

SOUTH SUDAN'S BROKEN PROMISE?

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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SOUTH SUDAN'S BROKEN PROMISE?

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2014

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 o'clock a.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward Royce (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ROYCE. This hearing will come to order.

I'm going to ask all the members if you could take your seats at this time.

As noted by our hearing title, "South Sudan's Broken Promise?" the pledge the Government of South Sudan made to its people and made to the world may be slipping away from us.

In recent weeks, a political power struggle and the outbreak of fighting across Sudan—South Sudan has led to the loss of thousands of lives. Hundreds of thousands of Sudanese have now been displaced. With both sides digging in their heels, there is no end in sight.

The people of South Sudan sacrificed for decades to achieve independence. That makes the latest round of fighting, largely attributable to their leadership's unwillingness to build an inclusive and viable South Sudan, all the more infuriating.

Indeed, it appears that the greatest threat to South Sudan's post-independence is South Sudan itself. This is a depressing picture for many in Washington.

It's safe to say that were it not for the United States Government's sustained engagement, including a massive investment from Congress, South Sudan would not be Africa's newest nation.

During this critical period, then-Senator John Kerry played a key role on behalf of the administration, declaring that "we helped midwife the birth of a new nation." The U.S. is proud of our role in this historical event. But the sad truth is that this crisis is no surprise.

During the 1990s, much of the fighting was among Southerners themselves with competing factions showing blatant disregard for human rights.

Since South Sudan's independence, experts have been sounding the alarm about rising internal tensions. The entire cabinet was sacked. Many journalists were assassinated. Humanitarian aid workers were expelled from the country.

A 2010 threat assessment by the director of national intelligence found that mass killings or genocide was most likely to occur in

South Sudan over the next 5 years in that report. In fact, Ranking Member Engel and I sent a letter to President Kiir last summer.

We warned that in the absence of marked improvement in the rule of law and in the presence of continued violence we fear South Sudan may be headed toward a longer and entrenched period of instability.

Despite these warnings, I am afraid that our investment and diplomatic success may have skewed the judgment of U.S. officials on more than one occasion.

For example, if we go back to 2012 when the U.N. Security Council proposed instituting sanctions against South Sudan for corruption and for human rights abuses, the administration reportedly led the effort to block their consideration.

There was no tough love when needed. I understand the administration is now considering a proposal to target those political leaders responsible for the latest atrocities and I will say it is about time, and it's useful to remind the leadership of South Sudan that significant U.S. assistance is at stake.

Forceful actions are needed before this new country is completely torn apart. Failing to resolve the current crisis will cost countless human lives and all but guarantee state failure in a strategically important region.

But U.S. standing in Africa is also at stake. If we don't leverage our considerable influence to help resolve this crisis, our ability to influence events on the continent of increasing economic, political and security importance will also surely shrink.

At the end of the day, resolving this crisis is first and foremost the responsibility of the South Sudanese. Leaders must put their country first.

History will remember for better or worse the actions they take in the coming days and weeks, and I will now turn to Mr. Sires for his comments. He's filling in for Eliot Engel, our ranking member for our committee.

Thank you, Mr. Sires.

Mr. SIRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm not going to read the ranking member's comments. I'm just going to make some observations myself. Here we have another effort of the newest country where we tried our best to ensure that people have a democracy, that people have—there is no human rights violations and we are on the brink now of probably having one of the longest civil wars starting.

I hate to think in terms of what the cost of this is but I think it comes down to oil in many respects. I think people should realize that we have made a great effort, pumping in millions of dollars to try to build this democracy in this newest country.

So I look forward to the testimonies that we have here today—of the people that we have here today and I thank you for being here today. Thank you very much.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Sires.

We'll go first for 2 minutes to Mr. Chris Smith, chairman of the Africa Subcommittee—

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE [continuing]. And then to Karen Bass from California.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this very timely and important hearing and welcome to Secretary Thomas-Greenfield and Assistant Administrator Gast. Thank you for your fine service on behalf of our country.

Mr. Chairman, since the 1980s Congress has championed efforts to end the enslavement of African southerners by Arab northerners, pressed for a declaration of genocide in Darfur, pushed for the peace agreement to end the north-south civil war and sanctioned the Khartoum government for its many violations of human rights.

Unfortunately, two U.S. administrations have failed to take actions sufficient to sustain the gains Congress and the administrations have achieved. The comprehensive peace agreement of '05 was supposed to not only end the long north-south civil war but also provide for a mutually beneficial working relationship between Sudan and South Sudan.

However, before the provisions of the agreement were fully realized the Bush administration had diverted its attention from—to the horrific crisis in Darfur, a kind of tyranny of the urgent mentality and it had to be done, of course.

But the other part of this should have been done and that is the implementation and the implementation was left unfulfilled. The Obama administration focused on the north-south agreement again just before the South Sudan was to become the world's newest nation.

But by then it was too late to conclude all the provisions of that accord before independence. Consequently, South Sudan started as a sovereign nation without a completely established border and serious jurisdictional questions remaining with the nation from which it was seceding.

Since independence, the administration and others have either ignored or not fully understand the warning signs including incidents of continued discord among the new nation's ethnic groups, reports of corruption and concern over lack of inclusion in the constitutional process by the outside—those outside of the ruling SPLM.

The current scope of the conflict in South Sudan belies the confidence expressed about problems being effectively managed. To end the current conflict, we do need—we don't need just another piece of paper that makes us feel good, although maybe there needs to be agreements and signatures to that paper.

But we do need a longer-term strategy that works on social reconciliation from the grass roots up, creates a more open and inclusive political process and better guarantees more accountability from the government of the day.

Meanwhile, we do have to do everything humanly possible to make sure that the refugees, the maybe as many as 10,000 or more people who have died and all of the horrific consequences from this fighting that to the best of our ability we meet that humanitarian crisis and I look forward to this hearing and any answers to any of those questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Congresswoman Bass.

Ms. BASS. Chairman Royce, as always I want to thank you for both your leadership of this committee and for holding today's important hearing. I also want to thank our witnesses today.

I've had the pleasure of working with both Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield and Assistant Administrator Gast and I look forward to hearing your perspective on the developments in South Sudan and the actions taken by our Government to help South Sudan reach a peaceful resolution.

On July 9th, 2011 we all watched with great excitement, anticipation and joy as after decades of violence South Sudan became the world's newest nation.

But that—but today that excitement, anticipation and joy is being tested as South Sudan is engulfed in conflict—the terrible violence including the ferry that sunk recently and the over 200 people that died trying to escape the violence.

To address this, first and foremost the violence needs to stop and the healing needs to begin. The parties involved must understand this and look to the future of their country and to their responsibilities and leaders.

As members of the international community, I know we're fully engaged regarding this crisis and must remain so to ensure peace and stability in South Sudan.

Most immediately we must work with the parties toward the success of the ongoing negotiations in Addis. I look forward to hearing from the assistant secretary regarding the efforts of the U.S. special envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, Ambassador Booth, and specifically what more we can do.

We must also ensure the provision of critical humanitarian relief to the internally displaced persons and other victims caught in the middle of this conflict and I look forward to hearing from Assistant Administrator Gast in this regard. I want to acknowledge both of your efforts currently.

I know that we are contributing hundreds of millions of dollars toward the humanitarian efforts and that you have reallocated funds specifically to deal with this situation. We know that for the future of South Sudan the countries' citizens and their leaders must live up to the responsibilities as the newest nation in Africa.

I'm committed to continuing working toward the promise of South Sudan and I look forward to working with my colleagues here in Washington, and I recognize that the situation looks dire now but I would just encourage all of us to maintain that commitment and not give up on South Sudan.

Thank you. I yield back my time.

Chairman ROYCE. This morning we are pleased to be joined by representatives of the Department of State and by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield serves as the assistant secretary for the Bureau of African Affairs. Since beginning her Foreign Service career in 1982, she has worked in Nigeria, in Kenya, in Pakistan and as Ambassador to the Republic of Liberia where she served during the critical 2008 to 2012 period.

Mr. Earl Gast is a 21-year veteran of the U.S. Agency for International Development who serves as assistant administrator for Africa and prior to his appointment he served as USAID's mission di-

rection for Afghanistan. He was once one of USAID's first employees to be stationed in Iraq.

Without objection, the witnesses' full prepared testimony will be made part of the record.

The members here will have 5 days to submit any questions or any statements, and also without objection the statement of John Prendergast, co-founded of the Enough Project, is submitted for the record and we will begin with Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE LINDA THOMAS-GREENFIELD, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Thank you, Chairman Royce.

Chairman, Congressman Sires, members of the committee, let me start by thanking you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

As you know, Special Envoy Booth is unavailable to testify today because he is in Addis and he is working tirelessly on the peace process. I know that this subject before us today is one about which you and other Members of Congress care deeply.

Mr. Chairman, last week marked a major anniversary for South Sudan, one that few celebrated. January 9th marked 3 years since South Sudan's historic referendum for independence and 9 years since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Today, South Sudan again is riven by conflict, not with Khartoum but with itself. The title of today's hearing, "South Sudan's Broken Promise?" while appropriately framed as a question, those words accurately capture what has been unfolding in the world's youngest country not just in the last few weeks but over the past few months. The fact that South Sudan faces internal challenges is not in and of itself surprising.

Internal political tensions were building for months. Political space was shrinking, intercommunal tensions are long-standing and the country's institutions are weak.

Nonetheless, the speed of this is nothing short of astonishing. During—days after hosting an international investment conference on December 4th and 5th, which we thought went quite well, political struggles at a party meeting on December 14th, just 10 days later, it is still unclear how the clash began and erupted on the 15th into the devastating broader conflict that now grips the country today.

It is heartbreaking for the people of South Sudan and for us as Americans who have made an enormous investment, as you've all noted, in this country and who so much want to see it escape the terrible cycle of violence that marked its past and now, today, threatens its future.

This conflict is exacting a terrible price on the people of Sudan who already face some of the most daunting development challenges in the world. The numbers are grim and grow more so every day. The International Crisis Group has estimated that more than 10,000 people may have been killed.

Over 400,000 have fled their homes including 65,000 who have sought refuge in neighboring countries. We don't know whether

these numbers of dead are accurate but we know that a lot of people have died.

There are reports of forced recruitment, sexual violence and the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Political rivalries have taken on ethnic dimensions. Atrocities are being committed. Men, women, and children are caught in the crossfire.

Lest there be any doubt, I would like to make crystal clear where we stand when it comes to this conflict. First and foremost, neither the United States nor the international community will accept the armed overthrow of the democratically-elected Government of South Sudan.

Second, hostilities must stop. Any and all violence directed at civilian populations must end and those responsible for perpetrating the violence and abuse must be held accountable.

Third, this crisis will not be resolved on the battlefield. Finally, all parties must permit immediate and unconditional humanitarian access to all in need, to the now hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese men, women, and children who are the real victims of this violence.

The United States has engaged in an all-out diplomatic effort to help bring an end to the fighting with engagement by Secretary Kerry, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, Special Envoy Booth, Ambassador Page and other high-ranking past and present officials with President Kiir and former Vice President Machar as well as with the heads of state and governments' ministers in neighboring countries and around the world.

The immediate security situation remains critical, particularly for the thousands of civilians forced from their homes. As the crisis began to unfold, we proposed and the Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution nearly doubling the authorized troop ceiling for UNMIS.

In turn, we are now actively encouraging member states to provide additional troops and police units. The special envoy to Sudan and South Sudan, Ambassador Booth, is actively trying to resolve this crisis.

He has been in the region since December 22nd, working around the clock. He has met with President Kiir and other officials. He travelled to South Sudan to meet with Riek Machar.

He secured the first official visits with the group of political detainees in Juba and he sat down with local religious leaders and civil society members to help find a way forward. He has also been working closely with the other special envoys in the region.

In Juba, Ambassador Page and her team have led an extraordinarily hard—difficult diplomatic effort under very difficult circumstances.

This said, and as I said before, an all-out effort on our part, and, especially given our special history with Sudan, is ongoing. We are working closely with South Sudan's neighbors through the East Africa's Intergovernmental Authority on Development, who are spearheading the mediation efforts.

A special summit on South Sudan was held at the heads of state level 12 days after the conflict began and, thanks to robust engagement, representatives of both parties arrived in Addis for negotiations just a few days later.

We are encouraged by IGAD's leadership in convening the parties and strongly support the efforts of former Ethiopian Minister Seyoum and Kenyan General Lazaro Sumbeiywo to find a peaceful solution to the political dialogue.

And over the past weekend, Ambassador Booth travelled with the mediators and other members of the diplomatic community to South Sudan where they met with Riek Machar to directly press him to enter into a cessation of hostilities immediately and unconditionally.

An agreement to end hostilities will provide much needed time and space for dialogue to begin on the core political and governance issues that really are the root causes of this crisis. Both sides must recognize that there can be no military solution.

We have made clear to the rebels that we will not recognize a violent overthrow of a democratically-elected government and at the same time we have urged the government to open political space to allow for greater inclusion. Each day that the conflict continues the risk of all-out civil war grows and tensions continue to rise.

Let me conclude by saying that I am gravely concerned that the crisis in South Sudan has the potential to escalate even further.

South Sudan's leaders on both sides are breaking their promises to their own people. While we do not know the scale of the atrocities that have been committed thus far, there is clear evidence of targeted killing. Dinkas are killing Nuer, Nuer are killing Dinkas.

Each violent act threatens to return Sudan to the cycle of conflict and destruction that South Sudanese of all ethnicities and backgrounds voted to end in their vote for independence in 2011.

But just as each act of violence may ignite retribution, each step toward peace offers the chance to rebuild. Breaking this cycle and ensuring that Africa's newest nation continues to move forward rather than backward is the highest priority of the United States Government.

