



Integrated Country Strategy

Sudan

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

In October 2017, after more than twenty years, the United States lifted a trade embargo and financial economic sanctions on Sudan, originally imposed for state-sponsored acts of terrorism and then for human rights abuses, after Sudan demonstrated significant progress on several issues of importance to the United States, including counterterrorism cooperation, peaceful efforts to end internal conflicts in Darfur and the Two Areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, and improving humanitarian access to IDPs and refugees. After lifting sanctions, Sudan continues to face major security, economic, social and political challenges for which the Government of Sudan (GoS) can no longer use U.S. economic sanctions as a scapegoat for its failure to address. The U.S. Mission shall work to encourage the GoS to bring peace, security, prosperity, and better governance to its own people, and to ensure improved civil and political rights. Key to these efforts will be engaging with the GoS (and other parties) to achieve a final, sustainable peace in Darfur and The Two Areas; to support the efforts of the international community to ensure regional security; to counter narratives of violent extremists and cooperate in fighting terrorism; to promote economic liberalization of Sudan's economy; and to strengthen good governance to include the protection of human rights and implementing democratic reforms.

Ending Regional and Internal Conflicts and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism

Through several unilateral declarations on cessations of hostilities (COH) beginning in 2016, the GoS has demonstrated that it is willing to change the country's history of violence in favor of negotiations on a political and peaceful end to the armed conflicts in Darfur and the Two Areas. One of this Mission's priorities will be to leverage the State Department and other agencies as well as international organizations and partners, to ensure that those negotiations begin in the near future. The government also implemented a National Dialogue process in which opposition parties were invited to enter into discussions with the government on achieving a sustainable peace. The National Dialogue, though flawed (many opposition parties did not join the discussions), achieved consensus on several issues. The U.S. Mission will continue to encourage the GoS to seek a peaceful end to the armed conflict in Darfur and The Two Areas through inclusive, frank, and peaceful dialogue with opposition political parties and armed opposition groups.

Sudan continues to be vulnerable to extremist philosophies, despite its history of moderate Islamic traditions. It has a long history of fundamentalist social movements and there have been instances of recruitment into the Islamic State and other violent extremist groups. The Mission will continue to recognize positive contributions Sudan makes to counter-terrorism, and as our bilateral relationship normalizes, may bring additional U.S. government resources to a range of security cooperation. In addition, we will continue to identify new opportunities to talk with and offer alternative messaging to communities vulnerable to extremist ideologies.

Promoting Economic Reform

The GoS must undertake significant economic reforms so that Sudan's economy again moves in a positive direction. Despite ample natural resources, particularly in agriculture and minerals, Sudan has suffered from years of economic mismanagement by the Sudanese government which previously relied mainly on oil revenues to bolster the economy until South Sudan's independence in 2011. Much needed international debt relief for Sudan is precluded until Sudan demonstrates that it should be removed from the U.S. State Sponsors of Terrorism List. Sudan's economic woes are several-fold: an informal market economy, including a competing parallel foreign exchange rate; heavy subsidies on imported commodities, including bread, fuel, and medicines; rampant public corruption; and disproportionate spending on security. Combined with limited access to international financial markets, Sudan's economic problems are exacerbated by massive shortages in foreign currency reserves. Corruption and cronyism continue to taint Sudan's economy, in addition to significant misreporting: The GoS reports that it spends more than 20 percent of its budget on military and intelligence, but it is widely suspected to spend far more, possibly from 50 to 70 percent. GoS officials with access have reaped illicit benefits from the parallel exchange rate and other economic distortions.

The U.S. Mission to Sudan will encourage the GoS to pursue sound economic policies, including by working with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to unify exchange rates, cut subsidies, address public corruption, and operate within a much more transparent budget. We will encourage Sudan to take steps on counterterrorism cooperation that enable the United States to remove Sudan from the State Sponsors of Terrorism List, thereby allowing the possibility of debt relief and financial assistance packages. We will also encourage the GoS to put into motion a development strategy that will put the needs of the country's long-suffering population, of modest means, front and center.

Strengthening Governance, Human Rights, and Democratization

Despite an abundance of government ministries and agencies, Sudan suffers from both weak institutions and an authoritarian, centralized approach to governance. Institutions remain weak since decisions lay with individuals rather than with established policy-making processes.

Sudan's human rights record remains a major challenge. It engages in arbitrary arrests, uses a heavy-handed security apparatus against religious institutions and civil society, and arrests students and anyone who speaks out against government actions. Violence against regime opponents occurs regularly, both in detention facilities and in conflict zones. The U.S. Mission's objective is to push the GoS to substantially improve its record and actions on human rights and religious freedom as a means of creating the conditions for a real democratic opening and to end the climate of fear that pervades in the country. The United States remains heavily engaged and has offered support to those communities affected by GoS actions that violate internationally recognized norms and practices, and will continue to do so, through public diplomacy, political advocacy, and support for civil society.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests

Mission Objective 1.1: Disrupt State-Sponsored and Regional Terrorist Groups in Order to Limit their Ability to Attack U.S. Interests both Inside and Outside Africa.

