers, resume negotiations and create the kind of government their people have sacrificed so much to achieve, or they can be remembered as those who failed them at their moment of great opportunity.

I look forward to continued engagement on this issue and to your questions.

Ms. BASS. Thank you. Thank you very much for your testimony. And if there is more, I am sure as we engage in questions and answers we will be able to do that. So we are going to begin that now, and we will each take 5 minutes. We will do a round, and then we will come back through again if any of the members have more that they would like to say.

Ambassador, you were talking about the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, and I wanted to know if you could expand a little bit on your thoughts on what the role is that they are playing, because I know that it is not positive.

Ms. JAMES. The United States has been having active engagement with all the countries that have a stake in what is going on in Sudan, including the Gulf States and Egypt, on the crisis that is happening. We have had very frank conversations at the level of Under Secretary Hale, Ambassador Booth, myself, the Department's Near East Asian Affairs Bureau, and our embassies in the region.

There was recently a meeting held just last weekend in Berlin. Countries that are interested in Sudan, we call ourselves the Friends of Sudan, and we gathered, including the countries from the Gulf States, to talk about how we could be supportive and how we could work together.

Ms. BASS. Is it the Administration's view that these three countries are playing a positive role?

Ms. JAMES. Well, we do think they can bring something to the table because they have influence and leverage with some of the parties. Particularly, there is leverage over the Transitional Military Council, and so we are urging them to use that leverage and to use the financial assistance that they have pledged to the country to move the TMC toward accepting an agreement and to ending violence.

So to that extent, we think that they are receptive to that message. They have given us positive indications that they want to be supportive. And so, yes, we think they could play a constructive role.

Ms. BASS. They could play a positive role, but they have not up until now.

Ms. JAMES. Well, I would say that we have urged them to be mindful of how their funds can undermine the process.

Ms. BASS. Right.

Ms. JAMES. And they have indicated to us that the money that they have pledged to date has been used just to stabilize the Sudanese pound, but going forward they want to work with the rest of the international community on how to continue disbursing those funds, so to that extent they can play a constructive role moving forward.

Ms. BASS. OK. So what is the status of—you mentioned the effort by Prime Minister Abiy. And so, what is the status of the Ethiopian and AU mediation efforts? I know when the Prime Minister first went there, if I am not mistaken—or no, I am sorry. When leaders of the opposition went to Addis, when they returned home, they were arrested. And I do not know where they are now, but I wanted to know what you thought of the Prime Minister's role in

general and what happened to the opposition forces. Are they still incarcerated?

Ms. JAMES. With respect to the general role that Prime Minister Abiy and his newly appointed Envoy Mahmoud Dardir are playing, we think it is a very constructive role. Actually, they are working very closely with the African Union. The African Union has basically supported Prime Minister Abiy's Envoy in taking the lead in mediation.

So we see a coming together of the African Union and the Ethiopian efforts, including efforts with IGAD. It has been positive. It has been going in a direction where they have presented proposals to the parties and we understand that the FFC has accepted them; the TMC has not. But that they are talking to all parties and trying to get this agreement signed, we think that is a constructive thing. We think it brings value.

I actually have to say I do not have the latest on the people who were arrested. We will have to get back to you on that one.

Ms. BASS. Thank you. I would appreciate that. And then I wanted to know what support we are providing to the mediation efforts. You know, you certainly referenced Booth and the Assistant Secretary, but specifically what are we doing? And then what tools do we have to press the TMC to hand over power?

Ms. JAMES. Well, our very presence, the very fact that we have an Envoy there helps us play a coordinating role. The coordinating role I described with the Gulf States, as well as with other partners, many in the Troika, the U.S., U.K., Norway, our engagement there, we are able to play a role where we are coordinating positions. We are putting forward ideas on how to assist the country once a civilian government is established.

So we think our role has been very complementary and supportive of the Envoy's role from the African Union and from ET/IGAD, so we think we are playing our part. With respect to actual tools we have, I think Assistant Secretary Nagy has spoken to this. We do have a wide array of tools. Some of them are to incentivize good behavior and we are also exploring what happens if things do not go well.

I do not want to go through chapter and verse now because we are in early stages, but we are looking at all options. The most important thing right now is we have robust diplomacy. That is our first tool that we really want to put into full effect. With all the Envoys now, with the ongoing dialog that is happening, we think diplomacy is one of our biggest and strongest tool——

Ms. BASS. Let me, before I run out of time, I wanted to know what actions that we have taken to press for an impartial, independent investigation to some of the killings that have taken place. And I do not mean to exclude you, Mr. Day, but Madam Ambassador, and then maybe in my last few seconds Mr. Day can respond.

Ms. JAMES. The killings were reprehensible and I think from the very first day we have issued statements from the State Department. We have also commended those statements coming from a number of other sources including our European colleagues, our European partners, and the Gulf States. So we have been all en-

couraging everyone to release statements and to put pressure on the TMC.

And our frank dialog that we had in Berlin just this weekend, we underscored that everyone has to make it very clear to the TMC no more violence will be acceptable under any circumstances and that there will be a cost to pay. I did not want to get into the cost in great detail now, but we are looking at all options including sanctions down the line should there be any kind of repeat of violence.

Ms. BASS. OK.

Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Hopefully those sanctions include indictments? I mean Bashir being the monster that he was, still was very concerned about his ICC indictments, so hopefully that is being very seriously considered.

