



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

AUG 16 2010

Dear Mr. Schock:

Thank you for your letter of April 9 regarding recent developments in Sudan. We regret the delay in responding to your concerns.

As you know, Sudan's first multiparty national elections in 24 years were held April 11-15, 2010. The United States Government (USG) has commended the people of Sudan for engaging in a lengthy and complex polling process and for their civic engagement during this period. We appreciate that the elections are a critical part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) but also note widespread irregularities and serious restrictions on political space leading up to and during the elections. The Administration, in close coordination with international partners, has condemned the electoral shortcomings, and senior U.S. officials have raised our concerns with Sudanese officials.

In anticipation of the referenda on southern self-determination and the status of Abyei in January 2011, we will continue to encourage all parties to expand democratic space in Sudan and ensure adequate respect for civic, political, and human rights. We are also assisting the Sudanese in drawing lessons from the entire elections process in order to improve the forthcoming referenda and future elections.

We continue to work to end the violence in Darfur. The United States continues to robustly support the efforts of the AU-UN Mediation team in Doha. We have been working with all parties to facilitate a negotiated settlement that will contribute to peace and stability in Darfur. We are encouraged by the improvement in Chad-Sudan relations, which reduced regional support for the Darfur armed movements, culminating in normalized relations between the two countries. We remain engaged with the Government of Sudan and armed movements to find a negotiated political settlement to Darfur and encourage all parties to return to Doha to resume negotiations. We are deeply concerned by aggressive actions taken by the parties in Darfur and encourage all actors to protect civilians and pursue peaceful dialogue.

The Honorable,
Aaron Schock,
House of Representatives.

Furthermore, gender-based violence (GBV) is an issue of growing concern to the Administration. There have been challenges since the 2009 NGO expulsion in meeting the needs of victims of GBV in Darfur. However, remaining relief organizations continue to conduct humanitarian protection activities, including support for victims of GBV and the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) has garnered state and federal support for expanded GBV programs in Darfur. In North Darfur, the Humanitarian Aid Commission has authorized nine women's centers and UNFPA has Sudanese government approval to revitalize a women's center in an internally displaced persons camp in West Darfur that will include GBV training.

USAID's implementing partners continue to adapt ongoing activities to enhance civilian protection. In the context of GBV, examples of programs include distributing food aid to women; ensuring that latrines are well-lit, lockable, and separated by gender; and providing training for livelihood skills and activities that do not require women to walk significant distances from the safety of their communities. USAID has also played a major role in strengthening the CPA-mandated Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS). Since 2004, USAID programs have: supported GOSS efforts to effectively deliver basic public services through an accountable and transparent public finance system that safeguard against corruption; fostered the establishment of a civil service; and helped to draft laws and a legal framework for a functioning government.

We remain concerned about the ongoing food crisis in Southern Sudan which may have devastating humanitarian consequences and create further instability in the South. We continue to monitor the situation closely and are looking at measures that can be taken to alleviate food shortages.

Finally, full implementation of the CPA remains a top USG priority. We continue to urge the parties to refocus on remaining CPA issues in addition to outstanding technical and political concerns related to the upcoming referenda.

We hope this information is helpful in addressing your concerns. Please feel free to contact us further on this or any matter of concern to you.

Sincerely,



Richard R. Verma
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs