

January 4, 2018

Mr. John J. Sullivan
Deputy Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

RE: Humanitarian Aid for the People of Sudan

Dear Mr. Sullivan,

We, the undersigned 105 Sudanese, human rights organizations, scholars and leading activists, urge the U.S. to require meaningful changes by the Sudan government for improved U.S.-Sudan relations. For the Trump Administration to justify to the American people the lifting of sanctions and to allow the Sudan government to enjoy the considerable benefits of normal trade relations with the U.S., it would be reasonable for the U.S. to have certain expectations of the Sudan government, especially given its links to terrorism and its perpetration of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes against the people of Sudan.

One of the tracks identified by the U.S. in Executive Order 13761 is improved humanitarian aid access in the conflict areas. Since Sudan, under the current government, faces a perpetual humanitarian crisis with 4.8 million Sudanese currently in need of humanitarian aid according to OCHA, it is important to provide some definition to “improved humanitarian aid access” that is guided by humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence and is based on the specific experience of NGOs in Sudan.

It is well known that Sudan’s Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) serves as a front for the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) and rather than facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid, it exists to track, impede and prohibit aid from reaching those in need. With the U.S. basing its sanctions decision, in part, on improved access to humanitarian aid and since the need is so great and relatively easy to address, immediate changes should be obvious. Life should be improving for Sudanese, especially those in conflict zones; however NGOs report privately that essentially nothing has changed. The Sudan government has allowed some movement in order to appease the U.S., but HAC’s role has not changed, aid is not reaching all those in need, and Sudanese continue to suffer.

If the U.S. is sincere in its desire to help the people of Sudan, then the following basic expectations regarding humanitarian aid should be met by the Sudan government:

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- First and foremost, the Sudan government must demonstrate a commitment not to kill and harm the people of Sudan. The Sudan government cannot infringe upon the right of the people of Sudan to live and it cannot treat the people of Sudan as mere objects of war.
- The Sudan government must demonstrate sincere intent regarding the humanitarian condition of its people evidenced by allowing aid to reach all people of Sudan, including minority groups, and the Sudan government must stop using access to humanitarian aid as a weapon of war against its citizens.
- The government of Sudan must allow unimpeded access to all areas of Sudan by international humanitarian aid organizations. Mechanisms of government should not exist for the purpose of orchestrating the impediment of humanitarian aid to people in need.
- International NGOs must be allowed to operate freely in Sudan – to go wherever they need to go whenever they need to go in order to save lives. The Sudan government must stop using the tools of bureaucracy to impede access to international NGOs by denying or delaying indefinitely visas, travel documents, or work and residence permits. Special permission from the Sudan government should not be necessary for expedited travel to areas in need.
- The government of Sudan must stop treating international NGOs as enemies of the state and spies. The atmosphere of suspicions and hostility exhibited continuously by HAC and NISS puts NGOs in a defensive position and it is intolerable.
- The government of Sudan must stop using discriminating banking practices against NGOs and it must allow international NGOs to open bank accounts, have control over their own funds and to participate in and control financial transactions, including the transfer of funds.
- The government of Sudan must expedite all processes for international NGOs to deliver aid to needy areas, including the registration process of purchased vehicles and other means for the movement of food, supplies, tools, seeds and medical supplies and equipment.

These requirements, which are necessary to improve humanitarian aid access to conflict areas in Sudan, are not unusual or burdensome; instead they are basic and fundamental components of universally accepted humanitarian principles and practices. Further concessions by the U.S. are not required for the Sudan government to implement them immediately. The government's failure to do so should raise concerns for the U.S. Administration and should cause the U.S. to question the government's sincerity. Allowing the international community to provide humanitarian aid to Sudanese in need is a basic test the Sudan government has not yet passed, therefore the U.S. should not make further adjustments in its relationship with Sudan until it sees real and sustained positive action in this and all tracks, including the promotion and protection of human rights.

Sincerely,

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21st Century Wilberforce Initiative, Nathan Wineinger, Director of Policy Relations, Washington, DC

Abdelbagi Jibril, Geneva, Switzerland

ACROSS, Elisama W Daniel, Executive Director, South Sudan

Act for Sudan, Eric Cohen, Co-Founder, Boston, MA

Adil Abdel Aati, Independent Candidate for Sudan Presidency 2020; Leader, Sudan of the Future Campaign

Ahmed H. Adam, Research Associate, School of Law, SOAS University of London, UK

Akulia Foundation, Lita Muki, Chairperson, Juba, Central Equatoria, South Sudan

Al Khatim Adlan Centre for Enlightenment & Human Development (KACE), Albaqir A Mukhtar, Director, Kampala, Uganda

Asha Khalil Elkarib, Activist and Human Rights Defender, Sudan

Brooklyn Coalition for Darfur & Marginalized Sudan, Laura Limuli, Coordinator, Brooklyn, NY

Christian Solidarity International-USA, The Rev. Heidi McGinness, Director of Outreach, Denver, CO

Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and Action, Roz Duman, Founder / Director, Denver, CO

Comité Soudan, Diagne Chanel, Présidente, Paris, France

Concerned Citizens for Change, Gene Binder, Member Steering Committee, Bronx, NY

DAAM (Sudanese Pro-Democracy Activists Abroad), Ali Abdelatif M. Hussein, UK

Darfur Action Group of South Carolina, Richard Sribnick, MD, Chairman, Columbia, SC

Darfur and Beyond, Cory Williams, Co-Founder, Phoenix, AZ

Darfur Community Org, Bakheit Shata, Director, Omaha, NE

Darfur Interfaith Network, Martha Boshnick, Co-Chair, Washington, DC

Darfur Vigil Group, Helga Moore, Coordinator, New York, NY

Dear Sudan Love Marin, Gerri Miller, Founder and Coordinator, Tiburon, CA

Dialogue on South Sudan / Sudan Canada, David Mabior Atem, Chair, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Doctors to the World, C. Louis Perrinjaquet, MD, MPH, Medical Director, Breckenridge, CO

Dr. Caroline Faria, Department of Geography and the Environment, University of Texas at Austin

Dr. Deborah Mayersen, Research Fellow, University of Wollongong, NSW, Australia

Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, Founding Chairman, Genocide Watch

Dr. Paul Slovic, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Dr. Robert K. Hitchcock, Adjunct Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM

East African Ministries (EAM), Alex Radler, Director of Development, Fort Worth, TX

Elhag Ali Warrag Sidahmed Warrag, Editor in Chief, Hurriyat, Egypt

Elijah M. Brown, Ph.D., General Secretary, North American Baptist Fellowship, Washington, DC

Ellen J. Kennedy, Ph.D., Executive Director, World Without Genocide, St. Paul, MN

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End Impunity Organization (EIO), Angelina Daniel Seeka, Regional Director, Juba, South Sudan

Eric Reeves, Senior Fellow, Harvard University's François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Northampton, MA

Face Past for Future Foundation (FP4F), Abdelrahman Gasim, Chairman, Kampala, Uganda

Genocide No More - Save Darfur, Marv Steinberg, Coordinator, Redding, CA

Genocide Watch, Elisa von Joeden-Forgey, PhD, President, Galloway, NJ

Georgia Coalition to Prevent Genocide, Melanie Nelkin, Chair, Atlanta, GA

Global Partnership for Peace in South Sudan, Sarah Rial, Founder and Executive Director, Boston, MA

Greater Nuba Action Coalition (GNAC), John Jefferson, Founder, San Mateo, CA

Hamid E. Ali, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Public Policy and Administration, The American University in Cairo, New Cairo, Egypt

Help Nuba, Rabbi David Kaufman, Des Moines, IL

Humanity Is Us, Kimberly Hollingsworth, Founder and President, New York, NY

Idaho Darfur Coalition, Marilyn Griep, Co-Founder, Boise, ID

Independent Movement Organization, Adil Taha, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Fairfax, VA

Institute for Sustainable Peace, Randall Butler, CEO, Boulder, CO

Institute on Religion and Democracy, Faith McDonnell, Director, Church Alliance for a New Sudan, Washington, DC

International Growth Centre, Richard Newfarmer, Country Director, Washington, DC

International Justice Project, Monica Feltz, Esq., LL.M., Executive Director, Newark, NJ

Investors Against Genocide, Susan Morgan, Co-founder, San Francisco, CA

Jews Against Genocide, USA, Sharon Silber, Co-Founder, New York, NY

John H. Weiss, Associate Professor of History, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Joining Our Voices, Slater Armstrong, Founder/Director, Baton Rouge, LA

Kentuckiana Taskforce Against Genocide, Phil Nippert, Coordinator, Louisville, KY

Ladu Jada Gubek, National Salvation Front (NAS) Diplomatic Representative to the United States of America and the United Nations, Minneapolis, MN

Leadership Office of the Dams Affected Communities / Sudan, Ali Askouri, Chairman, London, UK

Long Island Darfur Action Group, Nancy Walsh, Coordinator, Farmingdale, NY

Massachusetts Coalition for Darfur, William Rosenfeld, Director, Boston, MA

Mia Farrow, Actress and Humanitarian

My Sister's Keeper, Rev. Gloria White-Hammond, M.D., Executive Director, Boston, MA

Mustafa Sharif, PhD., College Station, TX

Nasredeen Abdulbari, Doctoral Candidate, Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, DC

Nehemiah Initiative, Gavin Gramstad, Executive Director, Washington, DC

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Never Again Coalition, Lauren Fortgang, Policy Director, Portland, OR