Mission Objective 1.2: Counter Transnational Crime, Porous Borders, and Other Threats Impacting Mutual Interests.

Mission Objective: 1.3: U.S. Mission Sudan influences the GoS and Armed Opposition Groups to Negotiate an Agreement to End Internal Armed Conflicts and Prevent Mass Atrocities.

Mission Goal 2: Promote Economic Reform to Facilitate Economic Growth and to Increase Opportunities for U.S. Trade and Investment.

Mission Objective 2.1: The GoS Implements Transparent Economic Reforms that Lay the Groundwork for Poverty Reduction, Sustained Growth, and Increased Trade.

Mission Objective 2.2: Expand Sudan's Capacity to Effectively Participate in Global Markets.

Mission Goal 3: Strengthen Good Governance, Human Rights, and Democracy.

Mission Objective 3.1: Promote Accountable, Transparent, and Responsive Governance.

Mission Objective 3.2: Promote and Protect Fundamental Rights and Liberties.

Mission Objective 3.3: The GoS and the United States Build Mutual Trust and Cooperative Partnerships through Educational and Cultural Engagement and Exchanges.

Management Objective 1: Enhance Operational Efficiency through the Efficient Use of Mission Resources.

Management Objective 2: Implement Policies and Request Support for Improving Mission Personnel's Quality of Life.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1: Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests

Description and Linkages: Mission Khartoum will advance the following priority action goals laid out in the Africa section of the 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy: the political priority action goal of “end[ing] long-running, violent conflicts” in Africa; and the military and security priority action goals of “defeat[ing] terrorist organizations and others who threaten U.S. citizens and the homeland” and “working with partners to improve the ability of their security services to counter terrorism, human trafficking, and the illegal trade in arms and natural resources.” Specific to Sudan, our pursuit of negotiations between the government and armed groups is rooted in the 2006 Abuja Darfur Peace Agreement, to which the United States is a witness, as well as the United States’ key role in helping to negotiate the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between Sudan and the Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Movement (SPLM) that laid the groundwork for South Sudan's 2011 independence referendum.

Objective 1.1: Disrupt State-Sponsored and Regional Terrorist Groups in Order to Limit their Ability to Attack U.S. Interests both Inside and Outside Africa.

Justification: Over the past few years, Mission Sudan has increased our counter-terrorism cooperation with Sudan, to the extent possible. As we move into the next phase of discussions on enhancing U.S.-Sudan bilateral relations, continued counter-terrorism commitments from the GoS will be a cornerstone of our engagement. U.S. Mission Khartoum will use a range of diplomatic means to achieve this goal, including available cooperative opportunities with the GoS and likeminded partners within the diplomatic corps on countering violent extremist threats.

Objective 1.2: Counter Transnational Crime, Porous Borders, and Other Threats Impacting Mutual Interests.

Justification: Sudan has long, often un-monitored borders from which, criminals, armed groups, and potential terrorist suspects enter and exit the country. Sudan is also an important country for combatting illegal migration, and is an unwitting host to human trafficking networks. Addressing these issues will require that U.S. Mission Khartoum make use of resources and expertise from the State Department and other agencies, to include securing waivers to systems that post is prohibited from providing due to SST that would be in the U.S. government security interest to provide, and work closely with the host country and other partners.

Objective 1.3: U.S. Mission Sudan influences the GoS and Armed Opposition Groups to Negotiate an Agreement to End Internal Armed Conflicts and Prevent Mass Atrocities.

Justification: Achieving this Objective will help accomplish the 2017 National Security Strategy goal of ending long-running, violent conflicts in Africa. U.S. Mission Khartoum will use diplomatic means at its disposal to achieve this goal, including available partnerships with likeminded partners within the diplomatic corps. A major risk to achieving this objective includes the GoS or armed opposition groups refusing calls to come to the negotiating table to end internal armed conflicts peacefully.

Mission Goal 2: Promote Economic Reform to Facilitate Economic Growth and to Increase Opportunities for U.S. Trade and Investment

Description and Linkages: This goal supports the 2018-2022 State Department/USAID Joint Strategic Plan's Strategic Objective 2.3: Advance U.S. economic security by ensuring energy security, combatting corruption, and promoting market-oriented economic and governance reforms. In addition, U.S. Mission Sudan will advance in Sudan the following economic priority action goals laid out in the Africa section of the 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy: expanding trade and commercial ties between the United States and Africa to create jobs and build wealth for Americans and Africans; establishing conditions that can transform reform-oriented governments into trading partners and improve their business environments; and offering American goods and services for U.S. economic benefit and as an alternative to China's often extractive economic footprint in Africa.