If I could—this is Administrator Day, if you could, you talked about how the Rapid Support Forces, witnesses said that they were formerly Janjaweed. Could you elaborate on that? And you did say, and I am glad you were so emphatic that we are fully against the May 13th decree by the TMC demanding that UNAMID bases are turned over to the RSF. And I am wondering, you know, that is a 10,000-strong deployment unless it has been downgraded further. I am wondering what role they may or may not be asked to play in terms of peace. They are there, they are not far. You know, of course Khartoum is not Darfur, but if you could speak to that.

And then the point you made in your opening about how credible reports that the RSF attacked protesters while they were sleeping, attacked medical staff and hospitals assisting the wounded, raped women and men, including healthcare workers, and then you go on from there. How safe is it now? Has that been chronicled? Do we know what are those people doing? Someone who has been attacked in such a horrific way, did they find any kind of refuge, particularly the wounded?

And what about a humanitarian worker on the ground right now in Khartoum or in proximity to it, how safe are they? And that goes for the medical staff as well. You mentioned one American was killed. Are you at liberty to disclose who that was, if you would? Was that person a humanitarian worker, for example. And again, I would ask you how many of these RSF forces are there. I mean, you know, the Janjaweed was not all that big, but they are unbelievably lethal because of their monopoly on weapons and other things in space, if you could speak to that as well.

And is there anything being considered at the United Nations in terms of a deployment of a force or re-deployment of existing forces in Sudan?

Mr. DAY. Thank you, Congressman. There are several components of that, that I will defer to the Ambassador on, but I will comment on a few of those. No. 1 is related, of course, to the humanitarian situation and the role that the RSF is potentially playing in that. You are absolutely right. Many of the leaders of the RSF are the same leaders that were leading the Janjaweed militia during the Darfur genocide started in 2003.

We are deeply concerned about that and how it will impact our ability to operate from a humanitarian perspective. The humani-

tarian situation is significant and it is serious. We have seen a significant increase in the humanitarian need over the last year or so, not just because of the political situation but also the economic. One million of these are refugees from South Sudan where USAID is reaching about 2.5 million people. But the operating environment is incredibly fluid. Where we have access 1 day, we may not have access another day.

So there are a lot of hydraulics that play. It is a very, very dangerous operating environment at the time. So one of the elements that UNAMID plays, you had mentioned UNAMID, is that it does provide some level of security in some of the areas in which we are operating, so it does play an important role. Any kind of transition from UNAMID bases to something that is controlled by the RSF is deeply concerning to us and absolutely unacceptable.

On many of the other issues, I would defer to the Ambassador.

Mr. SMITH. You do not mean that they get involved with mitigating the violence, you mean that they would lose their bases.

Mr. DAY. They would not play a constructive role, absolutely not.

Ms. JAMES. The first thing that I would add is that the RSF is under the TMC and the TMC is ultimately responsible for all the violence that is happening in the country. So we have made it very clear that we expect the TMC to have the RSF removed from Khartoum. They are a force that is operating without control and they need to be removed from that area. We have also said there should be accountability and that there should be accountability for the June 3rd violence and that we expect an impartial and credible investigation. So we are holding the TMC for the violence of the RSF. They are not a separate entity unto themselves.

The other thing you asked about with respect to an American who was killed, I am not aware of an American who was killed although I am aware of an American who was shot and who is in the hospital. And when Assistant Secretary Nagy and Envoy Don Booth were traveling, they visited him in the hospital. They personally engaged with him to assure him that these issues are of great concern to us.

But I do not think anyone was killed, but severely injured and that is unacceptable as well.

Mr. SMITH. Was that person a humanitarian aid worker or——

Ms. JAMES. I do not believe so.

Mr. SMITH. Woman or man?

Mr. DAY. We could check on that.

Mr. SMITH. OK, thank you. Thank you, Chair.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Wright.

Mr. WRIGHT. Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank both of you for being here.

Mr. Day, you had mentioned the situation on the ground is dangerous, that operationally it is very fluid. Do we know, have we been able to do a—has anyone been able to do a needs assessment? Do we know exactly what kind of supplies are needed there?

Mr. DAY. Sure. Thank you, Congressman. We do believe the type of humanitarian assistance that we are providing is what is needed which has been food distribution, which is the primary issue that we are—and food security is incredibly important at this point. There are about 5.8 million people in Sudan that are in what we

call IPC 3 or IPC 4 areas, which is either crisis or worse emergency. IPC 5 would be in a catastrophic situation.

But—so there are significant needs, but it is really on the food security side, nutrition, and then as well as water and sanitation.

Mr. WRIGHT. To what extent is the TMC preventing things, food and medicine to that extent from getting where it needs to be?

Mr. DAY. Historically, there has been interference or at least bureaucratic impediments in terms of getting permanence to operate in certain areas. Since 2016, the humanitarian access has improved. However, I say that with some caution just because it is very spotty, it is very uneven, and it is very unpredictable. So we have not seen any kind of systematic interference in our humanitarian access, but in some cases we just have more access than we have in other places.

Mr. WRIGHT. OK. Well, would you go as far as to say that their interference, people are dying because of their interference, that food and medicine is not getting where it needs to be. Is it that dire?

Mr. DAY. The situation is dire and there are people who are dying because of the food insecurity in Sudan. That said, the humanitarian operations are functioning and we are in good coordination with other donors. So I do not know that I would go so far as to say that there has been systematic and direct interference by the TMC that has led us to widespread inability to get to where we need to go.

Mr. WRIGHT. But their cooperation leaves a lot to be desired, does it not?

