

United States Institute of Peace  
Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training  
Sudan Experience Project

**Interview # 37 - Executive Summary**

*Interviewed by: Marilyn Bruno  
Initial Interview Date: June 22, 2006  
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The interviewee describes involvement in Sudanese issues since 2000. The interviewee was present at both the triumphant return of John Garang to Sudan in July 2005, where he was hailed by all sides as the leader of a future of national unity, and the weeks following his funeral. Following the announcement of the tragic death of Garang, there were two weeks' worth of rioting in Khartoum and violence so severe in Juba, now the political capital of Southern Sudan, that the Government in Khartoum "repatriated" over 700 Arab-Sudanese nationals back to the North.

Against this backdrop, the interviewee assesses the state of implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) one year after the death of John Garang. On the one hand, the Government of Southern Sudan was stood up and, elected MPs, and held the first Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly. On the other hand, there has been significant discord between the National Congress Party and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement, possibly attributed to the novice leadership in the Government of Southern Sudan, which did not expect to be thrown into that echelon of power so quickly.

Additionally, those in Darfur, Eastern and Northern Sudan, the Nubians and others, have raised marginalization issues in Khartoum, complaining that there is no foothold for them in the CPA because they are assumed to be part of the North. In the opinion of the interviewee, this contributed to the National Congress Party's delaying implementation of several CPA elements, such as adhering to the Abyei Commission's Boundaries Report, and setting up the National Petroleum Commission and the Joint Defense Board. For their part, the Southern Sudanese legislature went on an unexpected recess for three months recently, largely because there were questions brought to the floor by members of Parliament about what the Government of Southern Sudan could do to prevent corruption from taking a hold of the South.

Among the lessons learned was the danger of depending on the personalities involved in a peace process, rather than on the trust in the process, and the desirability of unification and the dividends of an Agreement itself. The National Congress Party recognized this deficiency, and have been skilled in citing it both within Sudan and in its relationship with the international community. One positive lesson was the advantage of creating a pre-interim period to build trust, raise capacity and resolve logistical issues. The interviewee recommends engaging the international community, primarily the

members of the Troika-Plus, to keep the process moving forward and to ensure that the Multidonor Trust Fund is funding required infrastructure.

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*Q: Do you want to tell me about your work on the Sudan project?*

A: I began my involvement with our U.S. policy towards Sudan where I was posted at the Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya. Our counterparts in Nairobi both through the IGAD process and from our own Embassy's support services, provided the support for work leading up to the Naivasha process and signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Nairobi on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Through a proximity of geography more than anything else, I was in the region when John Garang was killed in a helicopter crash on, well, it is disputable; between July 30<sup>th</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup> of 2005. I flew in with a team of personnel from the Embassy in Nairobi to support the SPLM in putting on a state funeral for its president, the president of Southern Sudan and the first vice president of the Government of National Unity. Many people I think look back at the death of John Garang as kind of a turning point for CPA implementation.

*Q. A turning point?*

A. What I mean by that is you have this complex, unprecedented peace agreement that really brought closure to a multidecade struggle between the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army and the Government in Khartoum, and it was signed into and entered into force on January 9<sup>th</sup> of 2005 in Nairobi. It went through the pre-interim period without any kind of noticeable glitches on July 9<sup>th</sup> according to the schedule laid out in the CPA at the interim Government of National Unity that was set up in Khartoum. Garang returned to the streets of Khartoum for the first time in some time, and was met by throngs of people. It looked like the return of a king, a national convention that was unlike anything we've ever seen in the United States for example. Northerners and Southerners alike were pretty much unified by his arrival in the capital, and it was a ceremony that was attended by many in the international community, to include prominent U.S. government officials like Deputy Secretary Zoellick and others.

On July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005, it looked like things were going to be continuing at pace. While there were still some comfort levels to be established between the SPLM and the National Congress Party in Khartoum, people had been cognizant of the deadline to bring the CPA up until that point when it looked like progress and implementation was really moving ahead in a credible fashion. When the Garang helicopter crash occurred, Khartoum really took about four steps backward in terms of mass rioting in the streets. Northerners

attacked Southerner neighborhoods. The Government of National Unity was really caught so unawares by the initial reports that his helicopter was missing and then by the fact that he was actually killed in the crash itself that they handled it extremely poorly from a public relations perspective. Initial reports produced in local media in Sudan claimed that he had touched down in Rumbek, claimed that they had film footage from a previous visit of his to the South, where they showed him on national television getting off the plane. This was coupled with international press reports that were saying first the helicopter was missing, that it had been found, then there were survivors from the crash and they had been transferred to a military helicopter, and then on to a military hospital.

Once it was actually determined that there were actually no survivors from the crash, it was so tragic that the only way to identify Garang actually was by anklets that he wore on his legs. That's how severe the crash trauma was. The people in Sudan, Southerners in particular, were just devastated, and unfortunately immediately jumped to the wrong conclusion for a rationale behind events, including that something more sinister had been in play than the actual rationale behind the crash, which was largely inclement weather. So, Khartoum really burst into flames. There were about two weeks' worth of rioting. Store fronts were decimated. Neighborhoods were burned. Our Foreign Service National employees at the Embassy in Khartoum were under an extreme amount of stress, trying to take care of loved ones while also dealing with our bilateral burdens in the relationship and to bring calm to a situation that we really thought could tear a historic peace agreement asunder.

In contrast in Juba, which is now the political capital of Southern Sudan, there was rioting for two days straight; rioters burned a major market center that basically took care of all the food and non-food commodities for 120,000 people. I touched down in Juba three days after the riots began. The Government at that point had "repatriated," quote-unquote, over 700 Arab-Sudanese nationals back to the North in Khartoum. They feared for their safety, but largely everyone else was so stunned by the violence that had occurred. All were so aware of the fact that violence and any kind of actions to undermine the Peace Accord would really go against what was becoming the legacy of John Garang in this entire process. Most Southerners had kind of pulled together, be they Christian or Muslim, and said, look we need to do things to take steps to rectify this situation.

And so, the SPLM pulled off a state funeral that was, given the resource constraints and logistical constraints, a real beauty and wonder to behold, attended by most world dignitaries, from our own Presidential delegation, to African leaders across the continent, to UN officials of high stature, to European officials of high stature -- all spread out along a church yard in Juba for a four and a half hour funeral service. It spoke a great deal to what lay ahead for the country to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. We had Rebecca Garang, his widow, and others speaking quite eloquently and forcefully about the need to pick up from where things left off with his death and kind of push a reinvigorated leadership into the implementation process and make things continue.