Objective 2.1: The GoS Implements Transparent Economic Reforms that Lay the Groundwork for Poverty Reduction, Sustained Growth, and Increased Trade.

Justification: With the October, 2017 lifting of most long-standing U.S. economic sanctions, U.S. relations with Sudan take on a new economic and commercial dimension. However, before Sudan can pursue important economic support goals, such as multilateral debt relief, or U.S. bilateral programs such as AGOA, the government must commit to significant economic reforms. The likely slow-paced macro-economic transformation will need to be supported by continued efforts at poverty reduction and humanitarian assistance, as well as an immediate-term economic stabilization program to arrest the country's accelerating economic decline as of mid-2018. We will coordinate closely with other aid providers, while ensuring that our programs and partners are targeted and effective.

Objective 2.2: Expand Sudan's Capacity to Effectively Participate in Global Markets

Justification: Since the lifting of sanctions, a number of U.S. companies have begun to explore trade and investment opportunities in Sudan. As we advance Objective 2.1, we will see an increase in such interest. At this time, however, neither the GoS, nor most of Sudan's private sector are prepared to operate in the global marketplace effectively. We will leverage our

diplomatic engagement, technical U.S. government agencies, and business advocacy groups to highlight how Sudan can improve its attractiveness to foreign investors.

Mission Goal 3: Strengthen Good Governance, Human Rights, and Democracy.

Description and Linkages: Mission Khartoum will advance in Sudan the following political priority action goal laid out in the Africa section of the 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy related to good governance, human rights, and democracy: encouraging reform and working with promising nations to promote effective governance, improve the rule of law, and develop institutions accountable and responsive to citizens through highlighting American institutions, practices, and democratic values as an example of participatory government. Our pursuit of impactful exchanges builds on Mission Sudan's 2016 ICS.

Objective 3.1.: Promote Accountable, Transparent, and Responsive Governance.

Justification: The launching of our Phase II engagement will set the foundation for on-going discussions with the government on improving its governance and transparency. U.S. Mission Khartoum will collaborate with like-minded diplomatic missions, Sudanese civil society, and others to highlight areas where the government can make steady progress.

Objective 3.2.: Promote and Protect Fundamental Rights and Liberties.

Justification: The government and many institutions of Sudan are rightfully criticized for their poor human rights record, including limits on religious practice, suppression of freedom of expression, arbitrary detention, and violence against citizens. As in Objective 3.1, Phase II will set the stage for ensuring that our bilateral relationship, to include requirements that the GoS improve its human rights practices. We will use a range of levers tied to opportunities for greater cooperation to ensure that progress is made.

Objective 3.3.: The GoS and the United States Build Mutual Trust and Cooperative Partnerships through Educational and Cultural Engagement and Exchanges

Justification: An entire generation of Sudanese went from high school into professional positions of influence while the country was under U.S. sanctions. Though we have always maintained some exchange programs, which have been instrumental in creating support for political, social, and economic reform, it will be important to expand those opportunities -- including new connections between U.S. and Sudanese institutions.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1: Enhance Operational Efficiency Through the Efficient Use of Mission Resources.

Justification: To ensure the success of political, economic, and security initiatives, the Mission is committed to maximizing the use of existing resources by implementing cost-saving initiatives and practicing fiscal restraint in all support areas, and implementing Management and Innovation (M/PRI) and Joint Management Board recommendations. Furthermore, recent Information Technology (IT) enhancements within the Department are inaccessible from Mission Khartoum because of low bandwidth. Expanding our communications bandwidth will enable us to reach beyond our immediate physical world using existing Mission resources to empower our staff through training, communications, interoperability, and collaboration that is not possible now.

Management Objective 2: Implement Policies and Request Support for Improving Mission Personnel's Quality of Life.

Justification: Embassy Khartoum is a difficult to fill hardship post because of family and geographical isolation. The family isolation exists because this is an adults-only post and geographical isolation exists because employees may not have personally owned/operated vehicles (POVs) at post. Both of these conditions are a direct result of security concerns. Yet, despite the security concerns, there is no comparable compensation to attract U.S. Direct Hire employees to Khartoum. In fact, over the last two years, incentive allowances have actually decreased with an accompanying decrease in bidders to post. Therefore, as security in Khartoum and Sudan continue to improve, we will work to allow POVs at post to be followed by families. In preparation for these anticipated events, we will work to improve family housing as well as recreational facilities in proximity to family residential housing. However, until the security situation changes to allow both POVs and families to return to Khartoum, the Mission will continue to work with Department to provide fair compensation that will allow the Bureau to attract qualified and motivated bidders to serve at Embassy Khartoum.