Mr. DAY. Yes.

Mr. WRIGHT. Ambassador James, you have talked a bit about some other African nations and their involvement and I did not hear anything about Russia and China. And we know that they are meddling in Africa, Chinese in particular, all over Africa. Have you heard—do you have any knowledge that they are getting involved in Sudan?

Ms. JAMES. I do not have anything specific to add on China in particular. We have certainly monitored Russian actions because the Russians were certainly involved with the Sudanese in some other African conflicts and so we are keeping a close eye, but I have not anything new to report to you today.

Mr. WRIGHT. OK, great.

Madam Chair, I would like to give the remainder of my time to the ranking member, if he needs it.

Ms. BASS. I am. I am.

Mr. Burchett.

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you, Chair and Ranking Member.

I was going through my questions here and everybody seems to be sort of reading off the same sheet now, but I appreciate that. There have been reports that there are tensions between the Sudanese military and the Rapid Support Force as the RSF. Should fighting break out between the security forces, what would that conflict look like? And both of you all can take a shot at it.

Ms. JAMES. Well, Congressman, I started by noting that we consider the RSF an entity that the TMC must be accountable for and must control. We understand that there are some tensions. We

have certainly seen it play out with respect to what happened on June 3rd. I think it is very clear that the RSF was at the fore of that. The RSF initiated that action. And so our pressing the TMC today is to say you must hold these people accountable. You must rein them in. You must stop this continued violence.

We are hoping that our pressing them collectively, not just the United States but all of the international partners pressing the TMC that there is going to be accountability and there is going to be a cost if they do not rein them in that that will generate enough motivation for them to really move seriously. We have to watch it. It is a very delicate situation. It is very fluid. Nobody wants to see more violence happening, so we have to kind of take this in very carefully measured steps.

But we have been making the point very clear to the TMC, you are responsible for what happens with the RSF. We have not allowed them to separate out and say they do not have control. They have to be accountable at the end of the day. That is our consistent and collective message.

Mr. DAY. And from USAID's perspective, we are in constant scenario planning mode and in the event that there is a further deterioration of the security situation we would be able to respond as necessary.

Mr. BURCHETT. OK, thank you.

Ms. BASS. Are you finished?

Mr. BURCHETT. Yes, ma'am. Yield the rest of my time. I apologize.

Ms. BASS. OK. That is OK. Thank you.

A few more questions. I wanted to ask again about Ethiopia and its role. And if there is an agreement based on the Ethiopian proposal, how could the U.S. and other partners ensure that key reforms are implemented to support a democratic transition? And then how will the U.S. respond if the TMC forms a transitional government without the opposition?

How about you, Mr. Day.

Mr. DAY. Well, again I will defer to the Ambassador on some of the political dynamics, but I will say that in the event that there is a civilian-led government that is formed and it is a government that we would want to work with, we are prepared and we are in, as I mentioned, in constant scenario planning. So in the event that there is a civilian-led government that we would want to work with, we are prepared to adjust our assistance posture toward that government. So we are ready to go.

Ms. BASS. Well, I was describing if they formed a government without the opposition.

Mr. DAY. I am sorry, without the opposition.

Ms. BASS. If the military, right.

Mr. DAY. So we will work with our——

Ms. BASS. What will we do? What will our response be?

Mr. DAY. So we will certainly work with our colleagues at the State Department to make a political analysis as to whether or not this is a government in which we can work. But in the event that we can work, well, then we are ready to go.

Ms. BASS. I think that was a—referring that to you, Ambassador.

Ms. JAMES. Chair, I would like to just be very clear and unequivocal about this. We have conveyed in very strong terms that a unilateral government formed by the TMC would not be credible, would be unacceptable, and we would have a very difficult time engaging with such a government.

Ms. BASS. What do you think the UAE and Saudi Arabia and Egypt would do?

Ms. JAMES. Well, we have had frank discussions as I said, this last week as well as the previous contacts I have described, and they have said to us repeatedly, they too want to see a civilian-led government that is in their interest because they are fundamentally concerned about stability. Anything short of a civilian-led transitional government that does not have the consensus and the buy-in from the people will not provide the stability that they care about.

So we believe them. We take them at their word that they want to see that, that they are sending those similar kinds of messages, and we urge them to continue to do that publicly, privately, and to use their leverage.

Ms. BASS. So are we doing anything to return internet access? I do not believe the internet is back, is it?

Ms. JAMES. My understanding is that it is not back yet. We are very concerned about that. Of course, it affects not only messaging, but it also affects humanitarian assistance delivery, it affects a number of things.

Ms. BASS. Right.

Ms. JAMES. We are very concerned about that. We have, again, been making that one of our clear messages to the TMC, "You have to restore the internet."

Ms. BASS. So what are we doing to support, then, the human rights defenders, journalists, and civil society during this period? And when you say to them that they have to restore the internet, what is their response? Because they have not done it.

Ms. JAMES. Well, they have not done it. I could not tell you chapter and verse as to what they are doing behind the scenes, we have not seen it. But they know that it is part of our broader messaging. If you do not allow the people to demonstrate peacefully, if you do not allow not just the internet, but media freedom, then all of this undermines credibility in their efforts to get a civilian government.

We have been making the linkage that you cannot have a good faith process if you do not allow the people to speak and to be seen and to be able to demonstrate peacefully. So we have been simply reiterating this as part of our broader messaging to them that people have a right to peacefully protest.

Ms. BASS. Do you get a sense that they take us seriously? I mean we do not have an ambassador, right?