I thank you for your time, I thank you for your commitment to the people of South Sudan and for our efforts in that region, and I would be happy to take your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Thomas-Greenfield follows:]

Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs
Linda Thomas-Greenfield's
Testimony to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 15, 2014
"South Sudan's Broken Promise?"

Introduction

Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. As you know, Special Envoy Booth is unavailable to testify today as he is in Addis Ababa working tirelessly on the peace process. I know that the subject before us is one about which you and other members of Congress care deeply.

Situation in South Sudan

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Engel, last week marked a major anniversary for South Sudan but one that few celebrated. January 9th marked three years since South Sudan's historic referendum for independence and nine years since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Today, South Sudan again is riven by conflict – not with Khartoum, however, but with itself. The title of today's hearing is "South Sudan's Broken Promise?" While appropriately framed as a question, those words accurately capture what has been unfolding in the world's youngest country, not just in the last few weeks but over many months.

The fact that South Sudan faces internal challenges is not in and of itself surprising – internal political tensions were building for months; political space was shrinking; intercommunal tensions are long-standing; and the country’s institutions are weak. Nonetheless, the speed of this is nothing short of astonishing. Days after hosting an international investment conference on December 4-5, political struggles at a party meeting on December 14th and a still unclear clash on the 15th erupted into devastating broader conflict that now grips the country. It is heart-breaking for the people of South Sudan and for us as Americans who have made an enormous investment in this country and who so want to see it escape the terrible cycles of violence that marked its past and that threaten to destroy its future.

This conflict is exacting a terrible price on the people of South Sudan, who already faced some of the most daunting development challenges in the world. The numbers are grim, and grow more so by the day. The International Crisis Group has estimated that more than 10,000 people may have been killed. For its part, the UN now believes that casualties are “much higher” than its earlier December 26 estimate of over 1,000. The simple fact is we don’t know the scale of the killing. We do know over 400,000 have fled their homes including 65,000 who have sought refuge in neighboring countries. There are reports of forced recruitment, sexual violence and the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Political rivalries have taken on ethnic dimensions, atrocities are being committed, and men, women, and children are caught in the crossfire.

Lest there be any doubt, I would like to make crystal clear where we stand when it comes to this conflict. First, neither the United States nor the international community will countenance the armed overthrow of the democratically elected

government of South Sudan. Second, hostilities must stop, any and all violence directed at civilian populations must end, and those responsible for perpetrating abuses and violations must be held accountable. Third, this crisis will not be solved on the battlefield. Although fighting started less than one month ago, the roots of this conflict are much deeper, and resolution can only come through immediate and meaningful dialogue between the two sides and an inclusive reconciliation. Finally, all parties must permit immediate and unconditional humanitarian access to all in need, to the now hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese men, women, and children who are the real victims of this violence.

The United States has engaged in an all-out diplomatic effort to help bring an end to the fighting, with engagement by Secretary Kerry, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, Special Envoy Booth, Ambassador Page and other high-ranking past and present officials with President Kiir and former Vice President Machar as well as with the heads of state and foreign ministers in neighboring countries and around the world. We have:

- galvanized support to end hostilities and open a broader dialogue between the two sides;
- tracked reports of atrocities and called for accountability;
- sought to secure the release of political detainees now being held in Juba;
- supported the critical efforts of Sudan's neighbors to end this crisis; and
- taken significant steps to increase the capacity of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to carry out its mandate of civilian protection.

The immediate security situation remains critical – particularly for the thousands of civilians forced from their homes – and must be addressed. As the crisis began to

unfold, we proposed and the Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution nearly doubling the authorized troop ceiling for UNMISS. In turn, we are now actively encouraging member states to provide additional troops and police units to the UN mission, including through the transfer of contingents from other missions in the region where they can be spared. As my colleague, Assistant Administrator Gast will discuss, we have just committed an additional \$50 million in emergency humanitarian assistance to bolster the response to pressing new needs arising from the crisis.

The President's Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan, Ambassador Donald Booth – who, as I noted, could not be here to testify today because he is in Ethiopia – is actively trying to help resolve this crisis. Ambassador Booth has been in the region since December 22nd, working around the clock. He has met repeatedly with President Kiir and other officials, traveled to Jonglei state to meet with Dr. Machar, secured the first official visit with the group of political detainees in Juba, and sat down with local religious leaders and civil society members to help find a way out of this crisis.

In Juba, Ambassador Page and her team have led an extraordinary diplomatic effort under extremely difficult circumstances.

This is, as I said, an all-out effort on our part, and, especially given our special history in South Sudan, we are working closely with South Sudan's neighbors, through East Africa's Intergovernmental Authority on Development, who are spearheading mediation efforts.

A special summit on South Sudan was held at the head of state level just 12 days after the conflict began, and, thanks to robust engagement, representatives of both parties arrived in Addis for negotiations just a few days later. We are encouraged by IGAD's leadership in convening the parties and strongly support the efforts of former Ethiopian Minister Seyoum Mesfin and Kenyan General Lazaro Sumbeiywo to find a peaceful solution through political dialogue. Over this past weekend, Ambassador Booth traveled with the mediators and other members of the diplomatic community to Jonglei, South Sudan, where they met with Riek Machar to directly press him to enter into a cessation of hostilities immediately and unconditionally.

The IGAD-led negotiations offer the best hope for South Sudan and the region. An agreement to end hostilities will provide much needed time and space for dialogue to begin on the core political and governance issues that are at the root of this crisis. Both sides must recognize that there can be no military solution. We have made clear to the rebels that we will not recognize a violent overthrow of a democratically elected government. At the same time, we have urged the government to open political space to allow for greater inclusion. The United States also strongly believes that the political detainees currently being held in Juba must be released. These individuals should join discussions in Addis to enlarge the chorus of those seeking constructive solutions to resolve this growing catastrophe. I would add that during a recent meeting between the IGAD negotiators and the detainees, they reiterated that their status should not prevent an immediate cessation of hostilities. Each day that the conflict continues, the risk of all-out civil war grows as ethnic tensions rise, more civilians are killed, injured, or forced to flee, the humanitarian situation grows more urgent, and those who have remained on the sidelines are increasingly pulled into the conflict.

In addition to calling for an end to the violence, dialogue, and the release of political prisoners in Juba, the United States is exploring the possibility of appropriate pressures against individuals on both sides who interfere with the peace and reconciliation process in South Sudan or are responsible for serious human rights abuses.

Let me conclude by saying that I am gravely concerned that the crisis in South Sudan has the potential to escalate even further. South Sudan's leaders on both sides are, I fear, breaking their promises to their own people. While we do not know the scale of atrocities that have been committed thus far, there is clear evidence that targeted killings have taken place, with Dinka killing Nuer, and Nuer killing Dinka. Countless civilians, including women and children, have become victims of violence perpetrated by both government and rebel forces alike. Each violent act threatens to return South Sudan to the cycle of conflict and destruction that South Sudanese of all ethnicities and backgrounds voted to end when they voted for independence in 2011.

But just as each act of violence may ignite retribution, each step towards peace offers the chance to rebuild. Breaking this cycle, and ensuring that Africa's newest nation continues to move forward rather than backwards, is of highest priority to the United States and the international community.

I want to thank you for your continued commitment to the people of South Sudan, and I look forward to your questions.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you very much, Ambassador.
We go now to Mr. Gast.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE EARL W. GAST, ASSISTANT
ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR AFRICA, U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. GAST. Good morning, Chairman Royce, and also good morning, Congressman Sires and members of the committee, and thank you for inviting me to testify on the crisis in South Sudan and the U.S. Government response.

The U.S. Government, especially members of this committee, have been strong supporters of the people of South Sudan for decades throughout the civil war, during the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and since independence.

Yet today this new nation's hopeful future has been obscured by an outbreak of horrific violence that threatens its hard-won struggle for peace and stability.

Even before the conflict emerged, much of South Sudan was staggeringly underdeveloped and vulnerable to conflict. Forty percent of people needed humanitarian assistance.

The lack of roads and services made providing that aid uniquely difficult and recurrent droughts, floods, violence, macroeconomic shocks and returnee and refugee inflows have only exacerbated existing needs, and these challenges have multiplied since the fighting began.

This conflict has now claimed thousands of lives and driven more than 480,000 persons from their homes. While aid agencies had already prepositioned stockpiles of relief supplies for humanitarian needs that existed before the fighting erupted last month, violence has prevented some organizations from accessing them and it's also disrupted supply chains.

Offices and warehouses have been looted. Drivers transporting supplies have been killed and we are routinely denied access to roads by the SPLA, the army, and armed groups.

The Nile River, which is typically a major conduit for the movement of supplies, has been off limits for weeks. So USAID's challenge and the challenge that humanitarian agencies face are twofold.

We must not only respond to emergency needs, those that were caused by the conflict and those that pre-existed the conflict, but also continue to work toward long-term development, goals that will help lift the South Sudanese out of this cycle of poverty and conflict.

Toward that end, we are developing a nimble platform that allows our partners to adapt their activities to meet shifting needs.

The additional \$50 million announced earlier this month is supporting a multi-sector operation for humanitarian assistance to help protect civilians and survivors of violence, manage sites hosting newly-displaced persons and reunify families that have been separated by the fighting.

Importantly, it also helps support the U.N. Humanitarian Air Service which is currently the main means of transporting aid workers and lifesaving supplies to nine UNMIS bases that are now sheltering some 66,000 persons.

Over decades of work in South Sudan our partners have developed the relationships and expertise needed to run these operations. The U.N. estimates that relief agencies have reached about half of the newly-displaced persons.

However, insecurity and obstruction continue to impede their ability to reach all those in need so we continue to push for unfettered humanitarian access and respect for humanitarian workers, which are critical to an effective response.

Concurrent with our emergency response we are also reviewing how our broad portfolio of long-term development activities might support South Sudan's recovery from the immediate crisis as well as address the root causes of violence.

Conflict mitigation and reconciliation processes will be key to helping alleviate the current conflict, rebuilding trust among communities and supporting local and national healing to re-knit South Sudan's social fabric.

Civil society and the media, which serve as the eyes and ears of the people and hold the government accountable, must play a central role in that process alongside a diversity of other voices including political parties.

We also need to protect development gains in health, education and agriculture while continuing to help build the institutions of a functioning, legitimate and viable state.

However, our assistance will have limited impact without the sustained commitment of South Sudan's leadership, something that is currently missing, to set the country on the right course of inclusive reform and development.

Unless that happens, this crisis will deal another major blow to South Sudan's future as a nation and to the hopes of its people.

Thank you for your time today and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gast follows:]

Earl W. Gast
Assistant Administrator for Africa
U.S. Agency for International Development

House Committee on Foreign Affairs
Rayburn House Office Building
Room 2172

Wednesday, January 15, 2014
10:00 a.m.

“South Sudan’s Broken Promise?”

Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel and Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify on the political and humanitarian crisis in South Sudan and the U.S. response. Thank you also for your continued support of USAID’s humanitarian programs around the world, which make a positive difference every day in the lives of millions.

Introduction

The U.S. government, including many members of Congress, has been a strong supporter of the welfare of the people of South Sudan for decades—throughout Sudan’s civil war, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement period, and since independence in 2011. We are all deeply alarmed by the horrific violence now threatening their hard-won struggle for independence—especially today, which marks the third anniversary of the conclusion of South Sudan’s referendum, in which an overwhelming 99 percent of the South Sudanese people voted to form the world’s youngest nation. The people of South Sudan have endured far too many years of conflict and bloodshed to see peace slip away.

The outbreak of hostilities on December 15 has since erupted into heavy fighting across six of South Sudan’s 10 states. This fighting is the result of longstanding, deeply rooted grievances in a fragile new state with nascent institutions not yet able to deliver justice or services to its people. Coupled with an unresolved power struggle that has ignited tensions along ethnic lines, we are now seeing a vicious cycle of targeted killings.

As this new fighting creates a new, vast set of humanitarian needs, it also significantly complicates our ability to meet the extensive humanitarian needs that existed across South Sudan prior to December 15. Due to decades of civil war, sporadic communal violence, and the recurrent shocks of floods and drought, an estimated 40 percent of South Sudan’s population—up to 4.4 million people—were already in need of humanitarian assistance. Even before the current crisis, the lack of roads and pervasive underdevelopment made South Sudan one of the most difficult environments to work in worldwide.

Meanwhile, South Sudan has welcomed some 230,000 refugees from neighboring countries, including the more than 200,000 refugees who have fled the fighting in Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states since June 2011, adding to an already vast array of needs in a country where more than half the population lives below the poverty line, and human development indicators are among the lowest in the world.

The humanitarian challenge today is twofold: to respond to the immediate needs, as well as find ways to continue our longstanding, lifesaving work targeting nearly half the population already in need. In the face of these challenges, the United States remains committed to working with the international community to respond to the urgent needs of the people of South Sudan.

Today, I'd like to address two key areas: first, an overview of the current humanitarian conditions; and second, an update on our response efforts and critical next steps.

Current Situation

In the few weeks since heavy fighting broke out in the towns of Bor, Malakal, and Bentiu, the spreading violence in South Sudan has claimed the lives of thousands of people and driven more than 395,000 people from their homes. Until there is progress on the urgently convened peace negotiations and political dialogue, there is potential for additional clashes and displacement.

According to the United Nations (UN), approximately 60,000 people—or 17 percent of those internally displaced—have sought refuge in 10 peacekeeping bases of the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). The town of Bor—a strategic gateway to Juba—is caught in a desperate tug-of-war between fighting factions. As a result, humanitarian aid groups have struggled to reach those in need, and ongoing violence and looting have caused thousands to seek safety at one UNMISS base, where a lack of safe drinking water and poor sanitation raise the risk of outbreak of disease. This is the same bleak reality being experienced in other South Sudanese towns, prompting desperate families to seek refuge at UNMISS bases in Juba, Malakal, Bentiu, Pariang, Melut and Rumbek, in addition to Bor.

An additional 85,000 people have fled Bor to make the treacherous journey across the White Nile River to seek shelter in neighboring Aweril County, where relief agencies initially found many people living under the hot, unrelenting sun with a short supply of clean water, food, and shelter and inadequate sanitation.

Close to 65,000 displaced South Sudanese refugees are seeking safety in neighboring Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya. New refugees are beginning to strain reception capacity, but all three governments are working closely with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to address the inflows. An additional 10,000 South Sudanese have fled to Sudan.

These new developments come on top of recurrent environmental hazards, violence, displacement, returnee and refugee inflows, and macroeconomic shocks over the last two years since South Sudan's independence. Nearly 160,000 individuals were displaced between January and September 2013. Nearly 75 percent of this displacement occurred in Jonglei State, where

inter-communal violence and conflict between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and non-state armed actors forced an estimated 100,000 civilians to flee to remote and difficult-to-access rural areas.

Challenges to Aid Delivery

Current hostilities and regularly changing lines of control make it difficult for lifesaving humanitarian assistance to reach both key areas newly affected by the recent violence and areas of long-standing need. While ample stockpiles of supplies are pre-positioned, security conditions on the ground are preventing international and non-governmental agencies from accessing their own warehouses, disrupting supply chains, and impeding their access to needy populations. Caught up in the violence, some partner offices and warehouses have been looted and vehicles taken by the groups engaged in the violence. Commercial drivers carrying humanitarian supplies have been killed, while our partners are routinely denied access to roads by the SPLA and armed groups. The Nile River—typically a major conduit for the movement of supplies—has been off limits for weeks as barges are no longer available for humanitarian use.

U.S. Government Response

In the midst of these extensive constraints, the U.S. government is working closely with the UN and with our partners to examine all possible ways to meet current, acute needs due to the worsening crisis, while also planning ahead for the upcoming rainy season. Moreover, we continue to work closely with the State Department to push for humanitarian access and respect for humanitarian workers, which is so vital to providing urgently needed aid. The U.S. government continues to insist that immediate, unconditional, and unfettered humanitarian access be allowed throughout South Sudan. Our partners have been blocked from the Nile and flights into Bor from Juba have been limited. The UN must be given access via air, road, and river to deliver urgently needed humanitarian supplies and personnel, and to reach all populations in need.

Immediately after the violence began on December 15, USAID stood up an eight-member Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) of experienced humanitarian staff based in Nairobi, Kenya as well as a Response Management Team (RMT) in Washington to monitor mounting needs and work with international partners to respond to the growing numbers of displaced persons. Despite a still highly volatile and uncertain environment, the UN and some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are scaling up to implement the response.

With continued support from the U.S. government since South Sudan's birth in 2011 and decades of work in the region, our UN and NGO partners have honed the logistical and technical expertise essential to operate in the challenging South Sudan environment to help those most in need—where roads routinely close during the rainy season and communities are effectively cut off for months. To date, the UN reports that relief agencies have reached 50 percent of those newly displaced—an estimated 175,000 people—with humanitarian assistance, primarily those people at UNMISS bases or in neighboring counties where security and access have permitted the delivery of aid.

In response to the new violence, we have strategically funded the UN and NGOs in support of an efficient and nimble platform, which allows agencies to respond to increased and shifting needs on the ground. Despite access challenges posed by armed groups, humanitarian organizations are working to overcome hurdles and optimize all means possible—including road, air, and barge transport—to deliver life-saving assistance. On January 3, the Department of State and USAID announced an additional nearly \$50 million in humanitarian assistance for South Sudan, bringing the total U.S. commitment to more than \$318 million for fiscal years 2013 and 2014. This new funding supports a multi-sector humanitarian response operation, including the provision of food, safe drinking water, emergency health care, vaccinations, improved sanitation, and shelter as well as the protection of civilians and support for survivors of violence. This new funding will also help manage sites for the displaced, support reunification of families separated by the fighting, and fund programs to help ensure the protection of the most vulnerable populations, including women and children. This work will be carried out by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and UN agencies including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Program (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Importantly, this new funding also helps support additional logistical capacity, including to the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), which is currently ferrying aid workers and supplies to nine UNMISS bases housing 51,000 internally displaced persons. The tenth base, in Bor, is occasionally receiving humanitarian flights, but these are not yet sustained and reliable.

In addition to new funds, we are using the full flexibility of our larger humanitarian portfolio, allowing our partners to redirect or reprogram funds to meet rapidly changing needs in a volatile environment—and to change course to meet the most urgent needs while still planning longer term. We know that in complex environments like South Sudan, partners need the flexibility to redirect resources and assess how their own programs can best adapt.

In response to a continually changing environment, in 2010 USAID stood up a Rapid Response Fund (RRF) that allows us to quickly route funding to international and national NGOs working on the ground as part of our ongoing humanitarian assistance efforts for the people of South Sudan. Since the recent crisis began, USAID has awarded nearly \$2 million in grants for seven emergency projects through the RRF to make an immediate difference. At the UNMISS base in Juba, where tight living conditions could risk disease outbreaks, USAID is funding two South Sudanese NGOs through the RRF to provide emergency healthcare, clean water, and improved sanitation and hygiene to internally displaced persons. When thousands fled the violence of Bor to seek safety in the rural areas of Awerial County, USAID's support of a local NGO called AWODA through the RRF—along with our assistance to UN agencies and other partners—resulted in a quick, coordinated response to prevent the spread of disease: latrines were dug, hygiene supplies distributed, and hand-washing facilities and bathing facilities constructed. More recently, at the UNMISS base in Bentiu, USAID partner Mercy Corps received more than \$300,000 through the RRF to build emergency latrines, provide safe drinking water and hygiene supplies, and promote good hygiene practices.

We are currently at the outset of the dry season, ordinarily a time when our partners would begin to use this five-month window of dry weather to replenish and preposition relief supplies before roads become impassable with the start of seasonal rains in June. The response to this current crisis has benefitted from the existing stockpile of warehoused supplies. The USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) released an alert on January 8, 2014, that recent conflict has disrupted the harvest and commodity flows in important trade corridors of South Sudan. The report predicts that crisis level food insecurity is likely among the most vulnerable populations, particularly in Jonglei, Upper Nile, and Unity states. Over the coming months, emergency levels of acute food insecurity are possible if hostilities and diminished food access persist. Looking ahead, if the violence persists, USAID will work with partners to seek all means of identifying ways to restock and resupply critical supply chains, both to address the current violence as well as address the ongoing critical needs of communities throughout one of the poorest nations on earth.

Conclusion

As USAID works to meet urgent humanitarian needs in light of recent events, we are also reviewing our portfolio of development activities to adjust to the changed landscape. We are continuing our activities where possible, including primary health care support in Central and Western Equatoria states and support for disease surveillance and response; support for independent radio; and activities that are helping to increase agricultural productivity in the Equatoria states. We look forward to staying in close contact with Congress as we undertake this deliberative process to determine the best way forward.

Looking ahead, increased access to those in need will be the key determinant of our success. The United States remains steadfast in our decades-long commitment to the South Sudanese people. As my colleague Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield has noted, we are using our full diplomatic efforts to negotiate an end to the violence as well as press all sides to respect the humanitarian supplies, personnel, and efforts essential to saving South Sudanese lives. The South Sudanese people deserve their rights to be protected and to live in communities free from harm.

As President Obama aptly stated, “too much blood has been spilled and too many lives have been lost to allow South Sudan’s moment of hope and opportunity to slip from its grasp.”

Thank you for your time today and for the vital Congressional support that makes our life-saving work possible. I look forward to your questions.

Chairman ROYCE. Well, thank you.

If I could start with this question. When we look at Khartoum's machinations over the years and their activities in South Sudan, I think that they have a long history of meddling within the factions there. And so now you have Bashir making a trip—a recent visit to Juba and I was wondering if we have any indication that he might have made any guarantees to President Kiir.

At the same time, Machar had that history prior to the establishment of South Sudan of switching sides, of joining the regime, of working with Bashir, and I wondered if you have any indication that he's reached out to Bashir for any form of assistance.

It wouldn't surprise me if both—if, you know, Bashir and those in the north who have a long history of repression down there and connections with both sides in this—in these factions that they might be strengthening their hands in their interaction with the south. But I don't—I don't have—other than the trip there I don't have any information.

Has the State Department conveyed any messages to the head of state in Sudan about meddling there? I just wondered what you could tell us.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Thank you for that question.

We are aware of Bashir's trip to South Sudan. He initially travelled in with the IGAD heads of state as a member of IGAD but he went in separately. We initially heard rumors that he would be providing security for the oil fields in—around the border.

They later announced that they had agreed to provide technical assistance. But I think all of that remains to be seen. It is something that we are concerned about and we are watching very closely as well.

We have not had any direct conversations with President Bashir, as you know, but we have conveyed across the region that we do not see this as being resolved militarily and we have encouraged countries to be very circumspect about any assistance to the warring parties.

Chairman ROYCE. Let me ask you this question. I brought up the issue of the U.N. attempting to exert some leverage on that government in South Sudan with respect to bringing sanctions in play. Now we have a new report.

I was going to ask you if it's accurate and if the administration is considering sanction there and specifically whether you'd try to sanction individuals in the government. Would they be targeted if they were complicit in this implosion?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Sir, we are looking at a variety of options to hold accountable those individuals who are responsible for the atrocities and violations of human rights and, particularly, we're looking at those individuals who are blocking efforts to—who are spoiling our efforts to achieve peace. They are on both sides, both within the government as well as those anti-government forces.

Chairman ROYCE. And one of the other observations that I made in my opening statement was that in many ways the writing was on the wall here. You had an enormous amount of, shall we say, authority being consolidated in the presidency. At the same time, you had corruption that was evident.

This was a concern—the magnitude of it—by the U.N. report, and the authoritarian rule was moving forward step by step. First, the local governors were pushed out by the President.

Then in March, behind closed doors, when he was approached by the Vice President for his increasingly strong-armed, you know, tactics the Vice President was dismissed. Machar was tossed. So was the entire cabinet—the entire cabinet.

So throughout the year when these episodes occurred and almost monthly we were reading something about the difficulties at hand, what was the engagement from the administration?

Did someone go from Washington to Juba to say enough or to engage or what was going on?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Well, first and foremost, our Ambassador was actively engaged and—

Chairman ROYCE. I understand that.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD [continuing]. Issued public and private statements concerning the situation. We also had meetings here in the U.S. on the margins of the U.N. with President Kiir. I can't answer whether anyone travelled. I can check on that and get back to you.

Chairman ROYCE. I think it's very important because I think we perhaps had an opportunity to bridge that internal divide. But that probably was not going to happen without a tremendous amount of international pressure, either the—at the U.N. where they tried to leverage, you know, their force with the threat of sanctions there to stop the corruption, stop the authoritarian rule and—or, you know, with direct engagement from the highest levels here in the United States where we laid out the consequences should this road of just destroying any viable opposition and tossing out cabinet members and, you know, taking away all the governorships.

I mean, it would seem to me that it would be pretty clear that in an environment like that without our direct engagement in terms of sending high-ranking officials there to sort of spell out the consequences that we would—

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I'm being passed a couple of notes that—

Chairman ROYCE. Yes.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD [continuing]. Indicate that both Gail Smith and General Rodriguez travelled out to the region. But I do know that there were high-level meetings with Salva Kiir in New York on the margins of the U.N.

Chairman ROYCE. Let me ask you also, we had—I appreciate that information. Our Embassy in Juba, I guess, is the old USAID compound. Doesn't meet safety standards.

In a briefing for the committee, Undersecretary Kennedy described the physical security there as pathetic and this latest evacuation, I think, underscores the importance of the committee's work to have enacted the Department of State Operations and Embassy Security Authorization Act, which we passed in a bipartisan way overwhelmingly in the Senate. We're trying to get that into law.

The draw down of the Embassy was reinforced and I think that was the first use of new military units created in the wake of

Benghazi. These units are the Djibouti-based East Africa Response Force and the Spain-based Marine Task Force.

What are the lessons learned from the first deployments of these units and will we use them differently in the future? And the FAST Team Marines based in Roda, Spain are also designed to respond to these types of contingencies.

I don't think they were deployed in this case. I was going to ask about that, and let me just ask you about that aspect of security.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Good. Thank you.

As you no doubt know, the security of our people in Sudan and everywhere where we have Embassies in the world is our highest priority. So that was the very first thing that we looked at.

We did an initial draw down of our staff and now we're down to minimal staff being supported by a very large security team. We have 45 from the East Africa Response Force who are there.

In addition, we have nine diplomatic security officers and seven Marines who are there with a very, very small staff headed by the Ambassador there. We're looking at the situation and monitoring the situation almost on an hourly basis.

We come together several times a day to review security in and around Juba and at any point when we determine that we can no longer keep our people safe we'll have to make the difficult decision of bringing down our flag and bringing our people home.

It is important, we believe, to continue to maintain a diplomatic presence. We think there is a key role for our Ambassador to play in terms of political engagement with the parties there but also to not—to be there to encourage the Sudanese who are going through this difficult time.

So our flag going down will send a very, very strong signal. But, again, we know that our—the safety of our staff is our most important priority.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Ambassador. Mr. Sires.

Mr. SIRES. Can you comment how much of the struggle is an effort to control the revenues of oil? Can you expand upon that?

I mean, obviously, there's a lot of corruption and I think behind all this there's an effort to control the only real source of money that Southern Sudan gets.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I'd say that that is part of it but there are a number of issues related to the constitution and how the government is organized and how inclusive the government is that has also led to this.