New York Coalition for Sudan, Eileen Weiss, Co-Director, New York, NY

Nuba Christian Family Mission, George Kouri Tuto, Chairman and James Spence Flournoy, Director, Denver, CO

Nuba Mountain Peace Coalition, Tito El Gassai, Dallas, TX

Nuba Mountains Advocacy, Gogadi Amoga, Chair, Cincinnati, OH

Nuba Mountains International Association, Komi Elaiaiser, President, Lorton, VA

Nubia Project, Nuraddin Abdulmannan, President, Washington, DC

Nubian Language Society, Nubantood Khalil, VA

Our Humanity in the Balance, Terry Nickelson, Executive Director, Deming, NM

Persecution Project Foundation, Brad Phillips, President, Culpeper, VA

Philip Tutu, Human Rights Activist, Kansas City, MO

Pittsburgh Darfur Emergency Coalition, David Rosenberg, Coordinator, Pittsburgh, PA

Professor Elihu D. Richter MD MPH, Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Hebrew University-Hadassah School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Jerusalem, Israel

Rev. Sylvia Carlson, Redstone Presbytery Mission Committee, Greensburg, PA

Rights for Peace Foundation, Osman Habila, General Director, Kansas City, MO

San Francisco Bay Area Darfur Coalition, Mohamed Suleiman, President, San Francisco, CA

Seed for Democracy for South Sudan, Justin Laku, Sr., Ottawa, ON, Canada

Seif Barsham, Activist, Boston, MA

Skills for Nuba Mountains, Lazim Suleiman Elbasha, Director, Kauda, South Kordofan/Nuba Mountains, Sudan

Society for Threatened Peoples - Germany, Ulrich Delius, Director, Göttingen, Germany

South Sudanese Global Community Network, Benjamin Taban Avelino, Sheffield, UK

STAND: The Student-Led Movement to End Mass Atrocities, Justin Cole, National Policy Coordinator

Stop Genocide Now, Katie-Jay Scott, Coordinator, Redondo, CA

Sudan Democracy First Group, Anwar Elhaj, Executive Director, Kampala, Uganda

Sudan Relief and Humanitarian Agency, Ishraga A. Khamis, Deputy Director, Blue Nile, Sudan

Sudan Sunrise, Tom Prichard, Executive Director, Reston, VA

Sudan Unlimited, Esther Sprague, Founder and Director, San Francisco, CA

Sudanese Community Association of Illinois, Peter Magai Bul, Chicago, IL

Sudanese Community Church, Episcopal Diocese of Colorado, The Rev. Ayyoubawaga (Oja) B. Gafour, Ph.D., Vicar, Denver, CO

Sudanese Community of Kentucky Inc, Abdulrahim Adam, President, Louisville, KY

The Abaunza Group, Bonnie Abaunza, Founder, Los Angeles, CA

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The African Middle Eastern Leadership Project (AMEL), Mohamed Abubakr, President, Washington, DC

The Boma Assistance Group, Bill Andress, Chairman, Lexington, SC

The Elsa-Gopa Trust, Nell Okie, Director, Madison, CT

The Reverend Ronald D. Culmer, St. Clare's Episcopal Church, Pleasanton, CA

Thomas Merton Center, Gabriel McMorland, Executive Director, Pittsburgh, PA

Timothy Oslovich, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Vernon, CT

Unite for Darfur Organization, Bahar Arabie, CEO, Gaithersburg, MD

Use Your Voice to Stop Genocide RI, Sandra Hammel, Director, Portsmouth, RI

Victoria Sanford, PhD, Professor & Chair, Department of Anthropology, Lehman College, Director, Center for Human Rights & Peace Studies, Doctoral Faculty, The Graduate Center, City University of New York, New York, NY

Waging Peace, Maddy Crowther, Executive Co-Director, London, UK

World Peace and Reconciliation (WR&P), Adeb Yousif, President, Washington, DC

cc: The Honorable Rex Tillerson, Secretary of State

The Honorable Nikki Haley, Ambassador to the United Nations

Senator Bob Corker, Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Senator Ben Cardin, Ranking Member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Senator Jeff Flake, Chairman, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy

Senator Cory A. Booker, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy

Rep. Ed Royce, Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Committee

Rep. Eliot Engel, Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee

Rep. Chris Smith, Chairman, House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations

Rep. Karen Bass, Ranking Member, House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations

Rep. Jim McGovern, Co-Chair, Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

Rep. Randy Hultgren, Co-Chair, Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

Rep. Mike Capuano, Co-Chair, Sudan and South Sudan Caucus

Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, Co-Chair, Sudan and South Sudan Caucus

Rep. Barbara Lee, Co-Chair, Sudan and South Sudan Caucus

Rep. Tom Rooney, Co-Chair, Sudan and South Sudan Caucus