

ran a program called S.T.A.R., Strategic Training and Relocation, for the United States Department of Labor. This program matched unemployed workers in Mississippi with employers in different parts of the state. Through his work with this program, Lieutenant Colonel Huff helped to greatly reduce the unemployment rate in Mississippi during that time.

Lieutenant Colonel Huff's life shows us what true commitment and leadership for our country and our state should be. The impact of Huff's diligent work for the state of Mississippi and the United States is incalculable. His actions should inspire the rest of us to follow his model of exemplary service.

I would like to thank Lieutenant Colonel Huff for his honorable service to our country and our state, and I would also like to wish him a very happy 100th birthday. Semper Fi.

TO RECOGNIZE SGTMAJ JOBE ON
HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 22, 2018

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sergeant Major Jobe on his retirement from the United States Marine Corps after 30 years of service. SgtMaj Jobe enlisted in April 1988 and attended the school of infantry at Camp Pendleton, California before reporting to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines. SgtMaj Jobe served as a machine gunner, machine gun team leader, Troop Handler, Recruiter, and participated in several deployments before earning the rank of Staff Sergeant.

After his promotion to Staff Sergeant, Jobe served as Platoon Sergeant and Platoon Commander in Company K, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, completing deployment with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. Post deployment, Jobe served as the Chief Instructor and Faculty Advisor for Career Course at the Staff Noncommissioned Officer's Academy in Japan. As a Gunnery Sergeant, he was assigned the Future Operations Chief for III Marine Expeditionary Force before reporting to 1st Battalion, 7th Marines to serve as Company Gunnery Sergeant and later First Sergeant. During this assignment, Jobe participated in "The March Up" to Baghdad during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During the latter part of his career, Jobe served as the Inspector & Instructor First Sergeant for Company B, 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion deploying to Iraq. After selection to Sergeant Major, Jobe served at Recruiting Station Dallas until becoming the Regimental Sergeant Major for the Eight Marine Regiment at Camp Lejeune. While there, Jobe deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Jobe was then transferred to 1st Marine Division serving as the Division Sergeant Major where he served as the SgtMaj of the Blue Diamond.

SgtMaj Jobe's decorations include the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with gold star, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Combat "V" and three gold stars, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with Combat "V" and three gold stars, and the Combat Action Ribbon with Gold Star.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in thanking SgtMaj Jobe and his family for their 30 years of service to the nation. I wish Dave, his wife, Kerri; and their sons DJ and Tyler, the best of luck in their future endeavors.

REMARKS BY JOHN J. SULLIVAN

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 22, 2018

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on December 6, 2017, the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled "Advancing Human Rights to Combat Extremism." The hearing focused on ways soft power and human rights diplomacy could effectively combat extremist ideology and policies. I had the privilege to sit down with Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan recently and discuss this issue with him in the context of our ongoing dialogue with the Government of Sudan. Mr. Speaker, Deputy Secretary Sullivan gave a speech at the Al-Neelain Mosque in Sudan before a variety of faith leaders. In the speech, he makes the case for a values-based diplomacy, and holding countries accountable for violations of fundamental human rights, especially religious freedom. I am pleased to include in the RECORD the speech he gave with his permission:

Asalaam Alaikam. I am honored to join all of you here today.

I would like to first thank the leaders of the Al-Neelain Mosque for hosting us today and for their gracious hospitality.

Many people from different faiths, backgrounds, and cultures have joined us here today to talk about the important work they are undertaking in Sudan to embrace tolerance and further the goal of mutual respect among all citizens.

It was a great privilege to spend time with many of you earlier this morning and to learn about the many ways that interfaith groups are working together to forge a new path forward in Sudan and to move away from divisions based on religion and culture. Our discussion was particularly significant as we continue to build a new relationship between the United States and Sudan. I want you to know that the U.S. government and international community stand with you in this important work.

THE U.S. COMMITMENT

This is my first visit to your beautiful country. Secretary Tillerson asked me to travel to Khartoum to speak with you and your government about the growing importance of our bilateral relationship. I am here today to underscore one key aspect of that relationship: the shared values of mutual respect, tolerance, and religious freedom.

I would like to share a bit of my own personal history on these topics, as they are central to who I am. I am the grandson of Irish-Catholic immigrants who arrived in Boston, Massachusetts in the 1880s. At the time they arrived—and for many decades that followed—Catholics in the United States faced widespread prejudice based on their religion. When John F. Kennedy—another Catholic from my home state—ran for President of the United States in 1960, he even had to give a prominent speech to reassure the nation that his faith was compatible with the duties of the office of President.

In the United States today, recalling such history seems quaint. But it was not easy,

and it took many decades. Eventually divisions were narrowed and mutual understanding between Catholics and Protestants in the United States improved substantially. Today, it is nearly unthinkable that one's status as a Catholic in the United States would serve as a disadvantage to one's ambitions for life.