But I'm certain that all—having access to all revenue plays a key role in the motivations of those who are involved.

Mr. SIRES. Can you comment on that?

Mr. GAST. Well, certainly, we've seen a significant reduction in oil production as many of the international staff of the Chinese companies and Malaysian companies have left.

So that's something that we're concerned about and, obviously, Sudan, which benefits from the oil, is also concerned about, and as the chairman had mentioned there was an offer of technical assistance to come across the border to help with the maintenance of the wells.

I agree with Ambassador Greenfield that there are many motivations for this. One is personal ambition. The other is control of re-

sources, which would include oil but also, basically, a battle for control of the political party and for political domination.

Mr. SIRES. What role is China playing in all this? Are they being constructive or are they just staying on the sidelines like they usually do?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. The Chinese have some major investments in the oil fields so there is a Chinese envoy who has been in Addis throughout most of the talks that have gone on in Addis and there was a visit by a senior Chinese official as well.

They have been playing a very positive role in trying to push for peace talks and peace negotiations because I think it's in their interest to have a stable South Sudan that—where the oil production is flowing. Right now, workers—many of the Chinese workers have been evacuated from the oil fields.

Mr. SIRES. And I think we give over \$300 million a year in humanitarian help. How do we—do we track it to make sure it gets to the people that's needed or how do we track this?

Mr. GAST. It's a very complex and broad architecture that's been developed by the U.N. The U.N. has been there for years and it includes multiple U.N. agencies that are coordinated by a humanitarian coordinator who also serves as the deputy head of mission for UNMIS.

So that's the major infrastructure. Below that are the service-oriented NGOs that support the actual delivery of services and so we support a group of between 15 and 20 NGOs that are out implementing it.

We also support the U.N. organizations and it's roughly a 60–40 split. Sixty percent of what we provide in humanitarian assistance goes toward the U.N. agencies and 40 percent goes into humanitarian NGOs.

We are currently tracking our assistance through NGO reports, U.N. reports. We have a DART team that is based in Nairobi right now and they're constantly coordinating with our people in the field—our Embassy—as well as the U.N. agencies and also the NGOs that are operating in country.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. Let me ask a couple of questions, if I could.

First of all, let me begin, again, thank you for your service. I know that we are all—I was glad to hear you say that the U.S. has engaged in an all-out diplomatic effort and it's not surprising.

But I do have a question. You did mention that meetings with Salva Kiir occurred on the perimeters of the U.N. That would have been last September, though, wouldn't it? Or was he here more recently than that?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. No. The high-level meetings occurred in—on the sidelines.

Mr. SMITH. But it would have been September?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes. Not since—

Mr. SMITH. Not since the crisis, just so we're clear?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We've had a number of high-level calls to Salva Kiir since this started.

Mr. SMITH. Okay.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. But—

Mr. SMITH. Does that include President Obama?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. No, sir. Susan Rice from the National Security Agency. The national security advisor called and Secretary Kerry has made numerous calls to Salva Kiir.

Mr. SMITH. Would the President consider doing that? I do think, you know, just as Bush made a huge impact on getting the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in the first place it would be very helpful to, I think, have the President engage both individuals, Machar as well as Salva Kiir. If you could take that back I think it would be very, very useful.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I will.

Mr. SMITH. You mentioned the 10,000 people who may have been killed—International Crisis Group. How did they arrive at that number?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I don't—I can't say how they arrived at the number. We heard a number from the U.N. of about 1,000. We think that is extraordinarily low.

I think the 10,000 figure may be high but, truthfully, we don't know the number because we have not had enough access to get in to do that kind of assessment and that's one of the things we're hoping with the cessation of hostilities, working with the U.N. Human Rights Commission and others that we can get better fidelity on those numbers.

Mr. SMITH. You said over the weekend Ambassador Booth met personally with other diplomatic individuals with Machar. Was there any breakthrough? Did he give any kind of assurance that he may be moving toward peace as opposed to continued hostility?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We felt a bit of confidence that he was close to agreeing to a cessation of hostilities. It has not happened yet and we're still pushing that.

Mr. SMITH. Let me ask you, has there been an effort to try to bring the faith community into this? You know, I know Bishop Eduardo Kussala. I've met with him many, many times.

There are large numbers of unbelievably competent—he's testified here, as have others—individuals who might be able to bridge the hostility gap and the fact is, as we all would recognize, this could go from unbelievably horrific, as Mr. Gast pointed out, to even worse.

The 10,000 could double, triple unless there's a huge tourniquet put on this killing. Has the faith community been asked to become mediators in this crisis?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. They have been actively involved. Secretary Kerry was in Rome over the weekend and spoke to the Pope. The Pope has mentioned South Sudan several times in his statements. Secretary Kerry, while in Rome, raised the issue.

Ambassador Booth has met with the faith community in Juba and has been supporting their efforts to call for peace.

Mr. SMITH. Again, I would respectfully submit that putting them in a more pivotal situation might make or diffuse at least some of the hostility as it grows in intensity. Yes?

Mr. GAST. Congressman, just to add, you're absolutely right and we're engaging with faith-based organizations and leaders to help at the community level and we're using the support that we pro-

vide to a network of independent broadcasters around the country to get those peace messages out.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that.

You mentioned, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield, very importantly that humanitarian access is extremely important—you know, the idea of unfettered access and unconditional.

Has either side been—could you give a detailed analysis either now or for the record as to who has been more cooperative on both sides of this divide?

Are they allowing it? Is Salva Kiir allowing it?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I think both sides are equally guilty but we have been able to recently get some humanitarian flights into some of the northern areas where we were—the U.N. was blocked. Earl may have some more detail on exactly what has been done but we—recently the U.N. has been able to fly in humanitarian assistance.

Mr. SMITH. But where is it being blocked? We all remember during the South Sudan when UNICEF testified right here as well as our own administration how difficult it was to get in. They had to get permission from Khartoum. Is this *deja vu* now in terms of humanitarian access?

Mr. GAST. Well, they require—they certainly require approval from Juba and often it's the circumstances on the ground that affect whether or not flights can come in.

So, as the Ambassador mentioned, it's mainly in the areas where there's conflict like Malakal, Bentiu and Bor. Those are the areas that are most difficult to access.

Mr. SMITH. Two very quick follow-up questions or questions. Mr. Gast, is there any evidence of any disease outbreaks occurring, and secondly, Ambassador, South Sudan has a population of about 8.2 million people. The Dinka are 1.5 million, the Nuer 800,000.

Where are the other ethnic groups breaking in terms of are they aligning themselves with one group or the other? Do we have a breakdown of that? Because that could, of course, exacerbate the situation if coalitions are built.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. In terms of the other ethnic groups, I think they have been quietly staying on the sidelines hoping that this situation eventually resolves itself.

I think if it continues over a long period of time we'll see some of those people who've been standing on the sidelines joining one side or the other and we're hoping we don't get to that point.

Mr. SMITH. Before Mr. Gast answers, the Americans who have been airlifted and gotten out of the country are there still Americans at risk?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes, sir. We have evacuated 450 Americans since this conflict started and we're monitoring another 200 to 300 who are still in South Sudan who have not either requested evacuation or we have not been able to reach them.

But this is something that we monitor, again, on an hour to hour basis. We have phone numbers of individuals. We reach out to those numbers on a regular basis.

They know where to call us. We have many of them calling out to us. Some of them are connected with the U.N. and are there on official responsibilities.

Mr. SMITH. Have any of them been injured besides the service members that were during the rescue attempt?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We have heard that two American citizens were killed in the battle. These were Americans of Sudanese descent who were in communities. That, again, is not information that I can confirm. There could be more. There could be fewer.

Mr. GAST. Congressman, going back to your question about outbreaks of disease, early on there were rumors of potentially cholera breaking out in some of the camps in Juba. Those proved to be unfounded.

Nonetheless, it really did spark a drive by the U.N. organizations and NGOs to ramp up sanitation efforts as well as immunization efforts in the camps. So no disease outbreaks.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Congresswoman Karen Bass from California.

Ms. BASS. Thank you.

Actually, just following up briefly on Mr. Smith's question about the Americans that are there, who are they? Are they primarily Sudanese-Americans? I know you said some of them are affiliated with the U.N. but what are they doing?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Some of them are working with NGOs. Some are with humanitarian organizations and some are private citizens who are there.

Ms. BASS. I see.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Again, we are monitoring the numbers that we have. Some of them were brought to our attention by relatives who are here in the United States and they've given us numbers that we have not been able to successfully reach people on.

Others have been in touch with us on a regular basis. We have encouraged, in fact, strongly urged that all American citizens leave Sudan in our travel warnings and that's a warning that we repeat on a regular basis.

There are still commercial flights that are flying out. We are no longer providing the charter flights that we were providing but commercial flights are still available and we—

Ms. BASS. Really?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD [continuing]. Encourage people to take advantage of those and leave.

Ms. BASS. Okay. Thank you.

So I wanted to ask a few questions to understand some of the nature of the conflict. So I know that there are—that Kiir—President Kiir is holding political prisoners. I wanted to know who these people were.

Are they combatants? Who are they? I know that our effort is to try to get them released. But how many, who are they, et cetera?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Currently, we are aware that there are 11 political detainees who are being held. Some of them were in government positions. They have made clear in the meetings that we have held with them and the negotiators have held with them that they are not combatants.

They do not want to be connected with the cessation of hostilities because they are not involved in that. But they have political interest and we think they ought to be involved in any political dialogue

that should take place. So we have been pushing for them to be released along with the IGAD leaders and others in the region.

Ms. BASS. Is Machar still holding on to his position that President Kiir has to step down in order for there to be a cessation of the violence?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We have not heard that from him. The only condition that he has announced is that the detainees must be released before there is a cessation of hostilities. We're trying to separate those two issues out.

We think there should be a cessation of hostilities immediately and we're pushing at the same time but separately that the detainees be released so that they can participate in the political dialogue and in the negotiations that follow.

Ms. BASS. And in terms of the conflict that's going on currently, are you concerned about fighters from Al-Shabaab or other folks or efforts, terrorist groups from outside of Sudan coming in? Is there any evidence of that?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We have not seen any evidence of that. Of course, it's always a possibility but it's not something that we've seen any evidence of and certainly the South Sudanese, most of whom—all of whom are Christian, I would not assume that they would welcome that kind of participation and I hope they would not welcome them.

Ms. BASS. Thank you. And then we—you've mentioned in both of your presentations about the blocking of humanitarian efforts and I wanted to know if the blocking of the humanitarian efforts is on both sides.

Is it one side? And is China involved in any of the humanitarian efforts either financially or logistical support?

Mr. GAST. It is on both sides, Congresswoman Bass. It's also in the areas primarily where there's conflict going on and so that's what's really impeding our ability to deliver humanitarian assistance in those conflict areas primarily right now concentrated in Malakal, in Bentiu and Bor.

Ms. BASS. Okay. And in terms of our efforts, is there anything else that you could think that we need to be doing as Members of Congress, what could we do to be helpful to the effort?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Let me just say that what you're doing today is helpful. It lets the South Sudanese know that what is happening there has a tremendous interest across our Government.

Calls to Sudanese officials, the kinds of public statements that have been made—those are all very, very helpful because they are listening to those statements. They're very conscious of what we are thinking and what we are saying.

Ms. BASS. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We'll go now to Mr. Rohrabacher of California.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Are we confident that the two sides here can control their own people? Did they make an agreement? Does that mean anything more than just two men making an agreement or are they in control of their own forces?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We do have concerns about command and control. There are a lot of militias that are formed separate from this battle and it is not clear that either side can control these individuals should they decide to continue to fight.

So that is an ongoing concern that we all have, and as we push for a cessation of hostilities between the two major forces I think we'll still be trying to bring under control the efforts of militias who have joined in to the fight for their own reasons.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. That's pretty tough.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes, sir.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Yes. What other countries—what role are other countries playing in this? Do you have some—a good guy list and a bad guy list of countries that are doing something and contributing in a way that you would think is a positive thing versus some other countries that may be actually hurting the situation?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Right now, everyone seems to be on the side of trying to bring this conflict to an end, and the IGAD countries who are all the neighbors have been playing a very, very positive role.

We have worked closely with other special envoys such as the U.K and, as I mentioned earlier, the Chinese special envoy. There's an EU special envoy.

So I think right now we all see this as problematic for the region and we see there are no benefits to be achieved here by any of the countries who neighbor South Sudan or those countries with an interest in South Sudan. So I think that's a good place to be right now.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. And you say even the Chinese are—you believe even they are playing a positive role?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes, sir.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Wow. That's something.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Got interest.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. All right. Who's providing all the guns to these people? I mean, if they were militia and all they had were, you know, spears or something like that we probably wouldn't be too concerned. But they, obviously, are well armed.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We think the rebels have been taking arms from the SPLA. There are SPLA soldiers who are in the north of South Sudan. In areas where they have been able to succeed in overtaking them they've been able to get those weapons. Also, we know that there have been some defections and those individuals are defecting with their arms.

We have not seen any evidence of where the arms are coming from other than what they may have had in their possession when this started.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. You know, when people are fighting, people who've never seen this up front don't know how fast the ammunition has dissipated in any type of a—you know, when you're in the middle of some fight you're running out of ammunition within a few minutes of the time that something starts. Isn't there a supply line of ammunition coming from somewhere?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I am sure that is the case. We have not seen it. But it is something that we are looking at very, very closely and we're encouraging, again, all of the neighbors and others who they might approach for supplies that they should not respond to any of those requests.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, I would think that our intelligence services should be able to track something like that down

and there should be some repercussions if we are serious about trying to get this conflict under control, at the very least of shutting off the supplies so when people shoot up with the bullets they've got they aren't going to have to—they won't know where the other bullets are coming from.