Ms. JAMES. We have a chargé and that is because they have a chargé here. But our Chargé, Steven Koutsis, has been very engaged. He has regular meetings across the board with FFC and TMC and other stakeholders, so we think that we are getting our message across.

We have actually seen some moderation. When I arrived in Khartoum at first, early April, one of the first demands was that the negotiators that the TMC put forward were not credible. They

were considered tainted, and we pressed that they had to remove them. The TMC did remove those people. And so we think that they do begin to hear us, but it has to be consistent and it has to be a collective message from the broader international community.

Ms. BASS. So it just seems to me, I mean, you know, I was there a few months ago before this happened and they were so excited and interested in moving U.S. relations forward, and they were all ears. And to me it seems like that has closed. I do not get the impression that they are taking us seriously. If we have said over and over again, they need to restore internet access and they have not, I do not know if we have any ability technology-wise to supersede that.

Ms. JAMES. I could not answer on the technical issue of what we can do on the internet specifically, other than make it very clear that that is part of our broader demand for giving the public access to media and the ability to be heard and to be seen. In terms of our leverage, one of the most important bits of leverage we have, and I think the committee is quite aware, is that we were in discussions with the government prior to the fall of Bashir. We were in discussions on what we called Phase II. That process has been suspended indefinitely.

Ms. BASS. Right.

Ms. JAMES. The government is very much interested in resuming that because they see it as the ultimate path to getting to economic assistance.

Ms. BASS. Right.

Ms. JAMES. So that leverage is something that we are——

Ms. BASS. They want the State sponsored terrorism removed.

Ms. JAMES. We are continuing to press that there will not even be a reassessment of starting that dialog unless the civilian government is in place. So we think we have their attention because that is leverage that they really want us to exert in their behalf.

Ms. BASS. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you much, Madam Chair.

Let me ask you if I could, the makeup of the RSF, you know, the information I have looked at suggests there may be as many as 50,000 troops. A man who goes by the nickname of Hemeti who is well-known for his atrocities, and I am wondering what we know about him. And I am wondering if you could tell us how the Saudis and the Gulf States provide money. What is the flow of money, munitions, other materiel, do they have any influence to try to end this reign of terror since they seem to be the purse strings?

But again, Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, I mean it could be—who goes by the nickname of Hemeti. But 50,000 troops, is that accurate, because that is a huge force, and are they at loggerheads with the military or are they in some way in cahoots with the military, if you could speak to that as well.

Who in the RSF has been—who are they targeting? I mean when they went into the hospitals, when they raped men and women, when they killed people, what was their target? They must have had—it could not have been indiscriminate. They must have had people. Is there any sectarian violence involved here? Are there Muslims, for example, or Catholics, or others? Is there any evidence of that? I think that is important.

And again, the Janjaweed leadership, how many of these people are newly recruited into this new force? You know, the Janjaweed was notorious for its brutality. They never went away and, apparently, they have reconstituted themselves under a new banner. If you could speak to that as well.

Ms. JAMES. Let me start with Hemeti first. Hemeti is the deputy of the TMC and in that position he has a role of influence within the TMC structure. And so, we engage with him, not to confer legitimacy, not because we believe that he is somebody who is credible and a good leader, but because we have to engage with him to deliver our tough messages. So we do meet with him quite regularly as part of our engagement strategy to be sure that they are getting our messages loud and clear.

With respect to the RSF, I could not answer your question yet on the numbers, but we all know that the RSF are a remnant of the—they are a rebranded version of what was the Janjaweed. These are not people who we consider to be credible security forces, but we do feel like because they have been a part of the security forces, the TMC has to rein them in and has to direct their behavior and has to be accountable for their behavior.

But the RSF is quite a concern for us, a very big concern. These are not disciplined forces. These are not trained security. And there is a great concern that the division between them and the regular army, the Sudanese Armed Forces, is very worrisome. Nobody wants to see a civil war break out.

And so we are trying to convey to General Burhan who is the head of the TMC that he must be accountable for what is happening with Hemeti and the RSF. We cannot say that enough. And it is not just the United States. This is a point that all the countries involved in Sudan including the members who were at the meeting on the weekend, the Gulf States, Egypt, Ethiopia, the AU, we have all been sending a similar message. The RSF must be reined in.

They have the potential to destabilize what could be a successful transitional process because they, of course, are worried about their future, so we have been repeating that message over and over to Burhan. He has to be accountable for what is happening with Hemeti and the RSF.

Mr. SMITH. Is there any kind of graph that would show the line of authority with Hemeti and others, and how many of these commanders are seasoned janjaweed who have committed the most gross atrocities on the face of the earth and now they are unleashed again to kill fellow Sudanese, do we have that? I mean how many—what is the core group that really makes up this terrible organization?

Ms. JAMES. I do not have a definitive number for you today. We can do some checking on that. But I think it is accurate to say that they are widely dispersed throughout Khartoum. They are in Omdurman. They are in other large cities, so they are in many different places. And we have urged that they be removed from the streets of Khartoum. They have no business in Khartoum. There are no barracks for them in Khartoum. And if they are going to be removed off the streets they have to be totally decommissioned

there. There is no place for them to go back into barracks in Khartoum.

Mr. SMITH. Now you have testified that AU has suspended their membership. Does that have any real impact? I mean Bashir actually ran the organization during one cycle. And I am just wondering if—what else is on the table that could really impact them?

Ms. JAMES. The point I was trying to underscore earlier about the robust diplomacy that is happening now, we are at a new moment right now. Between the Envoy that the AU has assigned, the Envoy from IGAD and from Ethiopia, and our own Envoy, as well as the Envoy from the United Nations and others, we see that there is now a consensus coming together. There is a core of diplomacy that is really beginning to have an impact.

We are not only doing it in Khartoum, we are doing it in various other capitals as well as in the Gulf States. Ambassador Booth will be traveling not only from Addis to Khartoum, he will be going to the Gulf States this week coming. And so, we are going to continue sending the message that we need to be coordinated and using all of our leverage. No one country alone can move the situation. It is going to take our collective activity, which is why we are spending a lot of time coordinating with our partners in any country that has influence and a constructive role to be played.

So that is what has been happening. That is the real leverage, using the diplomacy first because things are beginning to make a difference. You have the FFC open to an idea that has been put forward from the African Union and the IGAD members and that is something that we want to build on. We want to lock in what they have already agreed to and keep building on that and pressing the TMC to come to the table.

It is not going to be an overnight process, but we have to keep the pressure up from all the different bits of leverage that we have. And many different members of the international community have different degrees of leverage. We are trying to bring it all together.

Ms. BASS. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Ms. BASS. Representative Omar.

Ms. OMAR. Ambassador James, I wanted to talk to you about the role of foreign influence in the events of June 3rd, particularly wanted to talk to you about Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arabs. I know that the Administration sees the importance of engaging the Gulf States since David Hale called both the Saudis and the Emirates after the attacks.

What do you think are the interests of Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, and Egypt's objectives and interests in Sudan?

Ms. JAMES. Well, the first thing I would say is that after the June 3rd violence, the UAE and Saudi Government both issued statements, as well as Egypt and others, strongly condemning the violence. They took that action immediately unprompted, and I take that to mean that they were shocked and appalled by the violence as we were. So I would give them some degree of credit in recognizing that that was a horrific experience. It undermined the process that was going along in a constructive way.

Ms. OMAR. What are——

Ms. JAMES. With respect to their interests, I would say that certainly they have a lot of—a long-term economic interest, but they also have an interest in fundamental stability. Any instability in Sudan is going to affect the whole region. They have raised that with us on several occasions. We take that to be a very serious concern. Instability in the region is something that is going to affect all the neighbors and they have a stake in making sure that that instability does not spill over.

Ms. OMAR. And, Ambassador, do you think they have an interest in democratization of Sudan, and do you know if Secretary Pompeo discussed Sudan with MBS in his meeting yesterday?

Ms. JAMES. I do not have a readout on the Secretary's conversations, so I could not address that. But I would say they have a—the Gulf States have the same interests we have in terms of stability and the best way to get that stability is to have the civilian-led government. They have said that repeatedly. They support that. They have made it very clear that they do not support the TMC. They are not there for the TMC, but they engage with the TMC the way we engage to deliver tough messages.

I take them at their word that instability cannot be addressed if you do not have a government that the people fundamentally will accept. That is why the civilian-led government has been all of our mantra. That is all the people are demanding. That is what the people want. We believe they understand that is the root to stability.

Ms. OMAR. And we know that the Saudis and the Emirates have had a history of crushing democratic uprising in the region, and so I am wondering—that is contrary to what our interests are what we see as a stability being driven by in the Middle East. How is Ambassador Booth going to bring them around to see things from our point of view?

Ms. JAMES. Well, I start with the fact that I do not think we are pushing on such a closed door to begin with because in the meetings I held just this weekend with senior officials, the basic message was that we are all in agreement the civilian-led transitional government is imperative. It is imperative for the stability, but it is also the key to unlocking future economic assistance. That is what the country fundamentally needs. The instability in Sudan was driven by the economic crisis. They want to see the economic crisis addressed. We cannot address it until the State sponsored terrorism issue is addressed, so stability is key for all of us.

I think the Gulf States have that same interest. We are all moving in the direction of what will it take to get us there. That means we have to get a mediated process which everybody will agree to that will lead to a civilian government. I think the Emirates, the Saudis, are in the same position we are of wanting to see that happen sooner than later. It is the only guarantee to stave off the instability.

Ms. OMAR. Yes. And I know that the people of Sudan have fought really hard to make sure that they can get rid of a dictator and I hope we do everything to make sure that they do not get a dictator for another 30 years.

As you have mentioned that there might be possible sanctions down the road, to clarify do you mean the Global Magnitsky sanctions on Hemeti for his role on the June 3rd, or something else?

Ms. JAMES. Well, respectfully, I would like to say that we have not really finished that review process. We are looking at the options, but the options would include a range of things. As I said, there are some incentives, but there are also some sanctions, everything from visa sanctions to economic sanctions. I think I would leave it in that broad category for now as we are still assessing what are the best tools. We want to use the right tool and we really want to target the right people. So visa sanctions are certainly on the table as are economic sanctions.

Ms. OMAR. We often see different ways that we engage and the ways that we use our toolboxes. There are a lot of people who are talking to me about the way that we have engaged aggressively in the situation in Venezuela and how we are not aggressively in the case of Sudan. And some people would say this is a country of brown people who are Muslim, you know, we might not be interested in engaging aggressively because our allies do not want us to. And I hope that we are trying to find a balance and trying to be consistent with our values as we engage diplomatically in this particular issue.