From that perspective and from that point in time you did see things continue, people soldiering on despite the death of John Garang in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The Cabinet structure was stood up by September 30<sup>th</sup>. There was supposed to be an allotment of seats in the National Government and the National Cabinet for SPLM members. This was put into place and people assumed there would be these without incident. The Government of Southern Sudan was stood up with appropriate levels of fanfare and went about its business of orchestrating its first Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly and electing MP's and talking about constituency development funds and things like this. And for a bit it looked like implementation was going to be continuing apace. Garang's death was a tragedy. The riots thereafter were a black mark on the history of Sudan and a black mark on the new history of a New Sudan, but it looked like things were going to be moving ahead.

*Q. So, that was the turning point. How has implementation gone?*

A. I would have to say more than a year later and almost a year now to the death of John Garang, implementation has not been as on track as we certainly would like to see from a U.S. Government perspective. There has been a lot of discord between the National Congress Party and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement. To some degree, I think, you can attribute a lot of this to a novice leadership in the Government of Southern Sudan that really did not expect to be thrown into that echelon of power so quickly. The transition of power from Garang to Salva Kiir went exactly by the books.

You couldn't have asked for it more seamlessly. It was even better played out than our own transfer of power in the 2000 elections, and you had the Supreme Court stepping in to kind of wade through an election process that was murky at best. Here in this case you had a brand new government apparatus and a brand new political party. The Sudanese People's Liberation Party had just transitioned into a political movement, only through the course of a negotiation process, and you had Kiir, who was largely regarded as a very competent military commander, but someone who is much more comfortable in the context of Southern Sudan, very much a homebody, very much comfortable in his own circle of people and his own sphere of influence, being capitulated to an international stage, because he's basically been catapulted into the position of First Vice President. Kiir had a lot of duties to carry out that we placed upon him and then a lot of responsibility for implementing the Peace Agreement itself. The learning curve that he has had to take on has been very steep. He's done an admirable job by all accounts, but at the same time it's given the National Congress Party, a wing of the Government that is historically known for its very adept divide-and-conquering schemes towards its own people and certainly the international community as well, a kind of look at where they can exploit weaknesses in Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

The CPA, while it did very, very many things for Sudan as a whole, was derided to a degree correctly by observers and others initially after the signing, because it looked very much like a North-South-only agreement. There were significant levels of questions about whether or not this was truly an all-encompassing framework for the rest of the country. We've seen this a little bit by what has gone out on Darfur. We're seeing this

now with the fits and starts and negotiations for a political settlement for people in Eastern Sudan. You also have people in the North, the Nubians and others, raising marginalization issues in Khartoum as well, saying that there is no foothold for us in the Agreement between the North and South because we are, after all, in the North. So you have those elements of political questions not addressed by the CPA that act as bars or obstacles to the overall implementation because, as the National Congress Party, they can delay actual elements of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement from being implemented, like the Abyei Commission and the Boundaries Report, or delays in setting up the National Petroleum Commission, for example, or delays in setting up the Joint Defense Board, which is part of the Joint Integrated Units established for the kind of consolidation of Sudanese People's Liberation Army factions with Sudanese armed forces factions making a unified national military.

You see the delays spilling over into other areas of Sudan. For instance, in the East, Eastern Sudan was largely kind of an afterthought in the CPA. There are a chapter or two that address it, but it does so in very nebulous terms and largely speaking about the need for a redeployment of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army from the East backing them South.

During the war, the SPLA astutely realized, "Look, if we come towards Khartoum from the East, we can gain rapid ground by using contacts in Eritrea." They worked that to a great advantage and basically established a stronghold in the East that exists to this day, it's called the National Democratic Alliance enclave area. Until June 11<sup>th</sup> of 2006 the Sudanese Government military forces, SAF, did not have access into that area at all. The CPA had allowed for a redeployment over a phased time schedule. This was supposed to happen in the first year. Well, on January 9<sup>th</sup> of 2006, which would have recognized the first year, the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army hadn't even yet handed over a plan to the Joint Defense Force explaining how it was going to go about moving more than 8,000 SPLA troops out of the East to the South, with all the inherent logistical and resource concerns therein.

That of course bumped up tensions to a level that we've already seen spread violence, both into Darfur and linked to marginalization issues in the East as well. So, you had a Joint Defense Board put together in mid-December of '05, well behind schedule in accordance with the CPA. that was more window dressing than an actual committee of people in power to settle inter-military disputes. When they were presented with an armed standoff on January 10<sup>th</sup>, because Sudanese armed forces said, "Oh, it's the day after the year after, the SPLA should be out, we're moving in," it just didn't go according to plan at all. You had people in a very ad hoc fashion essentially rewriting the rules of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to fit the reality on the ground. So, instead of saying, "Oh, look its January of 2006. We really should be out of here. Let's figure out what we can do in the next two or three weeks so by the end of January we can at least be out of this region of the country," the redeployment was extrapolated through basically August of 2006. So, those types of things, that miscommunication firefight that occurred on January 10<sup>th</sup> in Eastern Sudan outside of Kasala and Hamastured, is indicative of what can go wrong when implementation is delayed.

*Q: Is this caused by a lack of leadership or a flaw in the Agreement itself, not being detailed enough?*

A: With respect to the East, it was ambiguity for this particular region, but I think you can also trace a lot of it back – not to lack of leadership, but lack of political will on behalf of the NCP to really implement its portions of the Agreement. You can only have a functioning Joint Defense Board if both the National Congress Party and the SPLM want to take part in it. You had the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement claiming, “Look, we’re ready. We’ve got our people, we’ve got our list of committee members,” but nothing was forthcoming from the NCP. At a similar level you see that working on things like the Abyei Boundary Commission and the ABC Report.

*Q: What is the ABC?*

A: The Abyei Boundary Commission report was something that was adjudicated by an International Observer Committee of which the United States could place a representative.

*Q: Who else was on that committee?*

A: Basically the troika members. That would include Norway, the United Kingdom and ourselves, the United States. We had some external observers. The United Nations played a cursory role, and then we went to Abyei with the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement representatives and National Congress Party representatives. They looked over the situation in Abyei, where the boundary was supposed to be rendered according to the 1961 statutes, spoke with local leaders on the ground. Spoke with tribal, spoke with government officials. Spoke with sheikhs, and spoke with elders of all flavors and sorts to find out what the general consensus was, what was the understanding historically of how this boundary area was delineated. Then the Boundary Commission came out with its report and presented it to the Government.

