Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the

committee. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today to testify

on Darfur and eastern Chad and our programs in Sudan.

I’ve submitted a longer written statement for the record that I

hope will be added. Thank you.

As Ambassador Williamson has just said, we are 3 years into the

Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and this is the most important

thing for the overall stability and unity of the country, and our assistance

programs across the map of Sudan continue to focus on

implementation of the CPA and all of its related aspects. It is as

much important for Darfur as it is for North, South, and the rest

of the country.

Sudan is USAID’s largest program in Africa, and among the largest

in the world. It’s our top foreign-policy priority in Africa. Darfur

is the largest international humanitarian operation in the world,

providing lifesaving assistance to more than 4 million people each

year; some 21⁄2 million, nearly, are displaced inside Darfur, another

250–260,000 are refugees in Chad and the Central African Republic,

and we have a massive investment in this humanitarian operations.

We are the largest bilateral donor providing assistance,

more than $1.5 billion since 2004 to Darfur and eastern Chad. Our

total program for Sudan has averaged around $750 million for the

last several years.

Today in Darfur, however, we face the most formidable challenges

in our long-term commitment to helping the Sudanese transition

toward peace and stability. Insecurity is affecting humanitarian

operations, and it’s at its highest point, and our ability to

access people in need is at its lowest point since 2005. This is because

of fighting among the Sudanese armed forces, tribal militias,

and rebel groups, who continue to kill, injure, displace, and otherwise

terrorize the civilian population.

Since January 1 of this year, aerial bombardment and clashes between

these groups have displaced a further 100,000 Darfuris. In

addition, banditry and lawlessness severely impede humanitarian

aid deliveries on a daily basis.

With most camps in their fourth or fifth year of existence, the infrastructure

of assistance is largely in place, and people in camps

are, for the most part, receiving food, water, health services, and

other lifesaving interventions. However, with insecurity worsening

and access decreasing, humanitarian conditions are precarious.

Miraculously, the World Food Programme is still able to reach

over 90 percent of its intended beneficiaries, despite the numerous

obstacles that confront, both bureaucratic and security, yet

Darfuris are tired of living in the camps, and the communities are

becoming increasingly polarized and politicized and violent. In addition,

many camps have reached capacity. But, the newly displaced

continue to arrive.

The people affected by this conflict desperately need lifesaving

assistance, but it is becoming increasingly difficult and dangerous

to provide it. In addition to the increasing bureaucratic obstacles

by the Government of Sudan impeding humanitarian assistance,

each day brings more danger and more challenges for the more

than 14,000 humanitarian workers, who risk their own lives to provide

assistance to Darfuris. According to the United Nations, assailants

have killed six aid workers and abducted 90 staff members

in Darfur this year, including 36 U.N. World Food Programme contracted

drivers, 26 of whom still remain missing. So far, in 2008,

bandits have hijacked over 100 vehicles from humanitarian organizations

and UNAMID, twice as many as the same period in 2007,

and three times as many as the same period in 2006. As a result

of attacks on WFP contracted commercial transport perpetrated by

tribal militias and rogue rebel elements, starting in May WFP will

cut by half the amount of cereals, pulses, and sugar provided to

2.45 million Darfuris in their general ration. WFP is planning to

resume full rations and expand the number of Darfuris receiving

food assistance in time for the June-to-September hunger gap. But,

if the attacks on convoys continue and the United States does not

bolster security for the convoys to get the food from the port and

the distribution points into Darfur, WFP may be forced to make

further cuts in the ration.

Delivery of food assistance is not the only worry for the humanitarians.

Security for all types of aid operations on the ground has

steadily declined over 2007, and this year, in 2008, access is now

at an all-time low. Cessation of all attacks on humanitarian operations

is essential to ensuring that aid can continue to be delivered

to the millions of Darfuris who rely on international assistance for

survival. At a minimum, the Government of Sudan must remove its

bureaucratic impediments to aid, and it should immediately increase

the number and frequency of police escorts for commercial

transport carrying humanitarian supplies, and further ensure security

for humanitarian and commercial traffic along the routes most

affected by military and rebel operations, banditry, and lawlessness.