Thank you and I yield back.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Phillips.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you, Madam Chair. And, of course, today's conversation and hearing is not just about the future of Sudan and the Sudanese people, but also Ethiopia which, of course, is host to hundreds of thousands of refugees. And even an issue that touches my district in the suburbs of Minneapolis, Minnesota, where one of the first questions asked in my recent town hall just last weekend was from a Sudanese immigrant who asked what we are doing to help the transition to an accountable form of government in his former country.

So to that end, I cannot help but reflect on the fact that we do not have an ambassador representing our country right now. Personnel at our embassy has been drawn down and the U.N. is also drawing down personnel. And so, my first question to both of you is, under those circumstances are we positioned to provide the assistance and support necessary and how do those three things affect our ability to do so?

Ambassador James.

Ms. JAMES. Yes, sir. With respect to the ordered departure, our first priority always, at all of our embassies overseas, is the safety of our own people and those who work for us. Drawing down the embassy was a prudent measure to take in the early days partly because air travel was inconsistent, and we would have no way to evacuate people. So we took an action based on the safety of our own people to draw down to just the essential core staff.

The essential core staff though is working around the clock and we are now trying to support them as hard as we can back in Washington. Ambassador Booth's appointment is to help with some of the regional diplomacy. So we do think that we have a number of tools, the Envoy, the embassy team, and then the robust group

that we have back here in Washington, so we do think our work is still going forward.

Yes, we would like to be at full staffing, but the most important thing is the safety of the people who are there. We think we are at a reasonable number for the risk and for the work that we have to get done. So that is with respect to the ordered departure.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Mr. Day.

Mr. DAY. I would only add that I think we are well positioned in the event that there is a real political transition in Sudan. We have been working in Sudan for nearly three decades. We are the largest humanitarian donor. Our development assistance is quite limited, but at the same time we do have a pretty significant network of civil society organizations that we have supported over the last several decades.

We have made available some money through our elections and political processes fund and we also are supporting human rights monitoring. So at this point we feel like our assistance is probably appropriate for what the environment is, would allow, again separating humanitarian assistance and development assistance. But in the event that there is a political transition, we stand at the ready to adjust our assistance posture.

Mr. PHILLIPS. OK. I appreciate that. My next question is about stolen assets and money laundering. Do you believe those issues are issues in Sudan?

Ms. JAMES. I would have to say they absolutely are issues. We have not personally engaged on those deeply since April 11th, but we know that the FFC has been looking at the issue and we have urged them to be transparent in whatever work that they are doing around that issue.

But it is certainly something that a civilian-led government could take on. I think we are not going to get a lot of traction on that right now, but if we can get to a civilian-led government I think it is something that we would urge them to put on their agenda.

Mr. PHILLIPS. As you know, the Treasury Department issues anti-money laundering advisories on occasion. We have done so relative to Venezuela and Ukraine. Would you argue that we should be doing so with Sudan so that we can identify and track some of those assets?

Ms. JAMES. To be quite honest, the priority right now is to really get the political process moving forward, to get the civilian-led government. That is the first thing. When that happens and we have a responsible government in place, then we can do a lot of other things along the lines you are describing. But without a responsible government, I think it is just going to be so much more difficult, if not impossible. So our priority right now is really to make this diplomacy robust and to get the civilian-led government in place.

Mr. PHILLIPS. OK.

Mr. Day, any comments on laundering?

OK. With that I yield my time.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Let me just ask a couple final questions. On December 28th, the New York Times in an article on the front lines of the Saudi War in Yemen, child soldiers from Darfur, the point was made that on

any given time for nearly 4 years there was some 14,000 Sudanese militia mostly from Darfur who really comprise the RSF, so child soldiers are deployed. They take part in that battle, then some, I guess, maybe many are returned. Is that what we are talking about in terms of the composition of those 50,000 RSF forces? Are we talking about child soldiers who are growing older of course, but more battle-hardened, who have now turned their violence against Sudanese people?

And again, if I could ask, do we have any sense as to how much money from the Gulf States is flowing to this transitional government and will the Saudis and others do more to just put a tourniquet on the money and their diplomatic support for this terrible bloodletting?

And again—well, third and finally, does USAID have enough resources? I mean we are talking millions of people again. Is there a need for an urgent supplemental or is money being diverted from some other account to ensure that food, clothing, medicine, and shelter is provided for the victims?

Ms. JAMES. With respect to the child soldier issue, I would note that Sudan has recently been relisted under the Child Soldier Protection Act which has consequences with it. It has sanctions attached to it. But, of course, as they are already under SST sanctions it does not trigger any new financial issues, but it is something that we will take note of and a civilian government will have to address that so they are relisted for the reasons you described.

I would say that some of those comprise, some of the RSF forces, I could not give you a breakdown, a real number, but we know that there have been child soldiers deployed to Yemen and that we have been concerned about that and we have raised that——

Mr. SMITH. Do we have any idea of what their cycling is? I mean we all worry here, even the United States, the U.K., others, that when people were deployed, went to fight with ISIS, when they came back posed a very real threat to the U.S. or name the country. Are these soldiers upon their return now obviously better trained in really barbaric behavior? Are they then—I mean how many are we talking about and are they disciplined? I mean who are they?

Ms. JAMES. I actually do not have a firm answer for what happens to the returnees. We could come back to you with more information.

Mr. SMITH. Could you provide that for the record?

Ms. JAMES. But I would also like to answer your question about the money from the Gulf States.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Ms. JAMES. What we have been told repeatedly, we have had several interventions on this issue, the Saudis and the UAE Government pledged a total of three billion dollars over a 2-year timeframe. They have indicated to us that they have each deposited 250 million into the Central Bank of Sudan and that that money is there to stabilize the pound.