That would be a great service and I would think that if our CIA can do anything they should be able to find those big trucks lumbering across filled with bullets and filled with land mines and filled with artillery shells.

Thank you very much and good luck to you.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Thank you, sir.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Rohrabacher.

We'll now go to Mr. Cicilline of Rhode Island.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our witnesses for being here today and for the work that you're doing.

I'd like to focus first on the capacity of the U.N. peacekeepers in South Sudan on their ability to protect civilians who are seeking refuge in the bases, which I think is somewhere in the neighborhood of 60,000 people and, of course, people outside of those bases.

As you know, we currently have legislative caps which prevent the United States from fulfilling its responsibilities unless Congress acts and I think the shortfall in terms of our making payments is about \$10 million and it means, I assume, that critical resources to the U.N. mission there are not available and it also, I suspect, means that countries who are providing troops, particularly, I understand, Bangladesh and Ghana are not being fully reimbursed for their services.

So would you speak a little bit about the capacity of the U.N. mission as a result of this? What impact it has on other countries who are part of this effort and what the long-term implications are?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. The U.N.—well, let me just start there. About 100,000 IDPs have taken refuge around the U.N. bases and the U.N. does not have the capacity at the moment to provide full protection and support that is needed.

So one of the first actions that we took was to ask for the Security Council to increase the number of troops and there was an additional 5,000 approved for South Sudan.

Mr. CICILLINE. Which we supported?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes, sir.

Mr. CICILLINE. Okay.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. And we have been working with the troop-contributing countries, with the other supporters of the U.N. to try to build up that capacity. I just heard that Ghana has agreed, despite the fact that they're not being paid, to provide 850 additional troops.

We have heard from the Tanzanians who have agreed to provide additional troops. The Nepalese have provided foreign police. The Bangladeshis have provided additional troops and we continue to push for other countries to build up the capacity so that we don't have a more disastrous situation to occur.

Mr. CICILLINE. Some have—as you know, South Sudan has—I want to just move to a different area—has not adopted or developed a constitution and some have suggested that that process by

itself would help to address some of the underlying issues surrounding the conflict.

Do you think that's true? Is there someone who you think has the leadership standing to begin that process? I know it seems hard to talk about—the development of a constitution in the middle of this conflict. But it seems as if we should be thinking about helping to support that kind of approach.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes, sir, and thank you again for that question.

We think one of the key areas after the cessation of hostilities and the political dialogue starts is that there are discussions on their constitutional formation and how they want their country to be developed as a democracy in the future.

So that is being given a great deal of thought. I can't give you a name of who might be the person to lead this process but I know that Ambassador Booth and others in the region are working very diligently on this.

Mr. GAST. South Sudan currently operates under a transitional constitution and you're absolutely right, they've been very woefully delayed in moving forward to develop a fully vetted constitution, meaning being inclusive.

They have set up the National Constitution Review Commission. It does include a large number of civil society groups but it's not fully constituted and we also believe that that would be a very good vehicle to help support a national dialogue of reconciliation after the immediate hostilities are addressed.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you. And finally, I think no matter how it unfolded there's no question that Machar has led an armed rebellion against the government and so when you talk about reconciliation and negotiation and resolution do you envision that there's a scenario in which he returns to the government and is part of the government?

Is that something which is probable, likely, supportable, sustainable? How does that happen?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I think all of that remains to be seen. I think there are some rifts now that have developed that will be hard to turn back. We're not going to be able to take South Sudan back to where South Sudan was before the fighting began.

So I think this will be a decision that the Sudanese—South Sudanese have to make as they look at how they reconcile and move forward. But I think it's going to be difficult for him to play a helpful role.

Mr. CICILLINE. Yes. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Cicilline.

We go now to Mr. Weber—Randy Weber.

Mr. WEBER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

Ambassador, thank you all for being here and, Mr. Gast, thanks for being here. I came in late so you may have already answered a couple of these questions but I'm going to take a shot at them anyhow.

The population of Sudan and South Sudan—do we know what that is?

Mr. GAST. 12 million in South Sudan.

Mr. WEBER. Of South Sudan?

Mr. GAST. South Sudan.

Mr. WEBER. And how about Sudan itself?

Mr. GAST. Something in that range. We'll get you the exact number.

Mr. WEBER. Okay. And what is the main economy of each?

Mr. GAST. So for the south they're almost entirely reliant on oil and oil production. For Sudan, Khartoum, also oil production is a major export but also agriculture is a mainstay of the economy.

Mr. WEBER. Okay. Who is their main trading partner, would you say?

Mr. GAST. South Sudan?

Mr. WEBER. Mm-hmm.

Mr. GAST. Main trading partner would be with the exports of the oil so it would be with the Chinese consortium and with Uganda.

Mr. WEBER. How about close countries? Does Uganda trade with them at all?

Mr. GAST. Absolutely. So a lot of imports come in from Uganda.

Mr. WEBER. And I'm reading that in response to the crisis Uganda has sent 1,200 troops into South Sudan and we get reports that Ugandan military aircraft have bombed several rebel-held positions and that Uganda itself says that that action came at the request of President Kiir. Is there a treaty that exists between South Sudan and Uganda?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I don't know that there is a treaty. We've spoken to the Ugandans on this and they've been very clear in public about what their motivations were.

Initially, in the communique that the IGAD governments issued after they visited South Sudan they announced that Uganda was going in to protect the key infrastructure—the airport and the road to Nimule from Juba.

Since then, the Ugandans have been involved militarily and they have indicated that they have an interest in a stable South Sudan but they also have an interest in ensuring that a democratically-elected government is not overthrown by violent means.

Mr. WEBER. So have they set up checkpoints, military personnel to control or protect that infrastructure?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes. They are—they have troops stationed at the airport and they have troops stationed along the road and as well to support the bridge leading into Juba.

Mr. WEBER. Done with or without the administration's knowledge—foreknowledge?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Oh, they're very aware. They've been very public.

Mr. WEBER. Foreknowledge, I should say.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes. They've been very public about it. They were very public in the announcement. This was initially announced in the communique so it was done in a very, very public way.

Mr. WEBER. And I understand that the U.S.-Ugandan security partnership includes significant support from us to Ugandan troops that are engaged in regional counterterrorism and stability operations. Has our support been used in effect to get involved in that civil—in that war?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We have watched that very closely and I think I can say that we have not seen any evidence that any support we are providing for that operation is being used to support the separate operation that we're not connected to.

Mr. WEBER. Troops are not engaged in the actual fighting itself, just the protection of the infrastructure—the Uganda troops?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. No, I think we have seen that they have been involved in some of the fighting. We understand some of the gun ships were used to assist the government in Bor.

Mr. WEBER. Okay. And you—some of the reading I did said that a lot of the fighting was over scarce waters and grazing lands disputes. How does that get fixed?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. That's a long-term problem that I think I can turn to my colleague here to talk about some of the activities that we've been involved in to assist them in addressing that issue.

Mr. GAST. It's a long-standing conflict between pastoralists and farmers and it's over scarce resources to include land, to include water. And so what we have been doing at the community level is helping peace commissioners and helping tribal leaders work together to address those issues so that they're able to negotiate access to land and access to resources.

Mr. WEBER. Do they have property rights? Do they own property?

Mr. GAST. That is something that is starting very soon. There are multiple systems in South Sudan but we were very instrumental in coming up with a land policy.

Mr. WEBER. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Lowenthal of California.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Chair for your—for the memorandum that really provided for me a context for today's hearing and I also want to thank the Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield and Mr. Gast.

My question regards the emerging infrastructure in South Sudan and U.S. companies that invest in infrastructure projects to help develop this young country. As you know, quality infrastructure, as you both pointed out, can provide that economic freedom and the prosperity for a country.

Last April, at the suggestion of a constituent and with the support of Congressman Rohrabacher, I wrote a letter to Secretary Kerry and the Acting Secretary of Commerce Blank asking for their support for an American or for American companies, really, interested in building oil pipelines in South Sudan.

The oil project would bring—was projected to bring in over \$3 billion to the South Sudan economy. With this conflict what is happening to U.S. investment? I don't even know if this project is even moving forward at this time. Where are U.S. companies now?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I would guess that they're all standing on the sidelines waiting to see how this conflict is resolved. I mentioned earlier that December 4th and 5th there was an investment conference.

Business people visited South Sudan. They saw the possibilities for investment there. But as long as there is a conflict ongoing, none of these companies will be able—whether it's infrastructure or

other types of investment, will be able to follow through on any investments in that country.

Mr. GAST. I agree they're also sitting on the sidelines. As the Ambassador mentioned, the investors conference that was held in Juba was very much a success.

More than 500 persons attended from several hundred companies to include U.S. companies. That was followed up by a special event that was held in Washington with the CCA where the keynote speaker—that's the Corporate Council for Africa—it's a community of business persons that are interested in investing in Africa—where the keynote speaker was the minister of foreign affairs.

So there is interest. There are some U.S. investors. But, obviously, this conflict is keeping everyone on the sidelines now.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Another question I have has to do with humanitarian needs. In our report, with the displacement of about 350,000 within the country and about 40,000 have left the country for neighboring countries, it talked about that approximately half of the displaced people within South Sudan have not yet been reached. About half have, half haven't.

What does that mean that they have not been reached? What is their status?

Mr. GAST. Part of it is trying to identify where the displaced persons are moving to. That is a phenomenon that happens very frequently in South Sudan when there is a crisis predominantly driven by violence.

People flee towns and go in—what they say into the bush, meaning that they're no longer visible and they're surviving based on what supplies they brought or whatever humanitarian assistance can be provided.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. But these are the ones that we have not been able to reach. Do we know where they are or—

Mr. GAST. We have a good sense of where they are and that's primarily because the U.N. agencies as well as the NGOs have been able to go out and do assessments. The challenge, of course, is getting humanitarian supplies that are already within country but into the areas where the IDPs are.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. And the final question I have is was talked about. You know, Vice President Machar really is—kind of oversees the rebel forces or those fighting the government. Are those—all the people that are fighting are they really responsive to the Vice President or are there other interests going on?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. There were—there are a large number, a variety of militias and rebel groups who have formed. We've heard about the white militia—the White Army. They're under the guidance of a prophet.

It is not clear that Riek Machar has command and control over all of the militias who are supporting—who are supporting his efforts.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I yield back my time.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Lowenthal.

We'll go now to Mr. Yoho.

Mr. YOHO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate you two being here and I hope you can shed some light on what we can do different or what needs to be done different in Sudan and South Sudan.

You know, looking back over the history since 1956 when they got their independence this war has been going on or the conflict has been going on. What do you see the main reason for the cause of the conflict between the two entities, south and north Sudan? Is it different in religion? Philosophical beliefs?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. The initial fighting between the conflict in Sudan that led to the creation of South Sudan was a very, very long-term conflict that had a basis in religion, in ethnic prejudice between the Arab north and the African south, and in a result of there not being political inclusion.

Mr. YOHO. Okay. And that's what I see over and over and over again. That's like the movie "Groundhog Day."

You know, we wake up to the same thing and, you know, I've got here in a report right in front of me that we spend \$2 billion annually in recent years between the north and the south—\$2 billion of the American taxpayers' money and we've been doing this for year after year after year.

Yet I'm reading an article here about China, and China has become South Sudan's largest trading partner, the single biggest trading partner, having overtaken the United States over the past decade but professes to remain neutral and not interfering in African states in their internal politics.

Of all the oil that's produced in South Sudan, who purchases most of that? What nation purchases that?

Mr. GAST. So there are two consortia that have concessions with the Government of South Sudan—one principally Chinese, the other one Malaysians. But there are Chinese—there's Chinese ownership on both.

And so if one were to look at, you know, the revenues—where they go to—roughly 45 percent of the revenue goes to the Government of South Sudan. Then another 40 percent goes to the consortia and then another—

Mr. YOHO. Let me rephrase that. Who benefits for—I don't want to say benefit—who uses the majority of that oil? What country? Where does that go to?

Mr. GAST. So it would be going—it would be going eastward.

Mr. YOHO. Right. China is what I have—80 percent of that.

Mr. GAST. Yes. Yes.

Mr. YOHO. How much foreign aid does China put into that country?

Mr. GAST. I wouldn't call it foreign aid but they have provided—they have provided buildings—

Mr. YOHO. Investment.

Mr. GAST. Investment. Some investment and some—

Mr. YOHO. And your answer on the money that goes to USAID, you know, no offense but it was kind of a gobbledy-gook answer because it wasn't going—there was no accountability is what I saw, you know.

And, again, we're putting billions of dollars—you said 60 percent of the money that we send over there kind of gets filtered through

the end through these different agencies and what I've seen in my short time here of a year is there's no accountability.

I think we need to focus on aid—or trade, not aid. I think China is ahead of us in here and it's reflected in that they're the largest trading partner.

If we become trading partners with a country like Sudan, instead of forcing Western ideals on a country that does not want those and it's been proven over and over again, and if we can build economic base in trade they'll come our way and in the meantime China knows this and they're kicking our rear end and our competitiveness is getting killed.

Mr. GAST. You make some very good points, Congressman.

Mr. YOHO. Thank you.

Mr. GAST. Let me just add to that. What I mentioned was the amount of humanitarian assistance that we're delivering. I didn't mention the development assistance which amounts to about \$300 million a year.

Now, you're talking about trade. Unfortunately, there's very limited capacity within the country for trade—

Mr. YOHO. I agree.

Mr. GAST [continuing]. To include the development of businesses, infrastructure, government systems and that's what we're trying to do is build that foundation so that businesses can develop and that South Sudan can take advantage—

Mr. YOHO. So instead of going through the U.N. and letting that money go through there why don't we use American companies and invest in infrastructure and things that we can trade and start from the ground floor up instead of filtering it through the U.N. where it never gets to seem, like, where it needs to go?