Now, in accordance with the CPA, once the Boundary Commission has put forward a report, that’s supposed to settle the border question right there and then—with respect to Abyei—and its supposed to be implemented. Given the history of the North-South struggle, Abyei has been a flashpoint for violence between the two sides for some time. Unfortunately, the unwillingness of the Government of National Unity, meaning President Bashir at this point, to implement the results of the Boundary Commission Report, had become a real public symbol of the National Congress Party’s unwillingness to implement in good faith all aspects of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. In March of 2006, Salva Kiir, empowered now as Vice President with a considerable chunk of time, stormed the staff at the State House in Khartoum and held an impromptu press conference to decry his counterparts in the NCP for not holding up their end of the bargain, and of the many things he cited, he cited Abyei as kind of a critical key element of lack of good faith implementation by the NCP.

While certainly the NCP has a lot to bear in terms of responsibility and blame for slow implementation at this point, I think to be fair you can say the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement has had their shortfalls as well. To a great degree because of our own involvement in the Naivasha process and our role in getting a final North-South Comprehensive Peace Agreement agreed to, the SPLM briefly looked to the United States to be kind of its face for pushing the NCP to implement certain aspects of the Agreement. We've responded repeatedly to that and in many locations across the world, "Look, this is your government. You're an equal party in this process in Khartoum,. You need to take up the mantle of leadership and really use it to your advantage in implementing some of these things."

To a degree because we have been very much aligned with the side of the SPLM throughout this North-South struggle, when there had been problems of implementation that are linked directly to the SPLM, its been a little slow in the uptake to recognize them. The SPLM did an excellent job of running what amounted, in retrospect, to a smear campaign against the National Congress Party about oil transfers throughout the course of this year. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement allows for significant oil transfers and oil shares between North and South. Basically the South received over \$220 million worth of oil shares this year alone. There are more things that kick into place. For a considerable amount of time, officials from the Government of Southern Sudan, Salva Kiir himself, and the President said, "Look, we're not getting this. It isn't coming at all. We're not seeing these things." Finally the National Congress Party produced the books and said, "Look this has actually all transferred. What's going on? How come the international community hasn't spoken up and defended us?" The SPLM had been a little hesitant to produce their side of the ledger because there were some inadequacies and some deficiencies and some question marks about where did this chunk of tens of millions of dollars disappear to. So there have been some growing pains in terms of the SPLM's ability to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

*Q: Is that monitored at all? I mean could we monitor the accounting?*

A: We provide advisors to the Government of Southern Sudan to assist with accounting and so, in that way, through our standard bilateral relationship we really push forth accountability. The good thing about the CPA is its uniqueness among international agreements. There are elements of the Agreement itself, like the Assessment and Evaluation Commission, which really acts as monitoring and watchdog mechanism within the Agreement.

*Q: Who are members of the Commission?*

A: The SPLM and the CPA. And this is actually a sub-committee of the CPA implementation process, and it's done quite well. Both sides meet regularly. A U.S. official is the Deputy under AEC and our representative to the entire organism. We have supported the Commission from Washington basically doing any kind of administrative or logistical support services necessary. A lot of the paper that we generate out of the State Department goes directly to where are we on communication, what phase, what



things are happening and not happening, and where do we need to push harder. This lends to more reliable progress. We have personnel out in Khartoum with the Embassy that are doing the worker bee aspect of the implementation. Some are, for the first time during the next two weeks, going down to the South for a visit to Juba to look at fledgling institutions there and see how they're working with respect to civil service implementation and new ministries in the Government of Southern Sudan. But this is a portion of the world where not only is their human capital extremely limited, but their resources and capabilities, education structure, health structure, its just not there.

So, how do you plug someone in as a civil servant into the Health Ministry who has no health background? How do you plug someone into a civil service position in the Justice Ministry who may not have any legal training? How do you take Southerners and put them into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the North to be diplomats if they've never been diplomats? What kind of training process needs to go on? The AEC has a role to play in this and we through our USAID programs have done a lot of hands-on training. We're implementing partners through local Sudanese entities, and international entities can push the capacity and build capacity and use these entities in Southern Sudan with the understanding that the CPA, plus an effective infusion of bilateral resources and political support, will make it attractive to the people of Southern Sudan, so that when the referendum comes in 2011 which is what the CPA is really a foundation to build up to, people will choose a unified Sudanese government and a unified Sudanese country and not choose secession.

*Q. What are the consequences of this?*

A. When you look at problems of implementation, it's the first alarm now that goes off in many of our minds back here in the United States and certainly in the Government of Southern Sudan, as well is that with every piece of the CPA that drops off the radar, such as redeployment in the East that takes longer than it should for implementation for Abyei seems to be going nowhere at the moment, are you making it attractive to the average Southerners who are already faced with enough daily constraints to live a fruitful life. There are cholera outbreaks, meningitis outbreaks, no schools, only 30 kilometers of paved road in the southern part of Sudan, limited governments because you have capacity issues to work through, and you're asking them to choose unification with the capital that historically has never been on their side. A Government of National Unity can't even implement all the assets it recovered peacefully. And so, what is needed are actual deliverables to the people in the South that this is something worth holding on to. Otherwise, what happens to what we worked so hard to put in place as the U.S. Government.

To have two Sudans in Africa is not necessarily an ideal scenario. Some have argued that an independent Southern Sudan would be as about effective a government as the Central African Republic. That's not exactly a starting point that we would like to put in this neighborhood. Certainly given all the political capital and will and interest we've spent at an Executive branch level or Congressional level as well. That's what I can say so far.

*Q: So, just recapping, we see that there are some shortfalls in the CPA itself that may have led to problems with implementation, but it's a very complex situation, and certainly the current circumstances, which no one could foresee, have pushed both parties in somewhat different directions: implementation in part, implementation in full, and now finding less political will.*

A: Yes, I think you see three things about their imputing implementation right now. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement is extremely detailed and, while it does have shortcomings in certain areas with respect to solely North-South issues, it does a fairly good job of laying out all of the elements you need moved into place. What we've underestimated is that much of what we needed at the political capital levels to get some of those foundational elements into place as part of implementation was very much dependent on John Garang as a political and personal leader of the process -- given the way he ran the SPLM, given his own interaction to fight President Taha at a national level, given his ability to wheel and deal as it is with the international community, once that pillar of the agreement, he really was a kind of an invisible pillar, a part of the package of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Once he dropped off, well, the Agreement itself is still an excellent basis to implement a radical political change in Sudan because you are making political space more open in Khartoum and you are making more space with human rights and development capacity in the South become possible.

Due to Salva Kiir's inability to be John Garang just through personal charisma levels and then also to a degree our own support to Kiir through the process, because of what's going on in Darfur and because of what's going on elsewhere in the bilateral relationship, there are elements of our foreign policy that became very personalized with respect to Sudan. When we declared Darfur to be a genocide, for example, that was such a huge political statement and a current one. But I think it bled some attention away from the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and we may have erroneously assumed that because the CPA was such a detailed document, of course everything would just fall into place. I think now that a year has passed and now that we're approaching the first year of Garang's death, we're able to see where the weaknesses are, both in the Government of Southern Sudan and then also in the Agreement itself., just because the NCP has shown its cards a little bit more openly about where its looking to be less credible in its own effort to implement this.

The fact is that you have President Bashir saying absolutely No, we're not implementing the Abyei Boundary Commission report. And we have not forcefully taken that up with him because we've been forcefully pushing through a peace agreement on Darfur. I think because we haven't hit 2011 essentially, or maybe 2009 if you look at national elections, there's room to say, "Well, we're letting the Government of Southern Sudan and the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement grow on their own and feel their way through this process and we're trying to not make it an American Government endeavor." But at the same time, I think people know that the Darfur process has run its course. We have a workable agreement there. I think we're able to say, "Okay, look, we need to reassess."

Our development programs have been running in lock step since the Agreement went into place on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005, but the level of energy we've applied on the political side of the equation hasn't really kept pace. It hasn't matched where it was in 2003; it hasn't matched where it was in 2004; it hasn't matched where it was leading up to John Garang's death, and I would say that six month critical period after. So since June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006, people are really refocusing their energies on the South to see what we can do to bolster the SPLM as an entity. We are really increasing the pressure on the regime in Khartoum to be more credible in its implementation efforts. We're doing that through stepped-up efforts through our embassies, and through the fact we have a Consulate General now in Juba. We're doing that through increased diplomatic efforts. I think once things level out, that the level of political will equals the level of development assistance, equals the focus of the Government of Southern Sudan on near-term objectives, that would bring Sudan through a prosperous 2009 national election. It will be less easy to say that the ambiguity of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement is what's holding it up and more correct to pinpoint political will deficiencies.

*Q: Abyei is the boundary that will determine petroleum revenues, is that correct?*

A: It effects the division, ultimately.

*Q: So, the strength of the South will be determined by the boundary, and this is where the North doesn't want to give up its revenue share and the power base that it might have.*

A: It does certainly switch some of the revenues into the favor of the South. The ABC Report itself is very favorable towards the SPLM, which of course explains why they are looking forward in many ways to seeing it be implemented. At the same time there is a political question there. There are people who have been living in what is in effect a transitional area now for decades and there are supposed to be rotational elements as a leadership that can't go into play without the ABC Report being acted on. So, while oil is certainly a big factor, there is also just general political elements that need to come into place as well.

*Q: So, what are the lessons learned from having gone through the CPA exercise? Is there anything we could have done better? That was a great success at the time, stopping a protracted war.*

A: I think it's a difficult question and it is difficult only because one of the things that made the negotiations aspect of Comprehensive Peace Agreement so successful a process was that we had someone dependable like John Garang in that process. As we've gone through the Darfur peace process in Abuja, repeatedly we remarked to each other and our colleagues in the international community, "I wish there was someone of John Garang's stature sitting at the table for the Sudan Liberation Movement or the Justice and Equality Movement, across the room from the Government of National Unity." Because, to a degree, you needed that kind of leadership. At the same time, given the difficulty we faced since Garang's death, I think we see how dangerous it is to depend too much on the

personalities involved in a peace process. I think it's very much important to leverage those elements of any negotiation during the negotiation process itself. You need to be able to read the people in the room. You need to be able to say, "Look, I've got a great relationship with John Garang or Ali Osman Taha so let me pull them into this room over here and try to work a buttressing bilateral deal that will push the process further down the field. If the Agreement itself depends on people, the personalities to implement, more than on the trust in a peace process, more than the desirability of unification, more than the dividends of an Agreement itself, I think we create problems. I don't think we would be having a conversation about CPA in conclusion and its pitfalls and fits and starts and the problems with these things if John Garang were still alive. That statement right there is very telling. It's too much of an unknown to pin an entire process on John Garang.

I think the National Congress Party recognizes that as a deficiency in the Agreement, and they've been very skilled at playing that up in terms of their relationship with the international community. If there were a way for us to learn from this implementation process in the future, I would say it is important to look, in a negotiation process, to setting up something very useful like the pre-interim period, which was a phenomenal element of this Agreement and one that's unfortunately desperately needed in the Darfur Peace Accords. The interim period is a credit to the CPA's success thus far. It allowed us to work out the kinks, with the Sudanese, with the international community. It really undergirds the implementation to this point.

We had the foresight to think that through, we just didn't have the foresight to say, "Well, what if and maybe someone were assassinated who was a critical element of the negotiations process? What if someone was so fed up with the political struggle inherent in implementation that they simply resign from their position? What if a natural disaster struck on such a momentous scale that it made implementation according to a fixed timetable impractical?" If we had a better understanding of maybe some common threads of past negotiations to include the CPA that were bars to implementation, we might not be in this position today, because I think we game-planned quite a bit, but we certainly didn't expect things like a helicopter crash and then Darfur as genocide to really have thrown significant wrenches in the works.

*Q: Well, it does sound like Darfur was one of those "what ifs" that was not contemplated. Do you think that it could have been staved off?*

A: Yes. Darfur is a difficult piece of the puzzle. Being out in the field you get a different perspective of how Washington involves itself in processes, and certainly a reporting officer in an embassy is responsible for sending in reports to Washington every day of what's going on any particular issue. The degree to which those reports are run with in D.C. is interesting. There are reports which are kind of pushed off to the side. Certainly in speaking with colleagues of mine at our Embassy in Khartoum, as Darfur began kicking up, you did get a sense from people that "Wow we're trying to ring an alarm bell here and Washington is not paying attention." In Washington's defense, some of this was because Darfur was an extremely difficult situation to grasp initially. Never

believe the first report coming out of Darfur. The ninth or tenth report might be more close to reality.

So, with the level of conflicting reports, with the Sudanese's ability to really kind of skew reality in terms of limiting access, and concerning the NGO's abilities to operate, it took a while for Washington as a powerhouse, as a location, as a political entity in the whole negotiations process, to realize that this was going to potentially derail the Naivasha process. It was being utilized by John Garang in a fashion that's not hopeful where we would like the SPLM knowing any of these negotiations. It's been utilized against our own observer status because we have the American public very much seized by the issue, very much calling on us for action, and while pockets of the United States were seized by the North-South struggle, everyone in the United States seems very much seized by Darfur. So, you had that kind of inequality of public interest leaning on levers of power in Washington, be it Congress, be it the State Department, be it the White House, and all this was coming to a head at the margins of Naivasha.

The pressure on negotiators at our embassies who were back-stopping the Naivasha process was very granular. At one point the goal was to make sure Naivasha was concluded so the President could mention it in the State of the Union address in 2005. This had to be wrapped up by December 31<sup>st</sup> so that by January 20<sup>th</sup> it could be foreign policy example number three that the President could point to as a success story. The Sudanese People's Liberation Movement, John Garang, and Vice President Taha, promised Colin Powell on the phone, "Oh, certainly, no problem. December 31<sup>st</sup>. We can make this deadline." It didn't happen. It didn't happen largely because Darfur was still churning as basically one of the larger nightmares that we have experienced thus far in this Administration's foreign policy. We declared it to be a genocide, and the international community was kind of like, "Oh, you called them genocide."

The Government in Khartoum raised their hackles up immediately, and here we were this close, so close that you could feel—it was palpable how close we are in the North-South Peace Agreement, and yet just the moral actions on the foreign policy scale were requiring us to take other actions we had regard for, knowing full well that we might be irrevocably affecting the Naivasha process. The fact that we managed in the scope of Darfur percolating to pull the Naivasha process together and get a Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and then manage to see the pre-interim period through to fruition on track. Six months in, yes, everyone was in Khartoum together on July 9<sup>th</sup>. The streets were overflowing with flags and John Garang and on and on his speech. Implementation was going apace, and Darfur was still manageable. Okay, we declared it genocide, fine. We had high U.S. officials in there virtually every other month talking to the Sudanese Government about what steps it needed to do to reign in the Janjaweed and stop the violence in Darfur, and we're still able to manage both. We're still doing a very good job of implementing a Comprehensive Peace Agreement, managing a genocide in Darfur and then dealing with things like Iraq and Afghanistan.

Then Garang's death occurred and CPA implementation began slowing down and Darfur really spiked. Since 2004, the violence was really building. That's when we declared it

to be at its worst, but really you saw a significance despite the violence, too, throughout the summer of '05 and through the fall of '05. It really pushed us to move that peace process forward. In that sense, Darfur was able to become an excuse for the National Congress Party for its own inability to implement this.

Since we were very much consumed with ensuring that violence against civilians was curtailed, that humanitarian access continued, and that disparate rebel groups from the Darfuri people got together on the same side of the table and spoke with a unified voice, the National Congress Party was very skilled at using that -- not as a distraction because I think that discredits what's actually occurring on the ground in Darfur -- but as a mechanism through which it could get away with a slow implementation process.

*Q: Might other Sudanese parties be brought into the peace process? Are there any other parties?*

A: You know, there's something called the South-South dialogue that's going on right now, and that's really an effort to move the disenfranchised or underrepresented armed groups and populations who did not necessarily side with John Garang's SPLM and bring them into the process politically, militarily. We're doing a lot of inter-communal peace building efforts at a community level through USAID programming. Our efforts in the South to kind of bolster the buy-in to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement are very on par with what needs to be done to make the Agreement understood by all and really welcomed by all. I think it's easing the frustration when people can say, "At least I understand what's in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. I haven't yet seen the peace dividend, but that's okay because I understand the Agreement. I recognize the Agreement for what it is and I trust that eventually my government, be it the Government of Southern Sudan or be it entities in Khartoum, will be able to bring this to fruition." I think, unfortunately, we had hoped that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement could really be a framework for peace for the rest of the country, and that when there were other negotiations, to resolve Darfur, to resolve the East, to resolve other pockets of inequity and marginalization, that people would at least say, "Let's use the CPA as the umbrella agreement through which to kind of guide these talks and tack on this agreement, as almost addenda to the Comprehensive Peace Accord."

So as a real framework for peace throughout Sudan, really the only way the U.S. Government ensured that that actually becomes reality is by taking such a front-and-center role in many of the follow-on negotiations, for other regions of the country, be it Darfur, be it the East. There does not seem to be a natural inclination by other Sudanese, Darfuris, Northerners, Easterners, or those in the transitional areas, to recognize that "Oh, despite the fact the Comprehensive Peace Agreement does not speak to my community specifically, I can use national elections in 2009 as a mechanism for a broader voice in a more democratic Sudan. I can support the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement in those national elections or other opposition parties contrary to the National Congress Party that's held such a chokehold on the life and times of Sudan for so long out of Khartoum, to make changes that will benefit me." People aren't necessarily taking the time to look at the document and seize upon the document as that kind of vehicle for

change. So, you see a push for using violence to get to a negotiating table to than get your own political equity solved through a unique peace agreement that addresses your own region.

What we were looking at, unfortunately, is one country with a series of peace agreements that addressed this corner, that corner, and the other corner, which is almost enough to amount to a Comprehensive Peace Agreement, a comprehensive North-South Peace Agreement. To a degree, that goes back to cultural issues in Sudan. When you talk to Southern Sudanese about Darfur, they seriously are ambivalent to the suffering of people there. It's not an issue for them. It's not that the geography makes them indifferent. It's literally, "We suffered as well. We understand what suffering is. We're truly sorry, but we have our own problems to deal with. I don't have time in my life right now to focus on the suffering of those in Western Sudan." That's the kind of mentality, I think, that we were hoping to change through a Comprehensive Peace Agreement and couldn't. So, it's a cultural dilemma that I don't know that anyone could think about in future negotiations. It's certainly been a problem for implementation.

*Q: Are we doing enough to create this vision of a new Sudan, a unified Sudan? Are we building capacity in the South and the other regions to participate ultimately in a democratic process or to elicit more political will from the North?*

A: Yes, I think we're doing quite a bit. As I said, our USAID programs have really continued apace. While our political attention might have shifted to Darfur nearly exclusively over the past year, the assistance that we've brought to the people of Southern Sudan and the political entities that are really fledgling and growing there are a testament to the fact that we do have a master plan for Sudan in the sense that we do have a vision of what we would like a democratic Sudan to look. Our support has been ongoing, and, to that degree we've done I think a very good job of reminding SPLM-ers and others that, "Look, unity needs to become attractive. What can we do to help you make unity attractive? If the daily obstacles to CPA implementation is what is making unity unattractive for you as a government official because you feel like you're banging your head against a brick wall, let us know how we can assist you in this discussion, this battle with the National Congress Party." We have had frequent conversations with Vice President Taha and with President al-Bashir about the need for renewed credible steps towards implementation at the Khartoum level of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. We are refocusing our efforts within the U.S. Government to ensure that, again, the Abuja process is concluded, that Darfur is slowly but surely stabilizing, that we can ensure that we won't have any regrets come 2009 when there are national elections, that there will have been sufficient political will and political energy and focus and assistance to bring them to this period.