And it was not given to the TMC and it is not against the people of Sudan, but it was to avoid a crisis, a fire as they described it. We have made the strong case to them that any additional disbursements of those funds should be done in coordination with the

international community, one to make it more effective and sustainable and to use it to help a civilian-led government, which will need that assistance over time.

So they seem to be responsive to those entreaties and we hope that that is how they will disburse the remainder of that three billion.

Mr. DAY. Ranking Member Smith, I think on the issue of do we have enough resources, given the increasing need as well as the access issues the humanitarian operations are fully functional. And so areas in which we can gain access, we have the resources that we need to address many of those issues. As the situation evolves, we may have to reassess as we go forward because it was only a year, year and a half ago that we were at about 4.5 million in need of humanitarian assistance and now we are at 8 million. So this is an extremely fluid situation, so we will continue to watch this.

We are also looking at other ways in which we may be able to support many of the people of South Sudan. We are looking at Office of Transition Initiatives programming. We are looking at ways in which we can continue to monitor the human rights issues. So there is a wide range of tools that we are using, but on the humanitarian assistance side we are deploying the resources that we have available to us, but many of the restrictions are going to be more on the access side than they are of are the resources there. We can move resources from one place to another.

Mr. SMITH. And before I run out of time, is there any serious consideration at the U.N. of redeploying or in some way constituting a force—I know it takes a long time to do all of that but, you know, my sense is that—I do not have a great deal of optimism that peace is going to break out. So one of the contingencies should be, will there be a U.N. force ready for deployment?

Ms. JAMES. To my knowledge, the U.N. Security Council has not taken this issue up yet. But the U.N. does have an Envoy, a very capable Envoy Nick Haysom who has been fully engaged in all the conversations with the other Envoys, with the TMC, and with the FFC. He has been in Khartoum quite a bit. He has engaged with us. We think the U.N. is clearly poised to take action, but it has not come to the Security Council to my knowledge.

If I could add one other point that I did not mention earlier, June 30th is close approaching. We are very concerned about the potential violence for June 30th. We have also been conveying very strong messages to the TMC that they must allow peaceful protests. That if there is any repeat of the violence that we saw on June 3rd that there will be consequences and that the people have a right to protest because we are anticipating that there will be major activities on the date of June 30th.

Mr. SMITH. And you think Hemeti gets that?

Ms. JAMES. Well, we have been conveying that across the board. Certainly we have been conveying it to Burhan and to others. We think that message is being repeatedly delivered by other partners as well. It is not just our message, it is the collective international community's message.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you so much. Thank you for your work under such difficult circumstances. Thank you.

Ms. BASS. Sure, my pleasure.

I just have a couple of final questions. I wanted to know if the U.S. is encouraging the TMC to turn al-Bashir over to the ICC.

Ms. JAMES. That has not been a topic of recent conversation. As you have seen probably in the media, he has had a hearing at the court in Khartoum.

Ms. BASS. Yes.

Ms. JAMES. And I think that is where he stands right now. He is incarcerated in Khartoum, but there has not been engagement on the ICC issue.

Ms. BASS. I wanted to know if you know of where the speaker of the Parliament is, the speaker that was in place last year. I do not know if there is a new speaker. And other parliamentary leaders before Bashir's removal, are they still in place or is Parliament not functioning at all?

Ms. JAMES. My sense is that Parliament is not functioning and there have certainly been a lot of people who have been removed from office. I could not say the status of the speaker, per se. I really do not know that and I will do some checking. But another——

Ms. BASS. Could you find out for me?

Ms. JAMES. Yes.

Ms. BASS. I would like to know where he is.

Ms. JAMES. Thank you.

Mr. DAY. And, Madam Chair, on that front, I would just add that on the public administration side, because of course USAID worked closely with the Humanitarian Aid Commission, many of those institutions have in many ways been either dismantled or completely sidelined. In some cases, the National Intelligence and Security Services that have actually been—they were interfering in our ability to work with the HAC to get the permits that we needed.

In an odd chain of events, the inability or the distraction of the NISS has actually enabled some of that permitting process to actually improve. So it is still complicated in terms of the humanitarian access in certain areas, but in many cases our interactions with the Government of Sudan has been almost nonexistent.

Ms. BASS. Thank you.

The internet blackout, I just want to say in closing, the internet blackout, we know, is affecting most of the country's citizens and has now been turned off for what I believe is 21 days. Internet access, we believe, must be reinstated, and I urge those behind this to unblock internet access immediately. Governments must understand that prohibiting access does not mean that citizens will stop exercising their civil rights. I urge the government also to stop the censoring of print newspapers and stop detaining and harassing journalists, activists, and any citizen exercising their right to free speech and protest peacefully.

Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle are very engaged in Sudan and plan to continue to do that and we want to make sure that we have a strong, unified message to help the citizens of Sudan realize their goal of a civilian-led transition to power. As I mentioned when we started, this is a first hearing, this is not our last. I would appreciate it if you would pass the word to Ambassador Booth and Nagy that we would like to have them come and speak to us and we would like to do that very soon.

When we have another hearing on Sudan, we will make sure that we have more than one panel and there will be Sudanese who are represented in the future. I apologize we were not able to do that this time, but assure you that this is not the last time that you will hear from us on this issue. Members of Congress, as I said, are very, very concerned about this and do not plan to let up.