I mean, I just read in here that 10 percent of one of the food drops that went over there got hijacked and it was enough to feed 180,000 people. And, you know, we keep doing those things.

China is putting in infrastructure, trading with them and they become a reliable partner, and you guys, between the two of you, you've got 50-some years of foreign aid experience.

Help us redirect policy to where we get the bang for our buck, and it's not about the money. It's about results. And if we have good economic development over there the people of Sudan will grow their economy and they'll settle a lot of their own problems.

I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you.

We go now to Dr. Ami Bera of California.

Mr. BERA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses.

You know, before I ask my first question, just in December we followed pretty closely the evacuation or the initial attempt at evacuation of Americans from the conflict zone in Bor and then, ultimately, getting them out.

So Ambassador, are the Americans that are in South Sudan being evacuated or, you know, or how is that going?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Since the conflict started we've evacuated more than 300—no, more than 400 American citizens. We have also evacuated other citizens who've expressed a desire on a space available basis.

We're tracking an additional 300 or so American citizens who still may be there who have not asked for assistance and we are urging in no uncertain terms that American citizens consider—in our travel advisory that they consider leaving South Sudan because our ability to continue to evacuate is limited.

As you know, our Embassy is down to minimal staffing and we are no longer providing the charter flights that we were providing.

There are still commercial flights, as I mentioned earlier, that are available for those American citizens to depart and we're encouraging them to take those commercial flights.

Mr. BERA. And we do have adequate contingency plans should things deteriorate rapidly?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Absolutely. We're watching this situation almost on an hourly basis and, as I mentioned earlier, we come together several times a day to do an assessment of the security situation in Juba.

But, again, I want to stress how important it is for us without taking the security of our people for granted for us to keep our flag flying in Juba.

Mr. BERA. Sure. And we have taken steps to protect our diplomats and Embassy personnel in Juba?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Currently, we have about 45 East Africa Response Force military troops in South Sudan protecting our Embassy facility.

Mr. BERA. Great. Thank you.

Now, shifting to the conflict, just so I can better understand it, would you characterize this as a religious-based conflict, Muslim versus Christian, or would you characterize it more as an inter-tribal conflict?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. This is inter-tribal and it's a clash of personalities.

Mr. BERA. Okay.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. It is a result of political ambitions and a combination of lack of political space in a country where the institutions are not well established to deal with those kinds of conflicts.

It's a new country and so we're hoping that if—when the cessation of hostilities stop that we can get the parties around the table to work out what are currently their political issues.

Mr. BERA. And if I recall, some of the early media reports and so forth as they were characterizing the conflict has there been prevalent use of conscripted child soldiers in this conflict by the rebels?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I think that is something we're watching and we're very concerned about. We are hearing about youth militias. Individuals are being armed in communities.

It would not be surprising to hear that some of these are individuals who are underage and that is something that is a real problem and a real concern for us.

Mr. BERA. Okay. Shifting to Mr. Gast, clearly, our focus right now is de-escalating and finding resolution of the current conflict. But, you know, if we were to step back and look at, you know, the 3 years of South Sudan's independence and some of the investments that we've made—and you touched on the development as-

sistance—how would you assess that and what are some of the successes we've had as well as some of the challenges we've had?

Mr. GAST. The overwhelming challenge is lack of capacity and that includes human capacity. Because of the three decades of war with the north, people weren't educated and those who were educated left. And so it means starting from scratch and building a country.

So there have been some accomplishments and, you know, over a 2½-year period of time and even some of the work that we had done pre-independence.

But building institutions of economic governance. There is a functioning central bank. It has its own currency. It's managing the foreign exchange fairly well albeit with assistance from the international community.

There's a ministry of finance that is managing a budget and trying to include principles of transparency so that one can see how the money is spent and track not only at the national level but moving down to the state level and even to the county level.

So there are those systems that are being built. We do see some significant development gains. For example, enrollment in schools has more than quadrupled over the past—over the past 5, 6, 7 years.

So that's a major accomplishment. There's more to be done. We're not satisfied with the percentage of those who are registered in schools who are girls. It's currently 39 percent and we want to push that effort as well.

But education is a major thrust because you can't have institutions without educated persons.

Mr. BERA. Right. Thank you. I yield back.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Meadows is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEADOWS. Thank you, Madam Chairman. Thank you both for your testimony.

I wanted to follow up on one area that has been addressed. But as we look at some of what has happened over the last few months, what would you say is the number one thing that we could do either from a policy standpoint or from a legislative standpoint to provide a more stable environment so that we don't have a repeat of this? And either one of you who would like to comment on that I'd love to hear your position.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Sorry. I think we have to stay engaged with South Sudan. This is—I think Congressman Royce referred to this as really depressing and it is depressing for all of us.

But we have to sustain our engagement with them to get them through this process. It's a very young country. It's only 3 years old and a lot of the institutions that need to be developed to help them address these kinds of fissures in their society are not there yet.

And so, again, I just think it's important that we remain engaged. We have to make certain in no uncertain terms to the warring parties that we do not support their efforts and that those who are involved in activities that are interfering with peace, who are committing atrocities and human rights violations will be held accountable and we should certainly support the efforts of those in the region who are trying to bring about peace as well as support this country as it moves forward.

Mr. MEADOWS. Being sensitive to the diplomatic component of this, how do you feel Congress, or Members of Congress, can express in more than words the need for these warring factions that—you know, you say it won't be tolerated. There's a lot of things that we say here in Washington, DC, that we'll never tolerate that we do.

And I guess what I'm saying is how do we go beyond that to put some meat behind the words that may come from us, not necessarily from you? Where could we address that? Is that an economic component or an aid component?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I think it's a number of components but I would appreciate the opportunity for consultations with you and other members of the committee on how we might address some of these issues of accountability as we move forward.

Mr. MEADOWS. All right. Mr. Gast?

Mr. GAST. Let me just add a few more things. Let's say that the immediate hostilities are addressed. I think at that point we'll have—the international community will have some leverage on the reforms taking place in South Sudan.

As we mentioned earlier, one is moving forward with the constitutional process and included in that could be national reconciliation and international dialogue and we do know that 2015 elections are coming up for national level and state level positions. And so that is an important part, the national dialogue and leading to the elections.

With regard to your comment about or your request for assistance from Congress, I think what we would like to do because we're in a pause right now—we don't know how the situation will work out—but it will certainly affect our thinking—our strategic thinking on how we deliver development assistance and that's a dialogue that we would like to have with you and others on the committee.

Mr. MEADOWS. I've had a couple of conversations with the U.N. Ambassador and her particular assessment of the situation. Without being too illuminating, would you say that your assessment and her assessment would be one and the same or where would they be different if indeed they are different?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I'm not sure what her assessment—

Mr. MEADOWS. You're not sure what her—

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I'm not sure what her assessment was.

Mr. MEADOWS. Well, she was fairly—before a lot of this happened there was some action that was going to be taken here in the House. She made a plea for that action to not happen and it was fairly optimistic that progress was being made.

Do you—would you characterize it as progress being made or not?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I'm sure at the point that she spoke to you we may have been making progress and, certainly, having gone through what we've gone through over the past 2 weeks in dealing with the situation on the ground there we are certainly reassessing that.

I think we're moving forward toward a cessation of hostilities so maybe that's a bit of progress right now. But I think it remains to

be seen how we move forward on the talks and the negotiation on the constitutional efforts and dialogue in the future.

Mr. MEADOWS. Thank you both for your heart and your testimony, and I yield back, Madam Chairman.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Meadows.

Mr. Kennedy is recognized.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you, Madam Chair.

To the witnesses, thank you very much for your time, for your persistence, your patience this morning and, most importantly, for your years of service to our country.

I also want to thank the State Department and some of your colleagues there that were instrumental in helping to get, working with a couple folks in my office, some constituents from Massachusetts out of the region in the time of crisis. And so many, many thanks from some grateful friends.

I guess I'd like to start with you, Madam Ambassador, if I can and both of you, really, open—I'd like your thoughts on both of these issues.

You affirmed in your testimony that there's not going to be a military solution to this crisis—that it's got to be diplomatic—and I just wanted to try to pin that down in perhaps a little bit more long-term approach.

Oil counts for nearly 100 percent of all of the state revenues in South Sudan but we haven't seen yet the South Sudanese Government invest those funds in meaningful ways in education, agriculture, infrastructure, as some of my colleagues touched on.

Nearly half of the country's population is children and two-thirds of the South Sudanese population is under the age of 24. So in terms of population and population growth, particularly, South Sudan is the third fastest growing country in the world.

As natural resources and the expanding human capital of South Sudan could undoubtedly allow for a different path forward, how can the international community, your agencies—State Department, this committee—help to take a longer-term view to ensure that with the demographic changes we're not going to be here 10 years from now seeing the exact same or similar levels of instability? Why don't we start with that?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Let me start and then I'll turn to Earl.

The statistics that you quote we're very conscious of and very aware of and we know that we have to work with this government to turn those statistics around because otherwise we will be here 10 years from now with the same problems.

So in terms of our own aid strategy, these are some of the things that we're looking at, and I'll turn to Earl.

Mr. GAST. So you're right. I mean, are they making the investments in their own population—talking about the government—and for the '13 and '14 budget that the government submitted there was a significant line item one investment in people, an investment in infrastructure, recognizing that the donor community would still absorb most of the burden.

And I think what we have seen because of the oil shocks that won't happen this year. They do have, and I would say that it's a world class standard petroleum revenue management bill that was

about to be signed by the President, which conforms with EITI standards.

And in that bill, absolutely focusing on transparency, transparency in terms of the revenue received by government as well as the revenue paid by the companies to the government, there was—and the Norwegians helped develop this—an investment fund where they would draw down on resources in a transparent way to invest in the country.

I think because of this conflict and also because we're seeing a significant reduction in oil production because of the conflict I can say that it's probably fair to say that that's not going to happen in the near term.

We do have a focus on youth and part of it is through education programs, not just at the primary level but also the secondary level. But we have seen a lot of idle youth who have very few employment opportunities and also are very much one to generally get involved in conflicts.

So that's part of our peace dialogue on reconciliation programs is looking at livelihoods and getting young people involved in things that are income producing rather than destructive for the nation.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you, and I'd love to just continue the conversation about that longer-term horizon with you after the hearing.

And then, Madam Ambassador, very briefly following up on one of my colleagues from—in the Senate, Senator Markey, last week I think asked you a bit about U.S. arms exports and the potential to look at those policies a little bit more closely.

You said that was kind of on the horizon or on the radar screen. Any more you can—care to elaborate on that at this point?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to clarify on that. We have not provided any lethal support to South Sudan at all. We have provided them with some communications equipment.

We've provided them with other non-lethal equipment and we have been providing them with training to help them become a more professional military. But we have not provided them any lethal weapons. I think all of the weaponry that they have in their possession they have purchased.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you. Thank you to both—you both and I yield back negative 15 seconds.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Kennedy. I'll take your 15. The chair recognizes herself now.

I, like all of the members of our committee, am gravely concerned with the ongoing crisis that we see unfolding in South Sudan, and when I was the committee's ranking member I had the honor of co-chairing a fact-finding mission to Sudan with then House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer which included a site visit to an internally displaced persons camp in Darfur and a meeting with Salva Kiir, the President of Southern Sudan.

There we saw firsthand the dire conditions that this horrific conflict has brought to the people of this region, and as we watched the long-awaited independence ceremony following the 2011 referendum, we were all hopeful that South Sudan could achieve a stable and durable democracy.

But it was clear that South Sudan's referendum and independence would not mark the end of this crisis but that harder work still remained ahead.

Education, good infrastructure—those are the keys toward building a successful South Sudan. But it will require, as we know, a lot of time and resources to change conditions in the country that is plagued by deep-rooted tribal tensions, by poverty, and by underdevelopment.

South Sudan has one of the most fertile soils in Africa yet only a small percentage of that soil is being cultivated.

It has the potential to be the food basket for Africa, which would help it in becoming self-sufficient and becoming prosperous, and as the highest donor country we have put immense political capital and U.S. resources into South Sudan.

So I ask you what efforts is USAID making to improve literacy, to improve transportation, to improve its infrastructure programs? And I will continue. Also, a prolonged war in South Sudan would lead to massive flows of refugees.

This could destabilize the entire region. And just yesterday we saw this sad report. Two hundred civilians or more, many of them women and children, died as a result of trying to flee across a river on a raft and this tragedy underscores the grim reality that the Sudanese people are facing daily. And we're all so wary of foreign governments investing in South Sudan's oil industry.

South Sudan is rich in natural resources, as we've discussed, so China and other countries who have invested there may view this conflict as an opportunity to expand their influence.

Given our vested interest in South Sudan, losing influence in this region would be a severe blow to our U.S. national security interest. And so I ask if the situation with the security deteriorates how can we secure our interest in South Sudan?

Despite the great challenges that are facing South Sudan, I think that we all remain hopeful that the world's youngest country will unite, will move forward toward building a stable and prosperous future for its people.

South Sudan has great potential to become a true success story in the continent that can be a model for other developing countries to emulate and we hope and we pray and we will work so that this conflict will be resolved in a prompt and peaceful manner.

And so I ask about USAID and the efforts that we're making on literacy, transportation and infrastructure in South Sudan and what are we doing to secure our interests in South Sudan with all of these competing countries being invested there. Thank you.

Mr. GAST. Thank you, Congresswoman, for your questions.

You're absolutely right. Conflict and war more than anything affect development and so South Sudan and Sudan had a conflict that lasted nearly 30 years, and now we see more conflict in South Sudan. And so we hope that that doesn't rob the development results that we've achieved over the past few years.