*Q: Are our allies and colleagues in the international community also stepping up to the plate or are they just following our lead?*

A: No, it's a very concerted international effort on Sudan. In addition to daily kind of Troika-plus coordination, the Norwegians, the United Kingdom, the Dutch, the

Canadians, the United States, G-8 members, and a host of others were integral to the Sudan peace process. We have Troika calls on a weekly basis to coordinate our development and political assistance goals. We have had donor conferences to ensure that peoples' donations to the Multidonor Trust Fund are well coordinated and not targeting the same areas or being redundant. We've done joint assessment missions with the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund to make sure that we're coordinating assistance through power and wealth-sharing portions of the CPA to ensure that things are going along in a good fashion. A lot of what we're doing right now is really to bring the level of the South on par with the North on development. Once that catches up, I think you'll see in a lot more visible way where the political equities have also evened out, and I think you will see a more confident Sudanese People's Liberation Movement taking up issues with the National Congress Party. There are some elements in play that will occur at the end of July, in fact.

*Q: What happens in July?*

A: There are a series of White House visits that will occur in July that I think will underscore the U.S. Government commitment to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and to ensuring that the SPLM's vision of a unified Sudan and certainly John Garang's vision of a unified Sudan actually happens. That, coupled with a renewed focus by our embassy in Khartoum on elements of a bilateral relationship that need plussing up, if you will. I think it will really under-gird our efforts in the next six to eight months to ensure that, where things have fallen off the radar over the past year largely as a result of Darfur and other issues, things will really kind of pick up steam on that.

*Q: So, we'll be able to deliver our good will and focus, and hopefully encourage the North to bring SPLM more into the Khartoum Government's thinking, and achieve integration a little more easily?*

A: Yes, to some degree a lot of that has been worked out between the National Congress Party and the SPLM themselves. They just recently had an inter-government summit in Khartoum between the two parties.

*Q: When was that?*

A: That was in late May, around the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May, in fact. Basically leadership from the NCP and SPLM met in Khartoum for some time. They had a full 48-hour session. Basically, not only did they have a formal meeting set aside, but then they had meetings on the margins to really hash out where inadequacies were in terms of ministry staffing. The SPLM would say something like, "You promised us this, this and this in order that we could implement X, Y and Z. We're supposed to be a Government of National Unity. Things look a little too bifurcated. We made concessions in putting together the Government of National Unity that allowed us to not necessarily take the reigns of power in certain ministries, yet at the same time the quid pro quo of that deal has not materialized. You have not given us the staff we need to carry out some of our duties in other ministries. How are we going to work through this? What are the benchmarks we



can put into place to test you at your word, you the National Congress Party, when you say we're going to become a more credible joint implementation partner of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement." This was about 48 hours of wrangling, at the end of which there was a Joint Statement, rather anodyne, talking about again reaffirming commitment to the CPA.

*Q: But it sounds like a useful exercise and that the SPLM conducted it to set benchmarks in a very promising approach.*

A: I think it was promising that the SPLM really took a leadership role in it. They did not come to the United States or the rest of the international community to say, "Please help us work through this process." They really took hold of the issue themselves, put together an agenda, and worked through the issues that needed to be worked out at a national level. And, to a degree, I think they've taken to heart some of our own bilateral council in the sense that, when certain ministers represent the SPLM in Khartoum, but act as a member of the National Congress Party. Some of their statements made by members of the cabinet in Khartoum, for example if you were to strip the initials SPLM before the name of Foreign Minister Akol, and just reading transcripts of what the man said on a monthly basis, you would have no way of realizing that he was a Southerner aligned with the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement. Nothing he says approaches anything of that ilk and yet he was the choice of the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement for that position.

Now to some degree you can say, "Look, he has a duty to be the face of President al-Bashir to the international community, and because President al-Bashir is very much NCP, this is the message he's going to give out because that's his job." I think that is what one is going to say to kind of give him that kind of defense as a credible one. You wouldn't then expect the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement to turn around to the United States of America and complain to us about Akol, but that is what happens frequently. We say to them, "Look, we agree, this gentleman is not the most easy person to deal with in a bilateral relationship, but he's not our cabinet minister. You need to take steps within the SPLM and straighten out some of these issues on your own." I think you can look at the summit between the SPLM and the NCP in Khartoum in May as a real turning point in the relationship and the balance of power between the two.

*Q: But in terms of capacity building he's gaining capacity, so no matter what happens in the future, would you not consider him a real resource?*

A: Yes. It's difficult, but its very much trial by error in this first year by the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement. They did just have a politburo in February of 2006. There were rumors of reshuffling that didn't occur, but I think people were given some very strict instructions and put on short leashes. I think if we were to look back after the national elections in 2009, we might be able to say that February of 2006, and May of 2006, and then again July of 2006 would certainly have been turning points in the SPLM's ability to manage the National Congress Party in an astute way.

*Q: Should the National Constitutional Review Commission be reconstituted to review implementations?*

A: I don't think so. This is the commission that was really charged with drafting the interim national Constitution. While it played an important role, and is really an important element of the CPA, really the Assessment and Evaluation Commission should take the forefront in modeling implementation. With this trip that it is about to take to Juba and with a kind of reinvigorated leadership we've seen in the past four months of operation, I think you can say that its moving ahead in a fashion that makes us comfortable. Really more so than the National Constitution Review Commission. I think you need things like the Joint Defense Board to be functioning more so than it is right now.

*Q: So, the Joint Defense Board is not functioning right now?*

A: No. The Joint Defense Board is really window dressing more than anything else. The leadership is there, but there's no support staff. The Joint Defense Board is supposed to be overseeing the integration of Joint Integrated Units between the SPLA and the Sudanese armed forces. Those JIUs are woefully behind schedule. The international community's component of the JDB has really fallen off the radar and that's because of direct obfuscation by the National Congress Party. Security in the South, be it paychecks for the Sudanese People's Liberation Army so that they're not resorting to other measures to have an income, or be it reigning in the Lord's Resistance Army or other armed groups that haven't aligned themselves with either the SPLA or the staff. It's a major benchmark for the longevity and sustainability of the CPA. This is something that's unfortunately well behind schedule.

*Q: So, the commissions that are not really functioning and are crucial right now would be the Joint Defense Board and others?.*

A: The National Petroleum Commission.

*Q: Right. What would that one do?*

A: This really determines and acts as a watchdog and an arbiter for oil shares between the North and the South.

*Q: Do they also monitor?*

A: Yes, to a degree.

