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INTRODUCTION:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

AMB. PASCUAL: Now, I am going to ask Andrew Natsios, the President's Special Envoy on Sudan, to address us. Andrew, as I said, has been deeply involved in issues for Sudan for a long, long time and will give us a perspective of what his mandate is and what the American strategy is to complement what the U.N. is doing.

Andrew, thanks.

MR. NATSIOS: Thank you very much, Carlos.

What I first want to say is that my mandate from the President and the Secretary of State is for all of Sudan, not just Darfur. It is for the East. There is unrest in the Nubian in the North over some water issues and certainly in the South where I have been involved for many years.

I do want to, though, just add a few comments about historical context. My first trip to Darfur was in 1991 during the first Darfur War, not the first in history but the first in the last 20-year cycle that we are going through. It started at the end of the Great Sahelian Drought of the mid-1980s. It was between the Fur and the Arabs and it started in 1985, 1986 and ended about 1991. I estimated then that about 20,000 people had died but mostly from hunger because there was a drought and a war at the same time, and in many developing countries, if you combine war and drought, it is usually a recipe for a lot of deaths.

Fortunately, one good thing this year -- about the only good thing in Darfur -- is that there was a good crop, good rains, good crop, which actually has been

atypical in the last couple of decades.

The second war took place between the Massalit and the Arabs from 1996 to 1998. So that was the second war. I was in the NGO community at that time, and my NGO, World Vision, was not involved in the relief effort, at least I am not aware of it. Maybe it was. I don't think so. We were just in the South.

And the third war now is the one that began, depending on whether you follow Alex De Waal and Julie Flint's arguments that in fact this did not start in 2003, but it started in 2002. Without going through a lot of debate about the beginning of the third war, this is clearly the most destructive of the three, in fact, clearly the most destructive in the history of Darfur, and that was because of the introduction of heavy weaponry and the arming of one particular set of Arab militias from the Rizeigat Abbala tribes, the camel-herding Rizeigat of the North of the Darfur. The Southern Rizeigat nazir refused to participate in this conflict. In fact, he has actually protected some of the African tribal leaders and chiefs in the South during this conflict and has refused to participate.

So the perception that this is Arabs versus Africans is simply not accurate. This is some Arab tribes versus some African tribes. The reality is that in historical context, the tribes have intermarried. You will frequently find people in tribes that are half-Zaghawa and half-Arab. In fact, there is one tribe that has a new name that is half-Zaghawa and half-Fur and because of the combination of the bloodlines, it has a new name for the tribe.

This is very complicated. It is not simple. It goes back centuries. The

Sultanate of the Fur goes back to the 1500s. Actually, there are some historical arguments that it goes back to the 15th Century, not just the 1500s.

I want to focus my attention, though, on what happened in Addis and complement a few of the comments that Jean-Marie has just made. I do want to associate myself and the United States Government with the perspective and the analysis that Jean-Marie just made. It is not always the case that the United States agrees with U.N. leadership on every issue. I have to say -- and everybody should know this -- that with respect to Darfur, our perception of what is happening and our broader plan for what needs to happen is coincident with the leadership of the United Nations, with Kofi Annan, with Jean-Marie, and with the other leaders in the U.N.

That does not mean we agree on every single issue. There are issues where we are a little hardliner than perhaps they might be and issues that we put a little more focus on, but I do want to commend Kofi Annan. I have watched him over many years, and he was brilliant in Addis. I thought his leadership skills came out, and after many years of leadership in the U.N., he is showing those skills once again.

I also want to commend my friend, Chairman Konare, the Chairman of the African Union, for his leadership at that meeting, too.

Several things happened in Addis, the first of which is there was a general consensus-building effort. This was not just the United States versus Sudan or the West versus Sudan or the U.N. versus Sudan. It was, I think, a general effort

among all of the participants, including the Sudanese, to come to some resolution of issues, many of which are dealt with in 1706.