Even if the bureaucratic and security challenges to the delivery

of aid are rectified, humanitarian assistance cannot, ultimately, resolve

the conflict in Darfur; it is merely a Band-Aid attempting to

mitigate the worst effects of the conflict. Lasting resolution requires

recognition of the conflict’s changing dynamics since it

began, 5 years ago. Fundamentally, popular support for the rebellion,

the resistance, continues, because the people of Darfur do not

believe their grievances have yet been met. Darfuris want to know

that their families, their land, their livestock will be protected from

predatory attack, that basic social services will be provided by their

government, that the lost assets essential to sustain their families

and communities will be restored, that critical issues to the long term

sustainability of Darfur’s economy and social structure will be

dealt with transparently and fairly—its use of access to land and

to water; and finally, that they will have meaningful participation,

first and foremost, in their own regional affairs, and, secondarily,

in the national affairs of the country.

The transition from the African Union Mission in Sudan to the

United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur, UNAMID, since

the beginning of the year, has yet to improve the security situation

for the civilian population, as we’ve been hearing.

Now, the security situation is, ultimately, the responsibility of

the GoS. Nevertheless, each additional day that the UNAMID cannot

provide civilian protection, its credibility among Darfuris diminishes,

and the difficulty of its task increases exponentially. Effective

deployment is, therefore, of paramount importance to creating

an enabling environment for a durable political settlement to

be found and, ultimately, for displaced people to be able to return

home.

Redoubling our efforts to find this durable political framework to

address the grievances of the Darfuri people, African and Arab

alike, is equally vital to finding this resolution. Key spoilers to this

process—and Ambassador Williamson has been talking to a number

of them—must somehow be managed. This includes rebel leaders

who variously wield significant political power over displaced

communities or impressive military capability that allows them to

prosecute war against the Sudanese Government and its proxy

forces.

The situation in eastern Chad is inextricably linked to what is

happening in Darfur, and the security threats facing humanitarian

operations there are similar to those in Darfur. USAID continues

to provide humanitarian assistance for 250,000 Sudanese refugees,

180,000 displaced people, and many of the 700,000 affected populations

or permanent residents of eastern Chad in the areas of refugee

flows and displacement.

Conflict and banditry continually disrupt operations, nevertheless,

and as long as the Governments of Sudan and Chad continue

to manipulate pre-existing domestic political animosities by fueling

each other’s armed oppositions, any viable solution or peace and

stability on either side of the border will not be possible.

While we struggle to overcome the challenges facing Darfur and

eastern Chad, it is an equally critical time in the implementation

of the CPA. Ambassador Williamson has mentioned the census.

Enumeration, in fact, has just begun yesterday, after much controversy

and some further delay in the South. In Darfur, it’s even

more of a flashpoint. The people of Darfur, one, don’t understand

the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, they don’t understand the

Darfur Peace Agreement, which is predicated on the Comprehensive

Peace Agreement, and they feel that the census will solidify

facts on the ground that do not represent their interests, in terms

of displaced populations and other outsiders who may have come

in and settled on their lands while they’ve been in IDP camps.

Therefore, this process of the census is a critical testing point,

these next couple of weeks, for the entire country, as the democratic

transformation of Sudan unrolls and moves towards elections,

which are due to take place by July 2009.

USAID remains committed to carrying out the full range of humanitarian

recovery, reconstruction, and development activities

that are vital to supporting Sudanese efforts to consolidate peace

in Southern Sudan and in Darfur.

And before concluding, I would like to take a moment to remember

two of our USAID colleagues who were murdered in Khartoum

on January 1st this year. John Granville was a USAID Foreign

Service officer and dedicated to making democracy a reality for people

at all levels of society. He worked for many years on Sudan and

other parts of Africa, and was an invaluable member of our team.

He, in particular, put significant effort into our support for the census,

and the technical assistance that was provided to Southern

Sudan for this process to happen.

Abdelrahman Abbas Rahama was a Sudanese Foreign Service

national and an original member of the USAID Disaster Assistance

Response Team in Darfur in 2004. And, by virtue of his role as one

of our drivers, he got to know all of our staff personally and individually,

and was also a very valuable member of our team.

We miss these colleagues and friends very much, and their commitment

and dedication will continue to guide our efforts toward

a just, stable, and peaceful Sudan.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. Thank you for the

opportunity to testify on Sudan and in particular the ongoing crisis in Darfur and

eastern Chad. My testimony will provide an update on the humanitarian situation

and what the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is doing

to respond.