*Q: Who's a member of that currently?*

A: Its membership is spotty largely because the NCP has dragged its feet to appoint its own membership to the Commission. The National Congress Party has not really teed up its experts, shall we say. There are international observers on the National Petroleum

Commission, mostly Norwegian, but basically much of this public relations war between the North and South about oil exchanges and oil profit revenues results from the lack of a functioning National Petroleum Commission. Don't get me wrong, the Constitutional Commission is important, but really what are important I think in this next year, the 2006-2007 period of CPA implementation, are things that can show deliverables to the people of Sudan, such as the AEC, the Assessment and Evaluation Commission, the Joint Defense Board, the National Petroleum Commission, and some of the committees that will rectify civil service inequities.

*Q: The Boundaries Commission as well?*

A: The Boundaries Commission, certainly. The Boundaries Commission writ large and certainly the Abyei Boundary Commission Report are two important ones.

*Q: What are some good questions to ask about implementation? What should we be looking for? How can we measure progress with implementation?*

A: I think it would be important to get a sense of the share of burden between the parties of the international agreement, in this case the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and international partners that have a supporting role. In this case the Troika-Plus has a huge role to work with the Sudanese in ensuring implementation. I think a very important question to ask is whether or not the political will of all the international partners is matching the effort or is as prompt as it should be. I mean, one of the big criticisms of the post-CPA period has been the fact that the Multidonor Trust Fund, while there have been many pledges to the Fund, follow through with channeling revenue to the Fund itself has been problematic. Its difficult, I think, to encourage other nations to meet those pledges when they are legitimately asking for more visible and more credible progress on certain issues. But at the same time, it is a bit of a Catch-22 because you have Sudanese implementing partners saying, "Well, look, we can't do the things that you're asking of us if we can't have those resources, that financial support to facilitate those efforts." That's a question I would ask.

I would ask about what are we doing to ensure that that there isn't a disconnect between the political elite implementing the Agreement and the average Sudanese on the ground once the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement has again picked up speed. What are you doing to make sure that some things that will be very detached from the average population are at least understandable in a way that they're translated into votes in 2009 and the appropriate decision for unity being attractive during a referendum in 2011? One of the aspects of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the setting up of the Government of Southern Sudan was this legislature for the Government of Southern Sudan. One of the first things it did in terms of putting together a budget was put together a military budget that was well beyond what we had counseled the SPLM we thought was appropriate, given the troop numbers that its required to keep under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and at the same time it set up a constituency development fund for newly minted members of parliament that certainly calls into question how exactly this fund will be used. These are newly-empowered people and

power corrupts absolutely. So, another question would be what other types of corruption are we seeing creep into the process and what things do we have in place, be it bilaterally or multilaterally, to make sure that as we put a lot of financial and political resources in play to support implementation so that the process doesn't go south or the process doesn't go sideways? What things do we need to do at a bilateral level to make sure that certain impediments to governance and democracy elsewhere in Africa don't creep into the process in Southern Sudan?

*Q: This is my own ignorance, but I have no sense again of this monitoring. You mentioned a public relations campaign that alleged misuse of oil revenues. Is there an active judiciary that could handle the prosecution if that's necessary? Is there a free press or a credible press that could record something because it sounds like there's a North press and a South press at this point?*

A: You know, independent watchdog groups and monitoring groups separate from those set up within the Comprehensive Peace Accord itself are few and far between. To some degree this is a direct result of the limited human rights space in Sudan because of the way that the Government of Khartoum in the past has operated. It is also due to the fact that a lot of the heavy lifting in the past has been done by the international community. Much of development and governance structures in the South were really run by Operation Lifeline Sudan, which was an international effort spearheaded by the United Nations, widely supported by the United States, that really benefited the SPLM and the people of the South. But we did it all and now we've suddenly turned over the work of doing it all to Southerners themselves. While there are elements of accountability and questioning authority and things like this that are creeping into the system, they're largely ad hoc.

For instance you have returning refugees coming back to Sudan, because they believe in the promise of a new Sudan. They have left refugee camps in Kenya, in Ethiopia, and in Uganda where they had schools and running water and medical facilities, and they get to the South and they arrive to find that there are no shelter facilities. There's not a functioning health care system. There is not a functioning educational system. And they come to the first NGO that they see, perhaps the one that helped them repatriate, and say, "Where's my school? Where's my running water? My kids had a school back in Uganda. Why don't they have a school in Southern Sudan, this is my home." The NGO is caught in a very difficult position because on the one hand is dependent on the Government of Southern Sudan to do some of its development work, but on the other hand it knows that the absolute correct answer to that question is, "Ask your local government. They are responsible for bringing these issues to fruition for you."

So, while those questions were beginning to be asked, they are not at a critical mass yet that I think warrants checks and balances like we see in the United States or in other countries. Right now, the true check and balance on much of this is very much enveloped in bilateral relationships that exist already. We are certainly known as the United States for taking up the call for some aspects of guidance and counsel to the SPLM. The Norwegians have other issues that they consider pet issues that they run with the

Government of Southern Sudan. The British, the same. We try to keep a balance of being mindful and respectful of the huge burden that the Government of Southern Sudan has, but at the same time not letting own frustration be too apparent when we see the Sudanese start going slowly down the wrong path. Not like they've taken that step, but you can see them eyeing the path slightly. We've done what we can I think to put some bars in place to remind them that, "Look, you value the relationship and what we're bringing to you through some of these development assistance programs. Let's not take this in the wrong direction because it would be a shame for us to curtail that activity."

When we can, we've acted as a watchdog and a check. But writ large, and certainly on the national governance level, that's lacking. And, with respect to a judiciary, there is not one functioning yet in the South, despite the fact that that's what called for in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The judiciary in the North is rather constrained when it comes to activism on human rights issues and also on political transparency issues.

*Q: And the press?*

A: Not a free press. There are some "independent dailies", which routinely get shut down by the government of Khartoum. One of them is starting up in Juba this coming fall. To a degree, I'm sure that they will have broader access in the South, but at the same time I think when you see questioning of the way things are playing out, when you see questioning of the way things are unfolding, when you see questioning of resources of certain financial allocations and how this is working, I think the freedom that they have right now will also be curtailed to a degree in the South. The Southern Sudanese legislature went on an unexpected recess for three months recently, largely because there was to be some questions brought to the floor by members of Parliament about what the Government of Southern Sudan could do to prevent corruption from taking a hold of the South. So, I think rather than allow for embarrassment of some rather senior party figures, the speaker of the Parliament basically said, "You know, let's take three months to assess our needs at the local level, go out to the hinterland, speak with our people, and we'll reconvene back in Juba at that time." I don't know whether or not questions and corruption are still on the agenda at that point.

*Q: Would you agree that, in the South where there aren't even roads, doing anything is a Herculean process? There's no electricity, so, there's no ability to communicate simultaneously with large groups of people.*

A: The infrastructure constraints on the development of Southern Sudan are almost unfathomable.