The American experience in this regard underscores that respect for the human dignity of every person—regardless of religious belief or origin—is a key component of not only protecting human rights, but also fostering a society that can flourish, build upon each other's strengths, and move forward together.

This brings me to one of the purposes of my visit: to make clear that the United States remains deeply committed to positive engagement with Sudan on a wide range of topics—including the protection of religious freedom and the promotion of other human rights throughout your country.

This path of closer engagement is new for both of us.

In 2015, after decades of strained bilateral relations, the United States began a measured engagement with your government to urge greater progress in various peace processes and to seek positive changes for the people of Sudan—regardless of religion, class, or ethnic background.

In June 2016, Sudan and the United States initiated a historic framework for the path forward, the so-called Five Track Engagement Plan.

This plan outlined five priority areas for constructive engagement, and required the Sudanese government to:

(1) cease hostilities in conflict regions, including the aerial bombardment in Darfur and the Two Areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile states;

(2) improve humanitarian access throughout Sudan so that aid groups could provide vital resources and assistance needed by the Sudanese people;

(3) refrain from interfering in South Sudan and instead play a constructive role in regional peace efforts;

(4) cooperate with regional efforts to counter the Lord's Resistance Army; and;

(5) build U.S.-Sudanese cooperation on counter terrorism, and make both of our countries safer. In each of those five areas, the Government of Sudan has made measureable progress. As a result, last month, the United States formally revoked certain U.S. sanctions on Sudan to open a new chapter in our bilateral relationship.

We hope that these positive developments are emblematic of a positive trajectory for the future of our bilateral relationship. But, we also recognize that completion of the Five Track Engagement Plan is only a first step on a longer road toward fully normalizing our bilateral relations.

More hard work is required—from both of our countries.

NEXT STEPS IN THE RELATIONSHIP

The United States is eager to see Sudan make progress in a range of areas in the months and years ahead, as we work towards a new framework for bilateral engagement. In short, the closer our countries become, the higher our expectations for Sudan will become.

This engagement will proceed on several fronts.

For Sudan to become a full partner of the United States, it must seek peace within its borders and with its neighbors, and cooperate reliably with the international community to improve security and prosperity in the region and adhere to long-standing international norms.

In addition, supporting human rights, including religious freedom, has been, and will

continue to be, a critical part of the United States' bilateral engagement with Sudan.

In the United States, the protection of the basic rights and freedoms of our citizens is fundamental to who we are as a nation. The Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution—our foundational legal document—sets forth protections for individual liberties and prohibitions on government power in these realms, including freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly. These are among our most cherished rights as Americans, and the protection of human rights and the dignity of the individual has served as a key basis of U.S. foreign policy throughout our history.

This history has shown that U.S. partnerships around the world are strongest and most durable with countries that take the necessary steps to protect the same basic human rights and freedoms that are central in the United States.

In the years ahead, one measure of the strength of the U.S.-Sudanese relationship will be improvements in Sudan's respect for human rights and, in particular, religious freedom. Indeed, one of the reasons I am speaking to you today—at the Al-Neelain Mosque, with Sudanese Muslim and Christian leaders—is to emphasize that the United States cares deeply about religious freedom in Sudan.

By taking steps to enhance protections for religious freedom, the Government will make the entire country more stable and secure.

Interfaith understanding, respect, and the protection of religious freedom and other human rights are bulwarks against extremism. Religious tolerance is a building block of peace and security and is the mark of responsible governance. The treatment of members of religious minorities is often the ultimate indicator of a government's commitment to these values.

When governments favor a specific religious, ethnic, or sectarian group over others, violent radicalism thrives. We also know that governments that sponsor or condone violence against their own people are far more likely to see violent extremism growing in their country.

But by protecting every person's human rights, society is more just, more free, and more stable for everyone.

For these reasons, we urge the Government of Sudan to protect basic freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association, religion, and movement. The United States calls on Sudan to protect political opposition members, human rights defenders, civil society groups, and the media. We also urge the government to hold accountable all who are responsible for human rights abuses.

On the issue of religious freedom, the United States has continued to designate Sudan as a 'Country of Particular Concern.'

The State Department's annual International Religious Freedom Report noted instances of the arrest, detention, and intimidation of religious leaders, and the denial of permits for the construction of new churches; restrictions on non-Muslim religious groups from entering the country; and the censorship of religious material.

During my discussions with senior leaders over the last six months, we have welcomed the Sudanese Government's expressed desire to take steps to overcome its designation as a Country of Particular Concern. However, for that to occur, we must see concrete and demonstrable progress through better policies and improved laws.