With that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:57 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations

Karen Bass (D-CA), Chair

June 25, 2019

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held by the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/):

DATE: Tuesday, June 25, 2019

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan

WITNESS: The Honorable Makila James
Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Africa and the Sudans
Bureau of African Affairs
United States Department of State

Mr. Ramsey Day
Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Africa
United States Agency for International Development

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202-225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON *Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations* HEARING

Day *Tuesday* **Date** *June 25, 2019* **Room** *2172*

Starting Time *2:48 pm* **Ending Time** *3:57 pm*

Recesses *0* (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Rep. Karen Bass

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☑
Executive (closed) Session ☐
Televised ☑
Electronically Recorded (taped) ☑
Stenographic Record ☑

TITLE OF HEARING:

The U.S. Response to the the Political Crisis in Sudan

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

See attached.

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: *(Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)*

N/A

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☑ **No** ☐
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

QFR, Omar

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *3:57 pm*

Naomia A
Subcommittee Staff Associate

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

COMMITTEE HEARING

PRESENT	*MEMBER*
X	Karen Bass, CA
	Susan Wild, PA
X	Dean Phillips, MN
X	Ilhan Omar, MN
X	Chrissy Houlahan, PA

PRESENT	*MEMBER*
X	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
	James F. Sensenbrenner, Jr., WI
X	Ron Wright, TX
X	Tim Burchett, TN

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

Hearing on "The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan"
U.S. House of Representatives
House Foreign Affairs Committees
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations

Questions for the Record from Representative Ilhan Omar
Submitted to Deputy Assistant Secretary Makila James

June 25, 2019

Question 1a:

Following up on Chairwoman Bass's question about the ICC and Bashir – you said that we had not broached the ICC question with the TMC.

a. Have we taken a position on what should happen with Bashir?

Answer 1a:

We believe that former President Bashir and all those responsible for atrocities must be held accountable. The Sudanese people should have the opportunity to determine the path to accountability, and we believe in strong civil society engagement in an open and transparent process to determine how to address the legacy of conflict.

Question 1b:

Are there circumstances where the United States would support his extradition to the ICC?

Answer 1b:

We support the Sudanese in their efforts to determine the appropriate forum for addressing atrocity crimes in Sudan.

Question 1c:

What sort of engagement do you foresee for the U.S. on transitional justice mechanisms broadly?

Hearing on "The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan"
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Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations

Answer 1c:

The U.S. supports comprehensive transitional justice strategies that address criminal justice, truth telling, reparations, and guarantees of non-recurrence. The design and implementation of transitional justice strategies must be done in consultation with a broad array of stakeholders, including victims, women, ethnic and religious minorities, and youth.

Question 1d:

What tangible support on transitional justice can we provide?

Answer 1d:

U.S. government programs (USAID/Sudan and State/DRL) have the capacity and technical ability to support critical transitional justice efforts like human rights documentation, support to survivors of violence and mass atrocities and support to local civil society in the pursuit of locally led truth, justice and atrocity prevention efforts. These types of programs are contingent on the availability of appropriated funds.

Question 1e:

Has the Office of Global Criminal Justice been involved in Sudan strategy since April?

Answer 1e:

The Department of State's Office of Global Criminal Justice has consistently been involved in Sudan policy decisions.

Question 1f:

Hearing on "The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan"
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You mentioned the trial Bashir is undergoing under the TMC. Do you consider this a legitimate judicial process?

Answer 1f:

Former President Omar al-Bashir appeared in public on June 19 for the first time since being ousted in April. According to Sudan's official news outlet, prosecutors said Bashir faced charges of "possessing foreign currency and acquiring suspicious and illicit wealth." However, we are concerned about the transparency and fairness of any trial conducted under the purview of the TMC, particularly given that the constitution currently remains suspended, and will continue to monitor these proceedings.

With regard to any domestic judicial process regarding former President Bashir's responsibility for atrocity crimes, we will continue to urge accountability for atrocity crimes in Sudan consistent with international law, including fair trial guarantees, in order to provide justice to victims.

Hearing on "The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan"
U.S. House of Representatives
House Foreign Affairs Committees
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
Questions for the Record Submitted to
Deputy Assistant Secretary Makila James by
Congresswoman Ilhan Omar (#2)
House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights,
and International Organizations
June 25, 2019

Question 2:

Do you know whether any of the weapons or other military material being used by the RSF in Sudan originated as U.S. weapons sales or security aid to Saudi or the UAE?

Answer 2:

We are not aware of any U.S.-origin material having been transferred from the UAE or Saudi Arabia to Rapid Security Forces (RSF) in Sudan.

Hearing on "The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan"
U.S. House of Representatives
House Foreign Affairs Committees
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
Questions for the Record Submitted to
Deputy Assistant Secretary Makila James by
Congresswoman Ilhan Omar (#3)
House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights,
and International Organizations
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Question 3:

You mentioned that you believe the Saudis, Emiratis, and Egyptians when they say they were shocked and appalled by the events of June 3rd. Does this mean you do not believe they gave the green light for those events? What do we think was discussed between Hemeti and MbS when Hemeti visited Jeddah just before the massacre?

Answer 3:

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Egypt have consistently told the Department they support a transition to civilian rule in Sudan and condemn violence against peaceful Sudanese protestors. Special Envoy for Sudan Donald Booth is actively engaging government officials in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt – including through meetings in each country in June – to continue this dialogue. The Department is not in a position to speculate about the recent discussion between Hemeti and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

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