Now, 1706 has become a very provocative term. My government stands behind that resolution; I want to repeat that. But it is interesting to me that if you read the Darfur Peace Agreement, there are many things in the Darfur Peace Agreement that are in 1706. So when we have people condemn 1706 or criticize it, who also support the Peace Agreement on Darfur, there is an issue because there is a lot of overlap between the two. I presume there are just a couple of issues actually within 1706 which are the controversial ones which have led to this divisiveness over the resolution.

Now, I want to say that our job between now and the end of this calendar year is to coordinate every closely with the leadership of the United Nations on the diplomacy of the Addis Ababa framework that we agreed to in the last few days because I don't want anyone to get the impression that we are conducting a separate negotiation of separate set of issues. We are not going to do that.

My government stands behind the Addis Ababa framework that was agreed to last week. We encourage the Sudanese Government to work through some of the remaining issues. When Lam Akol, the Foreign Minister, left, he said there were several issues I have to bring back to my government.

We look with great anticipation and interest on the reaction of the Sudanese Government on those issues, and I will be speaking with Mark Malloch Brown, the Secretary-General, and with Jean-Marie on a daily basis to ensure we are

coordinated on these issues and that we don't have two separate negotiating tracts because I think one of the reasons that the CPA negotiations were successful is we stopped having multiple negotiations going on at the same time with the Sudanese Government which confuses them and actually made the process last a lot longer. I mean prior to the CPA negotiations starting. I think that is one of the reasons we didn't have an agreement before is we had separate tracts going on at the same time.

It was very apparent to me in my trip to Khartoum five weeks ago that there were six negotiations going on simultaneously, and it was confusing everyone, including me, and not very helpful.

One of the first accomplishments of Addis Ababa is the agreement there is going to be now a U.N.-A.U. process and that our job in the African countries, the Arab League, the European Union, and the United States is to support that single tract.

The second point I want to make which is not an agreement that was made, but I think there was a consensus around the issue of timing. Amr Moussa from the Arab League said we are running out of time. I said we are running out of time. Kofi Annan knows we are running out of time because he is leaving office on January 1st.

There are three things happening on January 1st. One is there is a new Secretary-General, and it is not that the new Secretary-General is not able, but he is a different person than Kofi Annan. He is going to have different people in

positions of authority. There is a transition that is going on in any institution when you change leaders, and we need to be aware of that.

We have a new Congress coming into power in my government, January 1st. So, from my perspective, I have to understand that we have basically six weeks to get some agreements done before January 1st because I am clear now where we are. But on January 1st, there is a new Congress and they will be making policy decisions with us, and that may change. With respect to the political process here, we have six weeks.

We also have six weeks because the African Union has said that their mandate ends January 1st.

So for three different reasons, we are in a very tight timeline. Decisions have to be made. Agreements have to be reached. These are not artificial. They are based, because of the analysis I have just done, on a historical reality, not just one, not just Kofi Annan; it is in our government and it is also in the African Union in terms of their mandate.

Now, I want to say also when I was in the aid business and running humanitarian aid operations, the standards that I used to judge development programs and to develop action plans on crises from a purely humanitarian perspective, I had a different set of standards: Are we spending the money rapidly enough? Are people mobilized on the ground? Are we getting kids immunized? Is the food moving? Is the shelter moving? What is the security situation with respect to the people on the ground?

I must say I have to reorient my whole thinking about how to judge success from a purely diplomatic standpoint. I can't get my development mind and my humanitarian mind completely out of my head. It is there to stay for the rest of my life. So, constantly in the background, I worry about what the conditions are among the people in the villages and in the camps, both in Chad and in Darfur.

But essentially, we are not going to have one breakthrough moment when everything comes together on every single issue one day at one time. What we are having happen now is a series of steps are being taken where there is forward motion. As long as those steps are sufficient to reach a conclusion that is definitive by January 1st, I will be happy.

I think we began to do that in Addis. There was a series of things the Sudanese Government announced that they had not announced before. They essentially supported the package that we finished with. There were several issues that were remaining that they need to discuss in their government, but they did, for example, agree to the second package of assistance to upgrade the AMIS Force which is in Paragraphs 48 through 60 of Kofi Annan's report of July 28th, 2006. So, if you see that, they had not agreed to that. In fact, actually, they had opposed it. They clearly definitively said so at that meeting.. Lam Akol said: My government, in principle, has agreed to this. It is a matter of simply the operational details of getting this put in place. That, in my view, was a step forward. So, beyond the consensus-building, it was the second step.

The light package had been agreed to before, and Kofi Annan asked us not

to debate something that had already been agreed to which I thought was a wise decision on his part.

I think it is very important we move along which is Jean-Marie's obligation to do now or his duty to do, and he is in charge of that process.

I just want to say to you, if you need any help as you move along, please tell us.

I think there is a third thing that came out of this meeting. There is a lot of suspicion by the Sudanese Government that there are other agendas at work here, that this is not simply what it appears to be. I want to say this clearly, categorically from my government: The only agenda the United States has in Darfur is a human rights and humanitarian agenda. I hear so many bizarre rumors and stories circulating as to other agendas. It is nonsense.

I have been in every single meeting in the inter-agency process from May 1st when I took over as the AID Administrator because I was called into meetings that were purely diplomatic because of my expertise in Sudan. The only time I wasn't in the meetings was the nine months from early this year until I took over this position in September when I was teaching at Georgetown. By the way, I am still teaching at Georgetown, and I want thank John DeGioia, the President of Georgetown for giving me a little bit more flexibility in my teaching schedule to do this. But during that nine-month period, there were no meetings held that dramatically changed policy.

There is no other agenda. There is no hidden agenda. There is nothing else

at work in the U.S. Government over any other issues in Darfur. I need to say that because there is suspicion. There is distrust, and that distrust is, in my view, fueling the resistance of the Sudanese Government to a negotiation over the 1706. But now it is a little easier because I think all of these issues came out on the table during Addis Ababa.

A proposal was put together to have a joint U.N.-A.U. appointment of the next senior political international official. We would typically call that an SRSG, Special Representative to the Secretary-General, which is sort of the Ambassador of the United Nations, but we are talking about a hybrid now and the hybrid would be an A.U. official and U.N. official simultaneously, jointly appointed who would likely be an African; and then a Force Commander who would also be an African, jointly appointed by the A.U. and the U.N. This was also a general concept that was presented, and I think there was consensus around it, though the Sudanese Government needs to still speak about that issue.

It is critically important, from the perspective of my government, for the United Nations regular funding system for peacekeeping operations be used. Now, it can't be used in the traditional sense because this is a hybrid operation, but we cannot use the current system with which the Europeans and the United States have fully funded the AMIS Force. We have to keep going back for special appropriations to our Congress. The European budget for this is empty now to go back and assist AMIS. We are going to have to come up with some money between now and the end of the year to support AMIS during these critical

months.

But the point is we need a regularized system for raising funds for this, so that we don't have to do these supplemental appropriations. The reason I say that is there are always other issues in these supplemental appropriations in the United States. It has nothing to do with either party or the ideology. The fact of the matter is people add other things in. There is a big dispute now over the supplemental about whether there should be any earmarks in it. When that is held up, it means the appropriations are held up to help the A.U. When the United Nations presents to us a bill for all their peacekeeping operations -- I think is it 23 percent we pay now?

AMB. PASCUAL: Twenty-seven.

MR. NATSIOS: 27 percent; I wasn't trying to drop the figure, Jean-Marie, so don't start rumors. It is just my memory at my advanced age is now slipping a bit.

So, 27 percent, we pay it. It is appropriated. We pay it through the regular budgeting process. That is what we need to go to. We cannot use the system we have used to support AMIS financially because it is not regularized.

