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MEDIA NOTE

U.S. Special Envoy Gration to Travel to Sudan

U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration will be traveling to Sudan from September 9 to September 14, 2009. He will travel within Sudan to Juba, Boma, Darfur, and Khartoum.

Special Envoy Gration will first travel to Juba, Southern Sudan, to continue bilateral discussions between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the National Congress Party (NCP), facilitated by the United States. These discussions will center on reaching agreement between the two parties on the remaining two issues of Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) implementation, regarding the census and referenda for self-determination. These implementation issues were not addressed in the bilateral agreement between the SPLM and NCP that Special Envoy Gration witnessed in Juba, Southern Sudan, on August 19, 2009.

In the region of Boma, where annual animal migration is said to rival that of the Serengeti, Special Envoy Gration will observe conservation efforts and see an example of the untapped eco-tourism and development potential in the South.

Special Envoy Gration will then travel to Darfur. Within Darfur, he will go to the Abu Shouk and Zam Zam Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps to assess the humanitarian situation, meet with camp administrators and IDPs, and engage with women leaders in the camps about gender-based violence and programs to address this dire problem.

Special Envoy Gration will additionally travel to El Fasher, Darfur, where he will meet with General Patrick Nyambumba, the new UNAMID Force Commander, as well as Section Leaders from four IDP camps in the El Fasher area. He will then visit Ain Siro, a village in north Darfur, where he will meet with leaders from civil society in support of the Darfur peace process.

Finally, Special Envoy Gration will travel to Khartoum, where he will meet with former African heads of state Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Abdusalam Abukakar of Nigeria, and Pierre Buyoya of Burundi. The African Union's High Panel on Darfur (AUPD), chaired by President Mbeki, and the Arab League is set to release a report to the public on 15 September 2009 on issues of justice, accountability, stability and development in Darfur.

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