We have made a concerted effort to focus on education and, as I mentioned earlier, we're very pleased with enrollment rates more than quadrupled over the last 6, 7 years. But we're still not satisfied with the number of children or percentage of children who should be in school who are actually in school.

That is roughly 50 percent. And so now we're making a concerted effort to focus on those areas and not—surprisingly, those areas where there are lowest enrollment rates are those that are vulnerable to conflict.

And so we have a new program that's part of the Room to Learn agenda of UNICEF and others that really looks at providing security to those students and families where students are going to school and that, of course, affects girls' enrollment too. So we hope that will have a very good effect.

You mentioned transportation. We actually, with the support of Congress, spent \$200 million on rebuilding a highway from Juba to Nimule which is the border of Uganda, which is absolutely critical to the economy of South Sudan. More roads like that are needed.

We feel that our comparative advantage is supporting feeder roads that support agriculture and we're doing that—more than 1,000 kilometers of feeder roads.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, and I apologize, Madam Ambassador, but I've run out of time. Thank you very much.

Thank you, and I know you have more to say but let me turn to the committee's ranking member, Mr. Engel, who's just come back from a grueling trip to Israel and we thank him for his perseverance and strength in being here today.

I know those trips are long and hard. Thank you, Eliot.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank both of you for your good work and your hard work.

Let me start with you, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield. Obviously, we're a month into this crisis. Neither side is budging. The fighting is continuing.

What more are we doing—the administration doing to get the two sides serious about negotiating a cease fire? Are we looking at targeted sanctions or are any of our partners—U.K., any of the other countries—putting additional concrete pressure on President Kiir and former Vice President Machar?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Thank you, sir, for that question.

We are putting a tremendous amount of effort into pushing the two sides to the negotiating table once there is a cessation of hostilities.

Ambassador Booth has been out—our special envoy has been out there since the 22nd of December and he has been relentless in his efforts coordinating, very closely with the negotiators as well as the other special envoys.

We are exploring possible options for pressuring those individuals who have been spoilers to the peace process—those individuals who have committed atrocities and who are committing human rights violations.

We're looking at what pressures we can put on those individuals in the future and we are letting them know that we are exploring those possibilities so that they know that there will be consequences to what they are doing.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you.

Mr. Gast, let me ask you. The ordered evacuation of USG personnel and contractors from South Sudan, obviously, affects our ability to conduct critical aid programs. That's both in the areas af-

affected by the crisis, the worst areas, and in areas that have remained stable.

How has this evacuation affected our ability to conduct these aid programs?

Mr. GAST. It's actually affected our ability on the development side. We do have—as the assistant secretary mentioned, we do track all Americans and we do have about 25, 26 Americans who are working with NGO partners and we are seeing actually a number of expats—significant number of expats returning to provide humanitarian assistance.

We do have a few development programs that are continuing but, as I mentioned earlier, with the conflict we're taking a pause to assess where our priorities might change moving forward.

Mr. ENGEL. The whole thing—I know my colleagues have mentioned this—is such a tragedy because we had and still do, I mean, high hopes for this country. So let me just say—ask either one of you—we are still, obviously, the largest donor to South Sudan.

What should we be doing differently moving forward to help make South Sudan a more successful state, and given the widespread abuses that have taken place on the part of the SPLA is it even possible to continue providing that force with U.S. assistance?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. First, to your question what can we do differently, and I think what we need to do is focus intense attention on institution building so that the government is able to sustain itself when there are these kinds of political frictions that take place that allows a government to continue to operate even when the political players are not talking to each other, and those institutional—that institutional stability doesn't exist now.

It's only been a country for 3 years. But I think our efforts have to be intensified on that front. And yes, we have to continue to work with the SPLA. We have to continue to work with them to professionalize them. They are a huge group.

I think I've seen numbers as high as 120,000. Many of them were extraordinary fighters. They were militia. They were never trained military and so they need to be professionalized—and if we don't do it I don't think anybody else will—so that we can ensure that in the future when this kind of thing happened we have a professional military and not militias who have been pulled together under a so-called army.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you.

Mr. GAST, anything under the wire?

Mr. GAST. Sure. I would add that we need to support other voices and redouble our efforts in supporting civil society, media and also new political parties that are emerging.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. Thank you, both. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Ranking Member Engel.

And now we turn to Mr. Vargas for his 5 minutes.

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I appreciate it, and again, thank you for this hearing.

What a tremendously sad situation we're in. I think that both South Africa and Sudan have been the two African nations that have received the most attention by Americans. I know that my

children certainly know about Sudan and South Sudan because of Darfur, the genocide there and all the problems that these—that this region and this country, now these two countries, have had, and it seems that our efforts have sometimes not gone very far in the sense of actual outcomes.

I know you hear some frustration here today and I think we're starting to hear it more and more in our districts that we've put so much time, attention and money into this situation in this country, in these two countries, and, you know, the outcomes seem to be terrible—seem to revert back to old tribal fights, personalities.

I'm glad you did mention the upcoming election because it seems to me that a lot of it was based on that. One person wanted to stay in power. The other person wanted to challenge him. Didn't seem like it was going to work so one person decides to leave, you know, starts a fight.

All of a sudden, you know, it breaks down under ethnic old fights. I mean, what do we do? I mean, the American people are starting to get, I think, really weary of this. Even though, again, I think we're the most generous people in the world.

Always when you see a massacre we're the first people who want to help. But, man, this is going on forever in this particular region. What can we do?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We feel the frustration as well because so much has been invested in South Sudan, not just 3 years ago when the country became independent but for many, many years prior to independence, and you described it as sad and, as I mentioned, Congressman Royce said it was depressing and we all feel that.

But we think we have to stay engaged and I think the American people would want us to stay engaged, that we have to continue to push this country forward, to nudge them in the right direction.

Ultimately, the decision is theirs. We didn't cause this war. They caused the war. They're responsible for what has happened. But at the same time, we have to keep working for those voiceless people—the men, women and children who are victims of this war.

Mr. VARGAS. And I agree and I apologize for interrupting you, and I think the American people, certainly, people in my district feel the same way.

Whenever they see massacres, whenever they see, you know, people drowning they want to help. I mean, that's our natural, I think, as Americans inclination. But at the same time, you have to have some outcomes that are positive.

I mean, and here we—you know, we thought we were going to have a very positive outcome. I mean, you had all these real problems because, I mean, let's be factual about this. I mean, Sudan's an interesting country, part of Egypt for a while, more Arab north, African south—Muslim north, Christian south.

All of a sudden we think we get, you know, some of those things straightened out and all of a sudden there's these fights that break out and we're saying well, wait a minute—now it's down to the tribal level and they're fighting. I mean, what do we do? I mean, there's real frustration here.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes.

Mr. GAST. Congressman, you ask what are we getting with our assistance. We're keeping people alive, which is greatly important, and also we're providing opportunities to people and we're seeing that through education. More kids are going to school than ever before.

We're seeing really positive outcomes in health. People are getting vaccinated. They're able to go to school. We're also, through our assistance, creating employment opportunities.

Now, they're small opportunities but they're very important opportunities to the people that they affect and that is getting them involved in farming and increasing their yields and increasing what money that they take home.

Mr. VARGAS. Last question and then I'll yield back.

I'm glad you brought it up—the issue of children and children soldiers. Obviously, it's been a horrific issue in this area. What are we doing to make sure that that doesn't happen?

So many of the people in this country are young. What are we doing to assure that these poor kids are not being dragged in as soldiers?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Part of the problem is the lack of opportunity and education for children. So trying to reach those children to provide them with educational opportunities is, as Mr. Gast said, are part of what we're doing.

But we're also pressuring the governments in this country as well as around the region not to use child soldiers and making sure that they understand that there are consequences should they use child soldiers.

There are children who are being armed, I believe, in this current conflict and this is something that has us quite worried.

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. MEEKS is recognized.

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Madam Chair.

You know, this is a sad situation. I, first, want to thank you for your testimony and but taking everything into context, all of the investments, the hopes that we had of establishing a good new nation and, quite frankly, you know, I still have the faith and confidence over the long haul we can't give up.

We've got to get it done. It is significant. Not just for us and the United States—it's significant for the region. It's significant for the continent of Africa. It's significant for, I believe, the entire area.

And any time that you have a new nation of the sorts of South Sudan there's various people that have interests, I think, and I know that it's oftentimes we want to do it as the United States and we should lead.

My question is, though, part of that leadership, I think, should also be how are we helping coordinate and strengthening because I think that we do more or we're more successful when we do certain things in a multilateral way as opposed to a bilateral way because other countries have interests also.

And we sit down and we talk to them and we work collectively in a multilateral way to try to get a result and I would imagine that there are other governments that have leverage also, not just us but have leverage also to the South Sudanese Government.

So what are we doing or how are we partnering with others so that it's not just the United States? I hear education and roads where we're talking about that. Are we leveraging and partnering with others so that it's our dollars and whatever dollars that others are also putting in so that we are still creating these institutions and they can feel if there's pressure? Pressure not just from us. Pressure from others also in a multilateral way to try to start moving this in the right direction and to try to get them to understand even when they get to the point of trying to do a constitution that's going to be difficult and everybody has to be involved therein.

So talk to me about our leadership and trying to work together in a multilateral way.

MS. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. We have been working very, very closely first and foremost with the regional players, with IGAD. They are leading the process of trying to get the parties to the negotiating table.

We have been very—we've been backing that effort with Ambassador Booth and others in the field. But they're taking the lead. We're not taking the lead and they're putting the pressure on both sides along with our pressure.

We are also working closely with other special envoys who are out there. The Chinese are there with their special envoy. The U.K. has an envoy.

EU has an envoy and we are coordinating closely with them, putting pressure on—using leverage that we all have to put pressure on the various parties. And here from the Washington side we've been closely coordinating and working with capitals, one, to get, you know, the Vatican, for example, and with the U.K. foreign minister and the French foreign minister to get them to add their voices to the parties who are involved in the fighting.

So there are a lot of different pressure points we're using but we're coordinating closely. We don't see us as being the solution to this problem. We see working together with others and we've also gone to the U.N. to get support in the Security Council.

We're working with troop-contributing countries. So, again, we're just one of the players, not the only one.

MR. GAST. Those countries that are most active on the political side also happen to be the ones that are most active on the development side and so there is a very active group of countries, representatives in Juba as well as headquarters that interact on a daily basis—the Norwegians, the EU, the Brits, the World Bank, the IMF, the African Development Bank.

I'm leaving others out. But there is a very strong core group and it's been very important because we together have come up with policies that we're going to push on that are critical to transparency and establishing strong institutions.

And so when we—what we have found is when we work together we're able to work more effectively with the Government and the people of South Sudan.

MR. MEEKS. Unfortunately, I'm out of time.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Meeks.

Proud to recognize Mr. Connolly of Virginia, who is not retiring.

MR. CONNOLLY. Sorry to disappoint some of my friends on the other side of the aisle. I'm here.

Thank you, Madam Chairman. Madam Ambassador—and welcome to you both—in the case of some skeptics doesn't this current violence and instability suggest or call into question the logic of creating this as a nation state to begin with?

I mean, critics—skeptics might look at this and go well, part of it's predicated on the lack of logic of South Sudan as a nation state to begin with. How would you address that?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I think that would disappoint a lot of people who have spent most of their lives in South Sudan fighting for their freedom in a country where the rights of people of African descent and those who are Christian were ignored and denied for many, many years.

That was the genesis of the battle that the South Sudanese fought in Sudan. We supported that battle for 50 years. There are many Americans who have been part of that battle and there are now many Americans of Sudanese descent who have sacrificed and lost their families to support the right of South Sudan to exist as a country. And we're all disappointed. We're all disappointed at the current failure.

Mr. CONNOLLY. But, Madam Ambassador, excuse me.

My question wasn't about blood—you know, the valor or nobility of the cause. It was the logic of the cause, though.

Does this in retrospect cause some in the international community to question the logic of South Sudan as a nation state despite our best efforts, despite all of the noble blood shed? Nonetheless, one wonders what have we done here. Is that a fair question, from your point of view?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Probably not a fair question. I think that no one is questioning the logic of South Sudan. If we question the logic of South Sudan, we'll have to question the logic of almost every African country where there are artificial borders that have crossed lines that they should not cross.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Fair point.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. So I don't think we question the logic. We still support the right of this small nation to exist.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Okay. You also in response, I think, to Mr. Bera's question you came down on the side of this is more tribal than anything else. I think I heard your answer correctly.

But what about the political overlay which certainly there's a lot of bleeding between the two but between, say, the President and his former Vice President, the latter making certain political charges against the President and already on an authoritarian streak and so forth?

Isn't there that political overlay that maybe has helped spark this violence?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. It actually started the violence—

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD [continuing]. And it is becoming more ethnic and tribal but it didn't start that way.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Gotcha.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. There's no religious component to it. It's political ambitions and people are dividing along tribal lines.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And a final question. The U.N. added some peacekeeping troops for South Sudan last month. Two questions,

real quickly—what's been the history of peacekeeping operations, from the U.S. point of view, in Africa? Is there reason to be a little skeptical or are we fairly happy with results?

And, secondly, what about our own responsibilities? We are in arrears in our payments to peacekeeping missions. So here we are putting and supporting another burden on them but we're not always willing to step up to the plate and fully fund our fair share of the PKO.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes. That question came up earlier on us not funding our share. But we still support the use of peacekeeping operations on the continent of Africa.

Some are more successful than others but the important role that they play I think there's no question about and I have to say that we are tremendously appreciative of the countries who are troop-contributing countries. Ghana just added another 850 troops.

They are one of the countries where their troops aren't being paid. The Bangladeshis, the Nepalese have added additional troops. Tanzania has also added additional troops. So we appreciate that and we think they do have a positive role to play, particularly in this situation now.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you. Madam Chairman, obviously, if I had more time I'd ask Mr. Gast a string of questions about infrastructure and what we're doing in terms of investment and what we hope the outcome is going to be in 10 years.