*Q: No one seems to talk about this as an impediment to implementation. Is this not the sine qua non for any of the above and whereas on paper things may look good, but realistically how could this function?*

A: Well, that's certainly something we recognize and that's why our development programs are geared the way they are toward so much of a reconstruction and development focus.

*Q: Do you think we're giving enough?*

A: USAID would certainly welcome more money and Congress is willing to give it. We have very many supporters of Sudanese rebuilding and certainly there's a question of Southern Sudan reconstruction in Congress. At the same time, you hit a capacity level, a capacity absorption question. It's a Catch-22. You need everything, but you've never had everything, and you have unskilled people who need to implement everything, so how do you possibly do it? Where do you begin? It's almost like throwing a pebble in the ocean. You could spend all of your energies just working on a judiciary for Southern Sudan and, at the end of the day in five years when we have a referendum, there just may not have been enough time. When the funeral of John Garang happened, the U.S. Government airlifted into Juba enough food for 6,000 mourners because there was nothing there. Right now, when the rainy season in Southern Sudan begins in May and it runs for six months, nothing can function. You can't drive anywhere because the roads are impassable. Those roads that do exist are heavily mined. Those areas that might not have roads per se but are easily traversable, could be mined as well. De-mining efforts are torn asunder when the Lord's Resistance Army attacks the international organizations doing de-mining efforts. The sheer amount of redevelopment that needs to be done, and just baseline development, in Southern Sudan is really almost unquantifiable.

*Q: How many months is the rainy season?*

A: Six.

*Q: Six whole months of rainy season?*

A: Commenting from my Nairobi perspective, any NGO that works in Southern Sudan can tell you that they scramble during the rainy season to make sure all the logistical and resource requirements of their NGOs operations for the dry season are well in place, because the minute it looks like the rainy season will lift it intends 24/7 operation to make any headway. It's definitely a difficult place to operate in. Colleagues on the ground can give you a better picture of what the daily obstacles are.

*Q: Do you think there's a disconnect between our policy makers and this reality that we're describing?*

A: No because I think that at this point you can't. If the development obstacles were so insurmountable, you wouldn't have seen the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement make the progress they did in the war against the North. The fact is that they were able in that environment and in a context where communications and logistic structures were so limiting to take up so much ground and make so much headway against a real challenging rival. I mean the Sudanese are formidable opponents when it comes to

political issues, military issues, bilateral relationship issues. They really do an excellent job at safeguarding their own interests. The fact that the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement was able to make such headway is indicative of the fortitude of the people of Sudan. They get through. They're used to these barriers. They recognize them for what they are. So, by making the South equal to the North or at least giving them a headstart in moving up that road to equality in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, I think just recognizes that desire.

The human capital exists in the South. It just needs to be trained, and that's why we're doing a lot of training and development programs. Because once you have livelihood programs back in place, once you have a core group of civil service officers, once you have the physical infrastructure in place, any kind of service infrastructure that's kind of inherent in any governance, you will see civil society flourish. You will see Sudanese NGOs popping up left and right, and women's empowerment groups, and things like that. You will see a functioning society that's been blanketed by peace, supported by a Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and largely infused with development capital provided by the United States and others, so I don't think there is a disconnect.

*Q: Is there an undermining of the process by any terrorist elements?*

A: I don't think so, not with respect to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

*Q: There's no anti-Western sentiment?*

A: Not at all. Not for the South. The United States certainly very much beloved because of its role in the Peace Agreement process and also in bringing relief to the Sudanese through the Operation Lifeline Sudan program. We can do absolutely no wrong. As a U.S. diplomat, it's a truly moving experience to meet with people who are unabashedly patriotic about America. It's a moving experience and it's something that in this day and age you seldom see overseas. I think in that sense the Southerners, and even to a degree people in Khartoum and elsewhere in Sudan, are very welcoming of foreigners in general and Americans in particular, so you don't see a lot of terrorist acts.

*Q: So, they're optimistic. Are there any other questions you think are very pertinent to helping us to focus our interest in implementation? Any other things that we should be asking ourselves or our partners?*

A: I think you should ask the degree to which a policy that calls for unity being attractive is wise. If that's projecting too much of our own hopes onto a situation that maybe is not yet mature enough or ready enough to take that kind of leap of faith. It's not a question I can answer. Certainly people think it's still very fluid.

*Q: So it's a good question.*

A: Yes, but I think you'll get different perspectives from different people on where they think we're going with that kind of policy, and whether or not it's a wise policy to

endorse and continue to trumpet. I would certainly ask what people think about what are the litmus tests for the sustainability of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the timetable for, let's say, implementation, and then certainly what are absolutes of the CPA? What actually has to be in place before their national elections in 2009 for people to have enough confidence in what is being put together in Southern Sudan to see a unified country during the 2011 referendum?

*Q: One more question on the referendum. As far as I know, there has to be a census for voting to take place and the census has not yet occurred. I heard that the census should have taken place by now and it's behind schedule. Is that true and what are the difficulties in enacting the census?*

A: Yes, the census is slightly off schedule and largely that's a result again of capacity building. There's a lot of training that needs to go into carrying out a national census. Our own census in the United States has been called under question occasionally in the past, and I think the most recent census went through some changes. These are the questions that are being grappled with right now. We have brought Sudanese census officials for training in the United States to meet with people here and learn about the process. We have done training in Southern Sudan as well and elsewhere in Africa to talk about how you go about carrying this off. It's an important element and it's certainly important for the elections. Equally important is the set up of a National Electoral Commission to oversee national elections in 2009 and of course the referendum in 2011.

Now, of course, the Darfur Peace Agreement put another burden on the National Election Commission because it will have to carry out some of those elements as well. But, it is not a huge concern that the census is behind schedule because we're confident that the elements that are in place to make it actually be a reality are there. There are other elements in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement where we just see no motion whatsoever and they are more concerning. Because when you can say, "Hey there was supposed to be Joint Integrated Units between the Sudanese armed forces and the SPLA and there aren't." You can point to things like Eastern Sudan as a part of the country that would have benefited from a JIU. You can point to where delays in CPA implementation have effects elsewhere. What we're trying to do at this point is limit the kind of negative blowback from implementation delays. So, there isn't really, at this stage anyway, a negative consequence in a delayed census. The census will happen eventually. All the signs are there. As long as the training is good, then why rush it. That could lead us to do something improperly, so let's continue on the track we're on. When the signs are there that there will be no progress without some significant bilateral pressure on things like Abyei, on things like Joint Integrated Units, on things like some of the elements of the National Congress Party's and the SPLM's relations, that's when we get worried as a partner to peace in the Sudan and consider whether we have to step in on our bilateral relationship and really work some of these issues a lot harder than we have in the past.