Three years into the six-year roadmap known as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement

(CPA), ‘‘comprehensive peace’’ in Sudan remains elusive. While there has been

significant, albeit fragile, progress in the South, Sudan remains a sum of its troubled

parts. Regionalized politics, and regional approaches to resolving political differences,

are at the very core of these troubles despite the CPA’s careful intent to

guide the peaceful and democratic transformation for all of Sudan. While its integrity

and durability have been tested, the CPA still provides Sudan the most viable

approach to addressing the many grave historic political, economic, and social inequities

in Sudan. The success of the CPA is of critical importance to maintaining

stability throughout the country, including in Darfur, and therefore support for its

implementation will continue to be the keystone of our assistance in Sudan. Darfur,

however, is not yet positioned to contribute to, nor benefit from, the CPA, and recognition

of this fact will be vital to any successful resolution of the issues driving

conflict in Darfur.

Sudan is USAID’s largest program in Africa and among the largest in the world.

It is the United States top foreign policy priority in Africa and Darfur is the focus

of the largest international humanitarian operation in the world, which provides

life-saving assistance to more than 3 million people a year. This devastating conflict

has left 2.45 million people internally displaced and another 250,000 refugees in

Chad. Since 2004, USAID has spent an average of $750 million annually in assistance

to Sudan, including a total of $1.5 billion in humanitarian assistance in Darfur

and eastern Chad.

Today in Darfur we face one of the most formidable challenges in our long-term

commitment to helping the Sudanese in their transition toward peace and stability.

Insecurity affecting humanitarian operations is at its highest point and our ability

to access people in need is at its lowest point since 2005, when the international

humanitarian community first succeeded in reversing Darfur’s dire humanitarian

situation. Fighting among the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), tribal militias, and

rebel groups continues to kill, injure, displace, and otherwise terrorize the civilian

population. Since January 1 of this year, SAF bombardment of villages and clashes

between armed groups has displaced approximately 100,000 Darfuris. In addition,

banditry and lawlessness severely impede humanitarian aid deliveries on a daily

basis.

With most camps in their fourth or fifth year of existence, the ‘‘infrastructure of

assistance’’ is largely in place, and people in camps are, for the most part, receiving

food, water, health services, and other life-saving interventions. However, with insecurity

worsening and access decreasing, humanitarian conditions are precarious.

Darfuris are tired of living in the camps, and the communities are becoming increasingly

politicized and violent. In addition, many camps have reached capacity, but

the newly displaced continue to arrive. The situation in south Darfur is particularly

dire: Al Salaam camp does not have enough water for its current residents, much

less the many more displaced people in the area who are not even yet registered.

The people affected by this conflict desperately need life-saving assistance, but it

is becoming increasingly dangerous and difficult for humanitarian agencies to provide

it. The fact that morbidity and mortality rates are currently holding below emergency

levels is a tribute to the hard work, ingenuity, and forbearance of humanitarian

agencies in Darfur and the more than 14,000 humanitarian workers who

daily risk their lives to assist those by the conflict. However, if security and access

continue their downward spiral, our ability to provide life-saving assistance will further

degenerate—as will the lives of millions of Darfur’s people.

At the most basic-level aid delivery in Darfur has been impeded by bureaucratic

obstacles imposed by the Sudanese Government since the beginning of the crisis. In

an important step to address these bureaucratic impediments, the Sudanese Government

and the United Nations signed the Joint Communique´ on the Facilitation

of Humanitarian Activities in Darfur in March 2007. The Joint Communique´ did result

in some improvements for humanitarian actors initially: For example, the government

and the humanitarian community jointly developed a General Directory of

Procedures listing the process requirements that all NGOs must complete.

Unfortunately, despite this initial cooperation, the Sudanese Government continues

to disregard articles of the Joint Communique´ and has created new impediments

that further hamper humanitarian programs in Sudan. Between December

and February, the Sudanese Government imposed blockades in some parts of west

Darfur that prevented humanitarian agencies from providing lifesaving assistance

to those in need. USAID partners report excessive delays in visa processing, inaction

when approving technical agreements and lack of adherence to previously agreedupon

procedures. Delays in processing humanitarian goods through Sudanese customs

threaten vital relief supplies such as medicines and food commodities.