We have communicated these steps to the Sudanese Government through a proposed 'Action Plan,' which we hope Sudan will approve and enact. As an immediate confidence-building measure, we have suggested

that the Government convene a roundtable with members of religious minority groups about property registration issues, as certain government officials have cited registration issues as the rationale for the demolitions of places of worship. The Government of Sudan, including the Federal States, should also immediately suspend demolitions of places of worship, including churches and mosques.

President Trump, Vice President Pence, and Secretary Tillerson have made clear that the protection and promotion of religious freedom is a foreign policy priority of the Administration. As we move forward in our relationship, the United States will not ignore violations of human rights, including the right to religious freedom.

The United States is ready and willing to assist in these efforts.

To that end, we will explore opportunities to work with religious leaders who build bridges through tolerance and interfaith understanding to counter extremism—like those leaders with me here today—while we bring in new voices to further conversations about accountability and inclusive governance.

The United States will also review our people-to-people programs, such as the Young African Leaders Initiative and International Visitor Leadership Program, to identify ways to maximize partnerships and exchanges with the people of Sudan. I am pleased to see so many alumni here this morning as a testament to the success of these programs.

Indeed, we believe that any country-to-country relationship begins on the individual level. We are committed to finding more avenues for Sudanese religious and youth leaders to advance interfaith efforts for peace.

OTHER PRIORITIES FOR THE U.S.-SUDAN RELATIONSHIP

Before I conclude, I also want to touch on a few other important aspects of the U.S.-Sudan relationship.

We recognize that there are ongoing impediments, including certain commercial and financial restrictions, on the bilateral relationship between our countries and a lack of normalized diplomatic relations. Further strengthening of our bilateral relationship will require a renewed commitment by the Government of Sudan on other policies beyond religious freedom.

In particular, while restraint and a cessation of attacks in conflict areas is a positive step forward, we now expect the Sudanese government to move closer to a permanent ceasefire that will create an opening for a truly inclusive political dialogue in Darfur and the Two Areas.

The armed opposition must of course also denounce hostilities and make a commitment to a negotiated peace. All parties who have signed the African Union roadmap must live up to their commitment to engage in dialogue toward a resolution of the conflicts and a comprehensive and inclusive political process, and those who have yet to join the process must do so, as there is no other path to peace and improving the conditions of the people living in the conflict areas. As a first step, the opposition should accept the U.S. proposal to facilitate humanitarian aid in conflict areas across lines to help those who are suffering the most.

Moving forward, we also encourage the Government to improve cooperation with UNAMID—the AU-UN Hybrid Mission in Darfur. UNAMID protects civilians, facilitates humanitarian assistance, and mediates conflict at the local and national level in Darfur.

This mission—which the United States strongly supports—will continue to be instrumental to Sudan's future and greater

collaboration with the UN is a win-win proposition for the people of Sudan.

Violence, war, and ongoing instability are holding Sudan back from a future with great potential. Conflict has affected millions. Hundreds of thousands of Sudanese have been displaced and killed. It is time for a path to reconciliation and peace. Your country's prosperity and the security of future generations depend on it.

The United States calls on all parties to take this opportunity to define a way forward that will help all of Sudan's people.

Finally, the United States is also looking for the Sudanese Government to help counter international security threats. In that regard, I very much appreciate and applaud Sudan's public statements condemning North Korean provocations, and Sudan's full commitment to compliance with the UN Security Council Resolutions regarding North Korea. Finally, the statements yesterday by the Government of Sudan affirming that it will cut off all ties with North Korea is most welcome.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by noting that I am deeply encouraged by the interactions I have had with the Government and with civil society representatives during my visit here. The religious leaders with whom I met earlier today are a deep source of inspiration.

Indeed, there are challenges that lie ahead, but we should all have reason for hope and optimism about the growing engagement between our two countries.

Thank you for your hospitality and kindness. I look forward to many more opportunities to further our goals of a more peaceful and prosperous Sudan—a Sudan that respects the rights of persons of every faith.

LABORERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA LOCAL 81 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 22, 2018

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I recognize Laborers International Union of North America Local 81 as the organization celebrates its 100th anniversary. A century of dedication, hard work, and perseverance is certainly an amazing accomplishment, and the leaders and members of Local 81 are to be commended. In honor of this milestone, a 100th anniversary ceremony will take place on Thursday, January 25, 2018, at the Local 81 Union Hall in Valparaiso, Indiana.

Laborers Local 81 was founded in 1918 in Gary, Indiana. In the early days, union members and leaders helped to build the foundation for the future success of the organization. Prior to the late 1950's and early 1960's, union members worked without receiving health insurance, retirement benefits, or pension benefits. Many of these individuals banded together, went on strike, and fought for these benefits, thus allowing today's members to obtain these benefits for themselves and their families. Under the leadership of Laborers International Union of North America General President Terry O'Sullivan, as well as Local 81 President and Business Manager, Mike Campbell, Local 81 looks forward to advancement and success over the next 100 years, striving to "stay united in justice, honor, and strength."