



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman

Recent Two-Week Trip to Chad, Sudan, Qatar and Rwanda

Scott Gration
Special Envoy to Sudan
Washington, DC
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MR. TONER: Good afternoon. It's my great pleasure to introduce to you our Special Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration, who is going to brief on his trip to Chad, Khartoum and the Nuba Mountains in Sudan, Doha, Qatar, and Rwanda.

And without further ado, I'll hand it over to him.

MR. GRATION: Thank you. Well, good afternoon.

QUESTION: Hello.

MR. GRATION: I did just return from a two-week trip to Chad, Sudan, Qatar, and Rwanda. The trip focused on pushing the Darfur peace process toward a solution and toward resolving the remaining CPA issues. My talks in N'Djamena with President Deby and other senior Chadian officials focused a lot on the recent Chad-Sudan agreement and on normalization of relations between these two countries.

These steps will absolutely be critical in resolving the Darfur conflict. I continued working on the Darfur peace process as I went to Sudan and to Qatar. In Doha, I was there when the Justice and Equality Movement and the Government of Sudan signed that landmark framework agreement and the ceasefire. We were actively engaged in that whole time that I was in Doha, sometimes late into the night with the Government of Sudan, the JEM, and with other armed movements in trying to get an inclusive process, one that would result in a comprehensive peace framework.

The framework that was signed between JEM and the Government of Sudan offers us an important opportunity to significantly reduce violence in Darfur. But it must include the other rebel groups to be all-inclusive. The United States has worked tirelessly with all the parties and with the international partners to facilitate the negotiations, to find the common ground between the rebel groups, and to speed this process toward an early agreement that can be implemented on the ground.

The United States supports a peace process that is inclusive, that is comprehensive. And we believe that the newly formed Liberation and Justice Movement, which represents most of the non-JEM rebels, must have a clear voice in the Doha negotiations. The Darfuri civil society, the IDPs, the diaspora, and the refugees must also have a voice in this process.

We wrapped up discussions on Darfur in Kigali. It was here where the six envoys from the P-5 countries plus the EU met for frank discussions with UN's top leadership from Sudan. In Kigali, we had an excellent opportunity to focus the international partners and UNAMID on their core mandate, which is to provide security and to protect the civilians in Darfur. While the agreements that are being negotiated in Doha are critical to achieving a lasting peace, the problems of banditry and lawlessness must be dealt with quickly if the people of Darfur are to see real improvement in their local security environment.

Although much of my trip concentrated on the developments of the Darfur peace process, I want to highlight today some of the positive progress that is being made on the CPA implementation. While in Sudan, I was able to travel to Juba, to Khartoum, and to the Nuba Mountains. And I spent a lot of time discussing the CPA issues with the NCP and with our friends in the south. We also had numerous

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meetings on the elections to make sure that we had an understanding of how they were progressing, and I'll be able to answer questions on those things in a minute.

Concerning the CPA, I want to congratulate the SPLM and the NCP for reaching agreements on resolving the census dispute. This was a big deal. We also saw great progress being made on the North-South border demarcation and on formally agreeing to enter discussions on the post-2011 arrangements. As you know, the national elections are scheduled for next month, and significant preparations have been made to ensure that the elections will really reflect the will of the people. But we remain concerned about some of the logistical challenges that must be resolved in the very near future.

I continue to urge authorities at all levels to make sure that every eligible Sudanese that has met the qualifications to vote has the right and the access to vote in this political process. Basic rights, freedoms of speech, of assembly, freedom of the press must be respected, and we're going to work to ensure that that's the case. There's a lot of work that must be done before April, but we're working with all the parties and with all of our partners to make sure it gets done.

I'll be leaving again this weekend to travel to Nairobi and Paris and Doha. In Nairobi, I'll be attending the IGAD summit on the CPA implementation. Then I'll head to Paris where I'll meet with French officials to discuss how we can work together to ensure success of the Chad-Sudan agreement, and to build on the ongoing peace process in Doha. I will then return to Doha to again help push those negotiations to fruition and a final agreement and to support the process to ensure that it is inclusive and comprehensive, and that it really does meet the needs and the requirements and the issues of the Darfuri people.