In addition to disregarding some articles of the Joint Communique´, the Sudanese

Government has also begun to create new bureaucratic obstacles for humanitarian

actors. Since the beginning of 2008, the Sudanese Humanitarian Aid Commission

has required NGOs to obtain travel permits for transport in commercial or rented

vehicles—and then denied those permits; required that NGOs write technical agreements

in Arabic; repeatedly cancelled high-level committee meetings on implementing

the Joint Communique´; and requested additional information regarding the

transport, purpose, and recipients of NGO cash. For the past year, Sudan has

blocked the use of processed food aid containing genetically modified organism

(GMOs). This has restricted the U.S. Government from providing WFP with cornsoya

blend, which is used mainly to treat malnourished children. The loss of this

significant commodity contribution has stretched the already tight resources of

WFP, which now has to spend precious cash to procure the commodity from other

sources.

Humanitarian operations are significantly hobbled by the Sudanese Government’s

lack of cooperation and its noncompliance with the signed Joint Communique´. Their

acts violate the Sudanese Government’s commitment to respect the independence of

humanitarian actors and undermine the principles and spirit of the Joint

Communique´. They defy the government’s promise to respect the provision of assistance

and freedom of access to all people in need.

In addition to the increasing bureaucratic obstacles impeding humanitarian assistance,

each day brings more danger and more challenges for humanitarian staff

who risk their own lives as they work to save others’. According to the United Nations,

assailants have killed 6 aid workers and abducted 90 staff members in Darfur

this year, including 36 U.N. World Food Program (WFP)-contracted drivers, 26 of

whom remain missing. So far in 2008, bandits have hijacked 106 vehicles from humanitarian

organizations and the United Nations-African Union Mission in

Darfur—twice as many as the same period in 2007 and three times as many as the

same period in 2006.

As a result of attacks on WFP-contracted commercial transport perpetrated by

tribal militias and rogue rebel elements, trucking companies are now refusing to deliver

commodities to Darfur from logistical hubs without Government of Sudan police

escorts. The escorts, however, have been slow to materialize and too inadequate

to protect 150-vehicle convoys. At this time of year, WFP-contracted trucks should

be delivering 1,800 metric tons of food daily to supply warehouses in Darfur ahead

of the rainy season; deliveries have dropped to less than 900 tons a day.

On April 17, WFP announced that the current environment will force it to reduce

the general food ration in Darfur. Starting in May, WFP will cut by half the amount

of cereals, pulses, and sugar provided to 2.45 million Darfuris in their general ration.

The United States is greatly concerned about the reduction of critical food assistance

to the people of Darfur, and we are working with WFP to assure that full

rations resume as soon as practicable. WFP is planning to resume full rations and

expand the number of Darfuris receiving food assistance in time for the June ‘‘hunger

gap’’—the time between the end of one year’s food stocks and the next harvest.

However, if attacks on convoys continue and the GOS is unable to bolster security

for convoys, WFP may be forced to make additional significant reductions in assistance.

Delivery of food assistance is not the only worry for the humanitarian operation,

however. Security for all types of aid operations on the ground has steadily declined

over 2007 and 2008. Access is now at an all-time low. In west Darfur, 90 percent

of roads are closed to humanitarian agencies due to the presence of Arab militia and

Chadian and Sudanese rebel groups. Here, many NGOs are only able to access

project areas by helicopter, allowing them only 1 or 2 hours on the ground—enough

time to take a whirlwind tour of a clinic, check the books and supplies, talk to the

staff and maybe a few beneficiaries, and hop back in the helicopter. This type of

visit is not unlike those many of you have experienced on a tightly scheduled congressional

visit. And it is no way to manage programs or maintain effective operations.

Some aid agencies have to rely on remote staff or volunteers who elect to

travel insecure roads in order to reach the main office—literally risking life and

limb—to provide guidance and oversight to operations.

Cessation of all attacks on humanitarian operations is essential to ensuring that

life-saving aid can continue to be delivered to the millions of Darfuris who rely on

international assistance for survival. At a minimum, the Government of Sudan

should urgently increase the number and frequency of police escorts for commercial

transports carrying humanitarian supplies and ensure security for humanitarian

and commercial traffic along the roads most affected by military and rebel operations,

banditry and lawlessness.

Even if the bureaucratic and security challenges to the delivery of aid are rectified,

humanitarian assistance cannot ultimately resolve the conflict in Darfur. It

is merely a band-aid attempting to mitigate the worst effects of the conflict. Lasting

resolution requires recognition of the conflict’s changing dynamics since the outbreak

of violent rebellion in 2003, the signing of the N’Djamena Humanitarian

Ceasefire Agreement in 2004, and the conclusion of the Darfur Peace Agreement in

2006. Yet even while alliances and patterns of conflict have shifted significantly during

the past 5 years, fundamentally the conflict continues because the people of

Darfur do not believe that their grievances have been addressed. Darfuris want to

know that their families, their land, and their livestock will be protected from predatory

attack; that basic social services will be provided by their government; that

the lost assets essential to sustain their families and communities will be restored;

that critical issues important to the long-term sustainability of the Darfuri economy

and social order, such as access to land and water, will be addressed fairly and

transparently; and that they will have meaningful participation first and foremost

in the governance of their own regional affairs, and secondarily in the national affairs

of the country.

Even though the United States and the international community have invested

considerable resources and effort in political and security arrangements to help address

these grievances, many, if not most, Darfuris remain unconvinced and therefore

popular support for continued political and violent resistance persists. This furthers

an environment for opportunistic banditry to thrive and results in a downward

spiral of lawlessness and violence. The transition from the African Union Mission

in Sudan to the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) since

the beginning of the year has yet to improve the security situation for the civilian

population. Each additional day that UNAMID cannot provide civilian protection, its

credibility among Darfuris diminishes and the difficulty of its task increases exponentially.

The efforts of the United Nations and the Friends of UNAMID to speed

effective deployment of the peacekeeping force is therefore of paramount importance

to creating an enabling environment for a durable political settlement to be found

and ultimately for displaced people to return home.

Redoubling efforts to find a durable political framework to address the grievances

of the Darfuri people, African and Arab alike, is equally vital to finding a resolution

that will move Darfur beyond its dependence on humanitarian assistance. Key spoilers

to this process must somehow be managed—including rebel leaders who variously

wield significant political power over displaced communities, or impressive

military capability that allows them to prosecute war against the Sudanese Government

and its proxy forces. The Darfur Peace Agreement did not fully address these

issues, and therefore cannot be considered the final resolution to this conflict. Still,

it represents a significant step forward on the path to peace and provides a framework

to build upon. Essential next steps include implementation of the DPA’s key

provisions to support mediators’ efforts to win over protagonists who remain on the

outside. As well, a successful mediation will require an iterative process that accounts

for the differing characteristics of the principal rebel movements. This kind

of nuanced approach will require much more focused international support from

countries with leverage over key parties in the process.

The situation in eastern Chad is inextricably linked to what is happening in

Darfur, and the security threats facing humanitarian operations in eastern Chad

are similar to those in Darfur. USAID continues to provide humanitarian assistance

for 250,000 Sudanese refugees, 180,000 displaced people, and many of the 700,000

affected permanent residents of eastern Chad, but conflict and banditry continually

disrupt operations, including the fighting that occurred recently in N’Djamena and

Ade. As in Darfur, aid operations are heavily reliant on air transportation to access

people in need. The WFP food pipeline has been particularly challenged, as the logistics

required to transport food into the land-locked country are enormous and

must rely on the same limited routes as those used to supply the U.N.- and EU- supported

peacekeeping operations for Chad and the Central African Republic. The

fighting in February particularly disrupted the transport of food into eastern Chad.

However, despite these obstacles, USAID partners continue to deliver humanitarian

assistance. In FY 2007, the U.S. Government provided more than $89 million in aid

to eastern Chad, and so far in FY 2008, we have provided nearly $74 million.

Just as any viable political settlement to the Darfur conflict must account for the

principal Darfuri rebel spoilers, it must also account for the reciprocal effect that

the Chadian domestic political crisis and the Darfur conflict have on each other. The

Chad-Darfur border amounts to an international boundary on paper only. It will not

be possible to ameliorate the humanitarian situation on one side without commensurately

improving it on the other as both combatants and civilians move freely

back and forth. As long as the Governments of Sudan and Chad continue to manipulate

preexisting domestic political animosities by fueling each other’s armed opposition,

peace and stability on both sides of the border will remain elusive. The United

States is working to put in place a political process that concurrently addresses

Chadian political grievances with President Deby at the same time as Darfuri grievances

with the Sudanese Government.

While we struggle to overcome the challenges facing Darfur and eastern Chad, it

is an equally critical time in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement,

which ended two decades of civil war between Northern and Southern Sudan

in 2005 and is intended to provide the overall framework for the democratic transformation

of governance in Sudan. This week marks the realization of the CPA’s

first major milestone since standing up the Government of National Unity (GNU)

and the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS)—the first nationwide post-war census.

In addition to giving the government and donors crucial demographic information

to inform recovery and development plans, the results of the Sudanese census

will be used to recalculate equitable representation in the central government as

well as the distribution of national resources. This is both the census’ promise and

its downfall.

Only 3 days before enumeration was scheduled to start on April 15, the South

surprised us all by announcing a postponement, citing a lack of funding, insecurity,

the unresolved issue of border demarcation, the inability of displaced people to return

to the South, and the absence of ethnicity and religion questions on census

forms. A strong, unified donor community reaction helped to put the nationwide census

back on track. Enumeration began yesterday, April 22, and will continue until

May 6.

However, the census has also become a flashpoint in Darfur where neither the

DPA nor the CPA is widely understood, much less well-received. Darfuris view the

CPA as a deal for Southern Sudan only. Consequently, they do not see the DPA,

which is predicated on the CPA, as truly responsive to their grievances. Specifically,

going forward with the census in Darfur at this time is not supported by any of the

main rebel leaders, whether a signatory to the DPA or not. IDPs in particular fear

that outsiders have entered Darfur and settled on their vacated land, and thus will

be counted to the detriment of the millions of displaced who currently reside in

camps. As well, late census preparations seemed to many Darfuris to clearly highlight

how the region does not fit into Sudan’s power-sharing mechanisms. (The final

results must be endorsed by the northern and southern census agencies, as well as

the Presidents of the Governments of National Unity and of Southern Sudan.)

A valid nationwide census result nevertheless requires enumeration in Darfur, despite

the formidable challenges. It will likely not be perfect anywhere, but its shortcomings

can be managed and addressed. Delaying or canceling the census in one

part of the country, whether in the South or Darfur, will call into question the integrity

and therefore validity of the nationwide results. It would also be a dangerous

precedent to compromise this first major milestone of the fragile CPA. If the lead up

to the census provides an indicator for the next critical power-sharing benchmark—

the elections before July 2009—then much more work needs to be done to help keep

the CPA on track and to reach an inclusive political settlement in Darfur in time

for Darfuris to participate meaningfully in the democratic processes laid out in the

CPA.

The extensive negotiation of both the CPA and the DPA required persistent international

effort. Stewarding their implementation requires no less. The difficulties of

the last 3 years for the CPA are clear testimony that without committed, vigorous

proactive and reactive international engagement, this fragile peace remains very

much at risk. While imperfect in its implementation, it is the true ‘‘whole’’ solution

that will strengthen Sudan’s viability and integrity as a nation-state accountable to

its people in the south, north, east, and west. Without it, the international community

will be faced with the task of sustaining millions of Sudanese through the provision

of humanitarian assistance for many more years to come.

USAID remains committed to carrying out the full range of humanitarian, recovery,

reconstruction and development activities that are vital to supporting Sudanese

efforts to consolidate peace in Southern Sudan and to achieve it in Darfur. We look

forward to the day when the people of Darfur are not substantially reliant on humanitarian

aid for their very survival and we can work together with them, as we

do with the people of Southern Sudan and the Three Areas, to realize their aspirations

for development and democracy.

Before concluding, I would like to take a moment to remember our two USAID

colleagues who were murdered in Khartoum on January 1. John Granville, a USAID

Foreign Service officer, was dedicated to making democracy a reality for people at

all levels of society, and his years of work in Sudan and in other parts of Africa

made him an invaluable member of our team. Abdelrahman Abbas Rahama, a Sudanese

Foreign Service national and an original member of USAID’s disaster assistance

response team in Darfur in 2004, was a critical team member who, by virtue

of where he sat, had the unique ability to get to know the USAID team one by one.

They were our colleagues and our friends. The work and character of both of these

men epitomized the goodness of the human spirit, and what we can accomplish

when we are focused on bettering the lives of those in need. I can think of no better

way to honor them than to rededicate our efforts to bring peace to those who endure

violence, health to those who struggle with sickness, and prosperity to those who

live in poverty. We hope that their commitment and dedication will guide our efforts

toward achieving a just, stable, and peaceful Sudan.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee for your continued interest,

and for all the work and support that you have dedicated to Sudan and the

region.

The no-fly zone.

Thank you.

I would just like to say that the American people should be terribly

proud of the fact that we help keep millions of Darfuris alive.

It’s through assistance from the United States and the American

people, in particular, and with the facilitation of the U.S. Congress,

that we can provide as robust a humanitarian response as we do,

and that the impact is not far greater than what we see right now.

The reason why the humanitarian community is very nervous

about the idea of the no-fly zone and would find it difficult to sup-

port that option is that the Sudanese Government would almost

certainly see that as a hostile act. If it sees it as a hostile act, we

could predict that they would act to not cooperate in other areas

that we are dependent on their cooperation for, and that includes

the humanitarian operation; 14,000 humanitarian workers cannot

live and move around Darfur without the Sudanese Government allowing

them to be there. And if they decided, for whatever reason—

and a no-fly zone is a likely reason they would decide that—to shut

down the humanitarian operation, that lifesaving assistance goes

away. We depend on our nongovernmental organizations and the

U.N. agencies to get that aid to IDP camps, and even beyond, to

rural areas, and it’s exceedingly difficult right now, and it would

be virtually impossible if the Sudanese Government decided not to

tolerate it, to facilitate it, support it, going forward.

Second, I would just offer that, while aerial bombardments are

very troubling and in clear violation of the N’Djamena Humanitarian

Cease-Fire Accord, the Darfur Peace Agreement, and every

other commitment that the Sudanese Government has made, it’s

not the most significant factor causing humanitarian displacement.

It’s a terrible weapon of war, it should not be used, should not be

tolerated, but it shouldn’t take a no-fly zone to get them to stop.

In terms of practical impact on the security situation on the

ground right now, what would really help the humanitarian community

are police escorts for the humanitarian supplies. Food,

namely; but also other sorts of supplies need to be moved out to

Darfur. That’s within the Government of Sudan’s ability to step up

and do, and could do, even while UNAMID deployment is taking

place.

Non logistic military support for signatories of the DPA: One of

the reasons for the banditry and the lawlessness and the attacks

on humanitarian convoys is because that’s the only way they can

supply themselves. And if there were another legitimate nonmilitary

means for those who have signed the Darfur Peace Agreement,

to—at least to be fed, we would probably cut down on a significant

number of the attacks, particularly in north Darfur.

And then, finally, UNAMID needs a cease-fire commission. In the

transition from AMIS TO UNAMID, there is no effective mechanism

to validate a bombing, an attack, establish culpability, and

then hold individuals, groups, whoever, responsible and accountable

for the insecurity that they have perpetuated. And that, Ambassador

Williamson could probably speak to better, but that would

also significantly help the humanitarian community, going forward.

The current conflict started with an—a rebellion,

an outbreak in 2003 by the precursor to the five or so principal

rebel groups now, but, yes, it started out of frustration over the

grievances, over the attacks that they were under, and there remains

popular support for rebel leaders and rebel movements in

Darfur. Their grievances, they do not feel, still, have been addressed.

First of all, unfortunately, we don’t specifically

know who is attacking the convoys. We think there are a variety

of actors involved. Some of them are probably rogue elements from

rebel movements or part—many of these splinter factions that have

evolved, especially over the last year and a half. And there are resources

they see moving by them on the road in a very resource scarce

environment, and no matter how many times we speak

about humanitarian principles, those are attractive resources to go

after. That’s why the point of non logistic military support, particularly

for signatories to the DPA, for groups who have signed up to

the cease-fire and to the political framework that is in place right

now, would be one way of further mitigating banditry and attacks.

The rebels are not the only group taking advantage of the lawlessness

that has now overtaken Darfur. So——

The—I can’t speak to why the Government of

Sudan hasn’t been to provide more police escorts for WFP convoys,

for instance, but they are slow in responding to requests for the

convoys, and, in fact, some of these convoys are 150-vehicle-long

endeavors, and protecting that is a pretty significant endeavor. So,

ultimately, we need an environment of security in Darfur to properly

continue to get humanitarian aid where it needs to go.