And I might also add during Addis Ababa, there was also an educational process for all of the people there. It was not just for the Sudanese Government. It was for a lot of people who do not understand how complex these operations are. You must have systems for making checks out to the 7,000 soldiers who are on board. There is a regularized system for doing this.

I watched the U.N. military operations in the early nineties. I am not being mean here, but they were not up to par. Some of them were a disaster. Over 14 years, whatever it is from 1992 to now, there has been a gradual improvement in the systems, the mundane systems. You think they are not important? If you don't pay a soldier for six months and he is getting shot at on the field in any army, in any peacekeeping operation, you have a big problem with morale. Getting those checks from wherever the headquarters is in the middle of a war zone is not an easy thing to do. These are complex operations.

Do you have a memo of understanding between the African Union or the U.N. and the country in which the peacekeeping operation is going on because there are legal issues that come up? If someone gets hurt, what do you do? Do you pay taxes? Do you not pay taxes on these? There are all sorts of issues.

The U.N. has put in place a series of very complex arrangements that actually work very well. I compliment the United Nations -- and I always do that -- for the work that Kofi Annan has done, who used to have that job, Jean-Marie's job, and Jean-Marie's reforms over the last few years to put in place a set of what I would call critically important operational systems to make these operations work.

It is not a criticism of the A.U. to say that those systems are not in place in the A.U. Why aren't they? Because it is their first operation. It is very difficult to do these. It was difficult for the U.N. to do them when they started. So this is not a criticism of the A.U. I think the A.U. has done a wonderful job under

difficult circumstances in their first instance of these kinds of operations.

We need now going to 17,000 people from 7,000 which is what the proposal is at Addis, to established systems that has been tested over and over again that we know work. If we don't have those systems, it weakens this all.

I want to say I am going to believe the Sudanese Government's statements that they want an effective force, until they prove otherwise. They may prove otherwise, but I am going to wait for that to happen.

I believe the only way to make this work properly is to use U.N.-established backstopping systems and command and control systems because we know they work and we can see -- I can see -- the improvement in these operations over the last 14 years.

Jean-Marie mentioned the composition. There are issues about whether it will be only Africans or whether Africans will be encouraged from Arab countries and North Africa or outside of Africa in terms of South Asia and other countries with peacekeeping traditions. It is better to have countries that have done this before in other places around the world because it is more likely that they will be successful.

I want to just say something in conclusion. I have watched a lot of these operations. There are some things that are very dicey, very difficult to do, like disarming different groups, particularly from heavy weaponry. There is a lot of heavy weaponry sitting around Darfur right now on all sides. You can't have a peace agreement implemented unless that stuff is collected. The U.N. did not do

a good job 14 years ago. I watched them really mess up some things. They do an excellent job now in this. They have established procedures as to how to do it so it works. If we are going to have a peace agreement and Darfur is going to be stable again and development can take place, it is very important that we use those established procedures.

I accepted this job because the President assured me and the Secretary assured me that we will have a robust American effort to fund an internationally-coordinated and run development program to reconstruct Darfur after this is all over. I think a lot of people in the camps, in all tribes, and this is going to be, by the way, for all tribes. It can't be for one side and not the other. If it is for the Africans and not the Arabs, people are going to say in two more years, we are just going to have another war. Our objective here is to see to it that this is the last Darfur war, not the third of four or five or six wars.

People have suffered enough. The Sahara Desert is moving south. Destitution is terrible among all of the tribes because of the increase in population, the fragility of the environment, and the fact that there are an increasing number of droughts. There is a huge amount of water in Northern Darfur under the desert. It can be used, but we need a development program to do that.

I want to just say my government has agreed that they will play a role, a major role in that effort, but we must have a peace agreement and we must have the agreement include all of the tribes and all of the political interests and it has to

be done in a collaborative way, not by force. We believe that the United Nations is the best way to accomplish that.

Thank you very much.

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