It's a crucial time for Darfur and for Sudan in general. We must not let this opportunity to promote Sudan-wide political transformation, to improve the overall security, to facilitate a lasting peace pass us by. We will not rest until we've done everything we can to secure a brighter future for the next generation of Sudanese. Failure in this case is not an option, and we'll strive for success.

I'm ready for your questions. Thank you.

QUESTION: There are reports of resurging – a resurgence in violence. Do you think the elections – crystal balling I suppose – or do you think that violence can put the elections off track, or is it sort of a rock of expectation?

MR. GRATION: That is a concern that we all have. As you know, that there has been a history of violence and inter-tribal and inter-communal tensions, and we are doing our best to make sure that to the maximum extent, that this – these conflicts are mitigated and that they don't interfere with the election process. We've talked with the Ministry of Interior and we've talked with the National Elections Commission and they have a plan to increase security using both security forces from the police and other forces to ensure that people can get to the polls, and that the polls are not interrupted by (inaudible) or mischief.

We will have monitors in place they come from the Carter Center, they come from the EU, the AU, and even internally to ensure that we can, to the maximum extent, (inaudible) to get ahead of these issues and bring the proper attention to areas where polling may be disrupted by violence, conflict, and insecurity.

QUESTION: Sure, the – as I'm sure you're aware, there's been some concern among some of the advocacy groups on Darfur about some of the stances that – some of the ways that the diplomacy has been pursued. On a more general point, I mean, how do you feel about how we should deal with the government in Khartoum in terms of whether to give incentives based on what's going on in Darfur? How do you feel about the balance between incentives and pressure in a broad sense?

MR. GRATION: Well, certainly, it's the responsibility of the government to provide security, to bring development to its people, to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals are turned into reality, that people have water, that they have food security, that they have gender equality and transportation, communications, and those issues. So certainly, we are going to be working and using pressures and incentives to make sure this takes place.

As you know, the agreements that will be reached in Doha will probably decrease the number of people going into camps. In other words, the lesser violence, the decreased fighting between rebel groups and the Sudanese armed forces will decrease the disruptions. But they really won't change the conditions that the people are currently living under. And the fact is we need a multipronged approach, one that brings a ceasefire, that brings stability, and brings peace at that top level. But we also have to make the changes that will result in a more secure environment for the people who now live in IDP camps, who live in these villages.

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Gender-based violence still continues; that must stop. People's possessions are taken. They don't have their rights – human rights, in many cases. This has to be changed. And that's what we're trying to do now is to put into place systems of order, patterns of order, rule of law. We're trying to increase the capacity of UNAMID, the UN/UA forces that are there. And we're trying to set up programs that will allow the conditions that the people live in to be made better so that their future is brighter.

Yeah.

QUESTION: Could you talk – the agreement so far has been signed with the JEM, is that correct?

MR. GRATION: That's correct.

QUESTION: Right. What are the concrete obstacles to bringing in some of the other rebel groups to the peace agreement? Is it things that they want that the government's not offering? Is it vice versa or simply just logistical?

MR. GRATION: No, so far it's been two things that have stopped the progress. First of all, this was a framework agreement, the details of which are to be negotiated in Doha through the process that is run by the AU/UN negotiator Djibril Bassolé and facilitated by the Government of Qatar.

There are two issues that are hampering progress right now. The first is JEM wants to be exclusive; they either want to have everybody together under their leadership before they start, or they don't want the rebels to have a two-track or a parallel-track program. And I'm talking about the other rebels. The other rebels I'm referring to were rebels that were brought together in a unification effort in Addis Ababa and some effort – and some that were brought together through the efforts in Libya. All those rebels are now in Doha, or many of them are.