But, of course, I don't have that time. I won't be able to ask those questions but maybe we'll have some—

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. He will be around so that you can—

Mr. CONNOLLY. He'll be around?

Mr. GAST. I'll be around for questions on the record.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. And on behalf of our Chairman Royce, I would like to thank both of our witnesses for joining us today. As many members have noted, this committee has long been involved in Sudan policy and we'd like to work with the administration to give South Sudan a chance of lasting peace.

Thank you, and this meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:11 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X



MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

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

Edward R. Royce (R-CA), Chairman

January 15, 2014

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 in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at <http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov>):

DATE: Wednesday, January 15, 2014

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

SUBJECT: South Sudan's Broken Promise?

WITNESSES: The Honorable Linda Thomas-Greenfield
Assistant Secretary
Bureau of African Affairs
U.S. Department of State

The Honorable Earl W. Gast
Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Africa
U.S. 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 FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day Wednesday Date 01/15/14 Room 2172

Starting Time 10:00 A.M. Ending Time 12:11 P.M.

Recesses: 0 (____ to ____)(____ to ____)(____ to ____)(____ to ____)(____ to ____)(____ to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Rep. Edward R. Royce, Chairman
Rep. Heana Ros-Lehtinen

Check all of the following that apply:

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

TITLE OF HEARING:

South Sudan's Broken Promise?

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

See Attendance Sheet.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

None.

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.)*

SFR - Royce
SFR - Meeks

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____

or
TIME ADJOURNED 12:11 P.M.

Jean Marter, Director of Committee Operations

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Full Committee Hearing

<i>Present</i>	<i>Member</i>
X	Edward R. Royce, CA
X	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
X	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL
X	Dana Rohrabacher, CA
X	Steve Chabot, OH
	Joe Wilson, SC
	Michael T. McCaul, TX
	Tod Poc, TX
X	Matt Salmon, AZ
	Tom Marino, PA
	Jeff Duncan, SC
X	Adam Kinzinger, IL
	Mo Brooks, AL
X	Tom Cotton, AR
X	Paul Cook, CA
	George Holding, NC
X	Randy K. Weber, Sr., TX
	Scott Perry, PA
	Steve Stockman, TX
X	Ron DeSantis, FL
X	Trey Radcl, FL
X	Doug Collins, GA
X	Mark Meadows, NC
X	Ted S. Yoho, FL
X	Luke Messer, IN

<i>Present</i>	<i>Member</i>
X	Eliot L. Engel, NY
	Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, AS
	Brad Sherman, CA
X	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
X	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
	Brian Higgins, NY
X	Karen Bass, CA
	William Keating, MA
X	David Cicilline, RI
	Alan Grayson, FL
X	Juan Vargas, CA
	Bradley S. Schneider, IL
X	Joseph P. Kennedy III, MA
X	Ami Bera, CA
X	Alan S. Lowenthal, CA
	Grace Meng, NY
	Lois Frankel, FL
	Tulsi Gabbard, HI
X	Joaquin Castro, TX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE EDWARD R. ROYCE, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND CHAIRMAN,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS



Statement by John Prendergast, Co-Founder of Enough Project

House Committee on Foreign Affairs
South Sudan's Broken Promise?
January 15, 2014

Thank you, Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel, for the opportunity to submit testimony for the record at this critical moment in South Sudan's young life as a nation. This Committee has a history of strong commitment to the people of South Sudan and Sudan, and that continuing spotlight provided by the Committee is extremely helpful in the search for solutions at this fraught moment.

My statement focuses on the way forward for South Sudan. The U.S. government has already shown a welcome level of attention and engagement on this issue. Still, there is always much more that can and should be done to help stop the fighting, secure a durable peace, protect civilians, hold perpetrators accountable, and start to heal this new country in its rocky process of state formation.

Before I lay out my proposals, I want to reveal a controlling bias in my testimony. I believe that the U.S. and broader international community can finally learn the lessons from past failed peace efforts, and that a new process can evolve in Addis Ababa that takes into account the structural and substantive deficits of previous initiatives. And I believe that the U.S. can play a crucial role in helping to construct a more effective process, and then help build the international leverage necessary to see it through to successful completion.

What needs to happen to forge a negotiated political solution?

The "good" news is that we already know what doesn't work. We have seen too many peace conferences that kept civil society, religious leaders, grassroots activists and women out of the room. Our collective experience has shown that partial and non-inclusive peace agreements that are negotiated among only those with the biggest guns don't lead to lasting peace. Additionally, superficial power-sharing agreements don't work if they do not include professional, transparent and well-funded efforts at army reform and the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants back into society. South Sudan's struggle to establish its own national reconciliation and dialogue process offers a vivid example of the need to address these issues within the text of binding peace agreements too. Otherwise, DDR, SSR and TRCs just become buzzword acronyms without any impact.

The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement stopped the fighting between Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in the South. In terms of providing a stoppage of the primary North-South war, it was successful. But the internal wars within North and South were left unaddressed. Deadly conflict has re-erupted in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile, with Darfur last year having one of the highest rates of newly displaced people in the world. Similarly, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and what followed did not tackle the deep fissures within South Sudan itself, particularly within the ruling party and the army, but also between local communities who had borne the brunt of the war.

What is needed to address the crisis in South Sudan is a broad expansion beyond the approach taken by those who negotiated the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and those that are trying to broker isolated deals in Darfur, the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile, and Eastern Sudan. In South Sudan, of course a deal between the combatant forces for a cessation of hostilities is a first order priority, but what follows needs to be much more inclusive, transparent, and multi-layered than any of the processes that have come before if sustainable peace is to have a chance in South Sudan. This requires a broadening of both substance and structure.

In terms of structuring talks for a lasting political solution, the South Sudan peace process will have to become much more inclusive. Women and youth, who have been notably absent from the Addis process, must be welcomed. The release of the eleven senior level ruling party officials being detained by their government, representing significant political constituencies, and their subsequent involvement in Addis will be essential for the credibility of these talks. Church leaders who have played a major role in previous communal reconciliation initiatives need to be part of the process as well. Furthermore, it will be necessary over time to find a way to engage potential spoilers, whether armed groups or disaffected constituencies from different regions in South Sudan.

South Sudanese have already gone through an extensive consultative process around the New Deal Compact, which focused on both peacebuilding and state-building goals. Additionally, the National Democratic Institute conducted a nationwide survey on views about the constitution. Most recently, 1,200 people were surveyed by the South Sudanese NGO, the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization at the end of December 2013, after fighting started in Juba. Among other questions, they were asked their views on the road map for peace and stability in South Sudan. These efforts have already gathered valuable perspectives from those most affected by the violence: civilians and average citizens. Negotiators should take them into account.

What would a sustainable deal potentially look like?

A quick and dirty power-sharing deal is not the answer to South Sudan's problems. Simply redistributing power to combatant factions on the basis of the territory under their control would be a huge error. Similarly, essentializing South Sudanese political constituencies into their ethnic component parts would also be a mistake. A deal that overemphasizes sharing power between ethnic groups misses the root causes of this violence. Any interim arrangements or transitional government structure should seek to avoid these pitfalls. There will be great temptation to speed to a conclusion of the talks, which would leave major conflict drivers unaddressed.

A truly multi-layered approach would address the following priorities in different formats:

Broad, inclusive, national dialogue process: The regional IGAD mediation team needs to shepherd an inclusive process focused on a broad national dialogue process and governance reform. For too long, the ruling party's structures have languished due to infighting and neglect. Instead, patronage networks based on individual proximity to power, military might and wealth evolved. As a consequence, a political challenge which could have been resolved through dialogue mutated into armed conflict that has since engulfed the country. Only a truly inclusive national dialogue process will prevent that from happening again, one that addresses governance structures, ruling party cleavages, a legitimate constitution process, and security sector reform. All of this should happen BEFORE there are elections with a level playing field.

Otherwise, South Sudan will continue to suffer from their leaders' perception that taking up arms is the easiest or only way to gain power or leverage.

Accountability: Since South Sudan lacks a functioning judicial system, the specter of impunity or rushed military prosecutions is very real. Credibly holding perpetrators responsible for crimes committed in the past three weeks will require setting up independent mechanisms for investigation and prosecution. Otherwise a culture of impunity will prevail, preventing future reconciliation. The proposal for a mixed court, which would involve South Sudanese and international justice sector personnel should receive some discussion, as it has in other post-conflict settings.

Reconciliation: Church-led grassroots reconciliation and truth-telling efforts would help complement more formal judicial proceedings. Inter-communal cleavages have been once again inflamed over the last month. Long-term processes aimed at coexistence and cooperation will be critical to sustainable peace.

Army reform and DDR: One of the main unaddressed fault lines in South Sudan existed within the army, and that erupted at the first sign of stress in December 2013. As part of any peace implementation process, much greater effort and transparency must go into reforming the army and police force. Also, any deal will require a serious demobilization and reintegration program for ex-combatants, with real livelihood options for those leaving armed groups.

How can the U.S. help stabilize the country and support the peace process?

Expand the peace process: The U.S. can play a major role in helping to ensure that the current peace process unfolding in Addis does not repeat the mistakes of past mediation efforts in Sudan and South Sudan. This will require a team of diplomats led by our current Special Envoy but supplemented by issue and process experts who can help work all of the layers of peace-making: the immediate cessation of hostilities and its monitoring, the national dialogue and governance reform processes, the constitution process, the inter-communal reconciliation efforts, and the support for army reform and DDR. Their work should be backed by continuing high level engagement by key U.S. officials, including President Obama, National Security Adviser Rice, Secretary Kerry, and Ambassador Power, all of whom have already made important contributions to preventing further conflagration. Development assistance should support grassroots peace initiatives. Already, South Sudanese have established a decentralized think tank called Fresh Start South Sudan to discuss governance, peace building, social services and future prosperity. Others are engaged in campaigns that emphasize alternatives to violence, including "I Choose Peace" and "My Tribe Is South Sudan." These initiatives deserve greater attention and our logistical and financial support as well.

Congress can be helpful in ensuring that the resources are available for these diplomatic efforts, which for it to have a chance at success will have to be protracted and sustained.

Reinvent the Troika: The Troika (UK, Norway and the U.S.) played a crucial role in supporting the mediation process leading up to the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and its implementation. The Troika countries could play an even more important role in supporting the new peace effort in South Sudan if it expanded its membership by one: China. Bringing China into the tent would increase the Troika's influence on the process and the parties. Engaging India in this regard would also be potentially productive. A high-level White House effort should be undertaken with Beijing to find common ground on what our two countries can support

together in South Sudan (and Sudan as well), and then integrate those understandings into a revived Troika, or Quartet.

Congress can help by engaging Chinese officials as well in exploring ways the U.S. and China can work together for peace in the Sudans.

Collect and punish evidence of atrocities: The U.S. should begin collecting evidence of human rights crimes and instances where humanitarian aid workers are prevented from doing their work. The African Union has already expressed a willingness to impose targeted sanctions on any party implicated in "inciting people to violence, including along ethnic lines, continuing hostilities, undermining the envisaged inclusive dialogue, hindering humanitarian operations, undermining the protection mandate of UMISS and carry out acts of violence against civilians and unarmed combatants." The U.S. should follow suit, and work within the UN Security Council to begin consultations around passing a resolution establishing a targeted sanctions regime, as conceptualized by the African Union. Drawing on the Syrian example, they should also push actively for the creation of an Independent International Commission of Inquiry into crimes committed by all factions and combatants. While both the South Sudanese government and the UN peacekeeping mission have already begun these documentation efforts, an independent commission will allow findings to be depoliticized. Further, the U.S. should support the establishment of a mixed court, drawing on both South Sudanese and international law, to ensure fair trials and prosecutions.

Congress could help by asking for regular briefings by the administration on evidence of atrocities and how the U.S. is responding. If patterns of serious abuses are being found to be perpetrated by South Sudan government forces, this should lead to a reevaluation of our non-humanitarian aid programs.

Negotiate humanitarian access: The humanitarian situation in South Sudan is dire, and it has a direct impact on neighboring areas inside Sudan as well, particularly in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile regions. Negotiating an access framework, notwithstanding zones of control, is essential and must proceed along a parallel track, with potential U.S. leadership. It would be a mistake to connect humanitarian access negotiations to the broader political mediation. All South Sudanese deserve consistent and unimpeded humanitarian assistance, regardless of if they live in areas held by rebel or government forces. Refugees from Sudan living in camps along the border, especially in Yida and Maban, deserve special attention. Following the evacuation of international staff and the UN mission, these concentrations of civilians near the Sudan/South Sudan are particularly vulnerable. They are trapped between two active conflict zones, have nowhere to run, and their supplies are nearly exhausted.

Congress can raise the alarm bells regarding specific at-risk populations throughout South Sudan, as well as those in Yida camp, Maban camp and trapped across the border in war-torn Nuba and Blue Nile, and continue to ensure the funding is available for innovative relief interventions that will no doubt continue saving countless South Sudanese and Sudanese lives.



Statement for the Record

Submitted by the Honorable Gregory W. Meeks

Thank you Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel for calling this hearing today and bringing much needed international attention to an escalating humanitarian and security crisis in South Sudan. The United States is a long-time friend and supporter of the people of South Sudan, who suffered through a brutal civil war with Sudan for over two decades to gain independence and become the youngest country on the planet in 2011. What started as a political conflict and an executive abuse of power has escalated to a nation-wide violent civil war. An increasing number of armed militias are being drawn into the conflict. As we examine the current conflict in South Sudan, it is clear that a political solution is vital to stop the violence. As a first step, I urge President Kiir to release political detainees.