And the second issue, besides JEM's desire to be exclusive, is that the rebel groups themselves are having a little bit of difficulty in choosing a leader and in organizing themselves. So we're in – that's much of what I was doing there, trying to reach common ground, trying to bring the rebels together in a way so that they can represent their people and they can represent their causes with a single voice and be strong. At some point, we're going also have to bring in the views of the diaspora, the views of the civil societies, of the IDPs into this process, especially as we start talking about things like land reform and compensation and wealth sharing.

So the ceasefire can happen with the rebels, and that's the first agenda. And then things like power sharing can be done. But at some point, as we expand, we're going to have to expand and be more inclusive to people outside of Doha also.

QUESTION: Sorry, I just – if I could follow that up. You said, on the one hand, that JEM wants to be the exclusive representative of all the rebels. And then you said the non-JEM groups are having trouble finding their own representative, which suggests that there be two people negotiating with the government.

MR. GRATION: You hit it. You hit it.

QUESTION: So is it one or two? And if all the other non-JEM guys are trying to find one, and JEM says we want to be the only one, I mean, that seems a fairly insoluble –

MR. GRATION: No, you've hit the problem.

QUESTION: Right.

MR. GRATION: But there are several solutions. Obviously, the best solution is if everybody could come under the leadership of one individual, whether it's Khalil Ibrahim, whether it's Tijani Sesei or whoever it is, that would be the best thing because then you would have a single voice representing everybody.

There's a second option where you could have two tracks that are running in parallel, where the same issues are being discussed with the JEM and are being discussed with the other group. And as they reach agreement and common ground, the facilitators and negotiators can go back and forth and actually come up with an agreement that's put together in a parallel track, but essentially the agreement is one.

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The other way you can do this is do it sequentially, where the JEM gets their big issues resolved, things like the ceasefire, finalization of prisoner release, and those issues that are unique to them. And then the other groups get their issues resolved, and then you somehow put that all together into a framework agreement and then – but the reality is that allows you to move forward with a peace deal in Darfur. But it's really not going to be a final peace deal until compensation is sorted out, until the power-sharing deals are worked out. Because as you probably know, many of the rebel groups, because they had an active militia, were not allowed to participate in the election process, and therefore they are not represented in this election.

There will probably have to be some way, whether the constitution is changed and seats are added in the interim period, whether there's an interim election – there's a lot of things that we can put into play or that, I should say, the negotiators can put into play that will allow people to be represented in this interim period in Darfur. These are issues that will be worked out.

And then the last issue is, of course, that no lasting peace and durable peace will be complete until there's an accommodation of justice and accountability, and those issues will also have to be included in the final arrangement.

A question in the back, sir.

QUESTION: Yes. Who will represent the U.S. at the donors conference for Darfur this month in Egypt?

MR. GRATION: We're still working out the details. There will be representation, whether it comes from USAID, or whether it comes from our office or whether it comes from another office. Those details are still being worked out. But as you know, we only just recently had – got the invitation and we do know that our representative, the U.S. representative to the OIC will be there. And the question is now what kind of technical support team will be put together to ensure that there's adequate support.

QUESTION: And do you expect the U.S. to contribute additional money for this – at this conference?

MR. GRATION: It would be difficult for me to speculate right now because we just have started this process and we've just got the invitation.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MR. GRATION: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Senator Feingold, as you know, has been active on the subject --

MR. GRATION: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: -- and with 21 co-sponsors, I believe. The Senate has asked for enlarging international representation in this effort. Could you use some help from some other countries – well, not you particularly? But I mean, would that embellish opportunities for solving this problem?

MR. GRATION: Well, let me just give you some background. First of all, we totally agree that this problem is so big and so complex and so far-reaching that not only the parties have to be involved, but the region has to be involved, the Africa Union and all of Africa, and then the international partners have to be involved. So we totally agree with Senator Feingold. We totally agree with his analysis.

And let me tell you some of the things that we're doing already as we build this coalition. We have put together a group of envoys from the P-5. We call ourselves the E-6, because France, UK, China, Russia, the United States, and the European Union have special representatives, and we get together. In fact, we were together at Kigali, all of us, to discuss the issues having to do with Darfur and CPA implementation. We meet regularly and we also have video teleconferences and telephone.

In addition to that, as you know, the troika -- the U.S., Norway, and UK – were very influential in the birthing of the CPA. We've reinvigorated that process. And the troika meets regularly. We have a group called the Contact Group and – that works on financial issues and other issues, primarily in Europe, and that group, again, meets regularly at the staff level. As I said, I'm going to participate in IGAD, where the presidents and senior leaders from Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, and other IGAD countries are coming together, and we participate with them.

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This problem is not something that's America's problem. It's something that the globe has to work on: the North-South issue, the CPA implementation, the general security issue, and certainly, Darfur. Development's going to be a key factor and we need security and development to go hand in hand. And this has to be an integrated not only within the U.S., but also with the partners of the region and the international community. We certainly agree with that and we'll support that.

Yes, sir.

QUESTION: In your travels – I may have missed it – but I don't think I recall hearing China mentioned. Can you discuss China's role, how actively they're engaged to help or not to help? And just bring us up to date on that aspect of the current situation.

MR. GRATION: Sure. I have made a trip to Beijing and have discussed these issues at very high levels within the Government of China. And when the Chinese delegation came over here to meet with the Secretary of State, Secretary Clinton invited me to join in on the segments that had to do with Sudan. So we've been involved at the government-to-government level.

I will also say that Ambassador Liu Guijin, who is the special representative of China to Sudan, and I have a relationship that goes back when he was in the Embassy, China Embassy in Kenya, and I was flying with the Kenya Air Force, so we've known each other for awhile. And we – he was at Kigali with me this last week, and we continue to have a relationship.

Let me just say this: that while we have differences at the tactical level, and certainly we have differences in terms of supporting the military aspects of the NCP, there is a strategic commonality in that China needs security and stability for its investments, the same security and stability that we need for our humanitarian goals and to ensure that the South is able to transition, should they choose that, in a way that's not violent. So we share common objectives in the region and we're working hard to ensure that we're working together in terms of development, humanitarian assistance and those kinds of things, that our plans are integrated, and that we're working together. And certainly on areas where we have differences, we continue to discuss this in an open and frank way.

QUESTION: You talk about the settlement requiring justice in the final analysis. I assume that also includes the dispensation of Bashir in the international courts. So where do you come down on that – on that particular case?

MR. GRATION: Well, certainly we believe that that issue is going to have to be resolved if we're going to have a lasting and durable peace. And so we support efforts to ensure that President Bashir answers the questions that the ICC has posed, and we support the process continuing as it's outlined in the international system. And that's – we'll have to see where that one goes. But certainly, there is no hesitancy on our part to support those.

QUESTION: If I could --

QUESTION: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

QUESTION: Just you're mentioning the talks about the CPA, how do you draw a balance between assessing the North-South issues and the Darfur issue? Do you get a sense that one needs to take precedence over the other?

MR. GRATION: Certainly in terms of importance, ensuring that the South has an opportunity to express its will through the referendum is very important. At the same time, there's an urgency of making sure that the conditions in Darfur are reversed – that people can have a brighter future, that they can have the opportunity to return or to stay in an urbanized environment. These things have to be worked at the same time. And we don't have the luxury of doing one and maybe the other. They have to be integrated, not only because we're running out of time but the two actually are integrated in many ways. There's a common border between Darfur and the South. And obviously, being able to come to a solution in the North, I believe will make things a lot easier in coming up to an accommodation with the South, especially on border issues, on sharing of wealth, and grazing and water and oil accommodation. All these issues have to be worked, and I believe they have to be worked in concert. And that's why our strategy is one that's comprehensive and it's one that's integrated and one that has a sense of urgency because the clocks are ticking.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MR. GRATION: Okay, thank you very much.

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