Well, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this

hearing and for your very thoughtful opening statement, which, in

a comprehensive way, sets forward many of the problems. I join,

also, in welcoming our distinguished witnesses.

I appreciate that General Gration has taken time to join us

today. I know that he understands Congress’s deep interest in this

issue. And I applaud the appointment of a special envoy, underscoring

the President’s intention to provide international leadership

on the Darfur crisis.

But time is perhaps not on our side. The Darfur crisis now in its

sixth year, prospects for peace in the region appear to be little better

than they were when the international community first responded

with a massive humanitarian intervention. In the face of

direct obstruction and willful delays by Khartoum, these humanitarian efforts probably saved hundreds of thousands of lives. But,

millions of refugees continue to be at risk of violence, malnutrition,

and disease. The Khartoum Government’s expulsion of 13 humanitarian

organizations that were providing for roughly a million people

has exacerbated conditions for the displaced.

The safety net of organizations now operating in Darfur is doing

its best to shoulder more responsibility, but the sheer number of

displaced, and the difficulties presented by the rainy season, are

straining their capacity.

In July 2007, hopes for security were raised by U.N. Security

Council approval of an enlargement of the peacekeeping force in

Darfur to 26,000 troops. Unfortunately, 2 years later, the peacekeeping

force still lacks elements key to its success. The force does

not have sufficient helicopters, other types of equipment that are

essential to achieve mobility and to deliver humanitarian supplies.

And moreover, the overall stability of the region depends on full

implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between

North and South Sudan.

With a referendum on independence of the South due in 2011,

most indicators are that voters will choose to separate. Unless

some formula for stability can be constructed, the tensions between

North and South will be highly volatile, and could inflame the

entire region.

General Gration is charged with one of the most difficult diplomatic

assignments in our Government. Given that President Bashir

has been indicted for war crimes and his government has demonstrated

little interest in resolving the political situation, the Darfur

problem does not lend itself to straightforward diplomatic negotiation.

Any successful strategy is likely to involve building broad international

support for measures that pressure the Khartoum Government

to accept a settlement to the Darfur crisis. And such a settlement

should allow refugees to return to their homes, establish

procedures to guarantee their security, and extend some level of

autonomy to Darfur.

The United States must lead in finding ways to address these

political and logistical shortcomings. The Obama administration is

conducting an ongoing review of Sudan policy. And I’m hopeful this

review will soon yield a plan that clarifies and galvanizes U.S. policy

and encourages far greater multilateral support for a resolution

of a crisis that has produced immense suffering.

I’ll look forward to hearing from our witnesses about how U.S.

plans and efforts are progressing and what more we can do.

And I thank you again, Mr. Chairman.

General Gration, the Sudan Program Group was

created at the State Department to deal specifically with the complex

issues associated with Sudan, and originally was focused on

the 30-year North-South conflict. Now it appears to be focused on

the whole of Sudan. Now, I have three or four questions, which I’ll

ask, and ask you to bring us up to date.

First of all, is the Sudan Program Group still independent of the

African Bureau at the State Department? And, if so, what rationale

is there for the continued independence?

Second, what role does your staff play in the Sudan Program

Group? Are you adequately staffed?

And third, what bureau and office handles the day-to-day diplomatic

affairs for the United States with regard to Sudan?

So, you have made that request within the

Department. And have you outlined, really, how many persons, or,

sort of, a battle plan for what’s required now?

Well, I appreciate that. And that’s one value of

these hearings, to sort of raise to the next level that consideration

generally, because we all describe the comprehensive dilemmas,

but you have to get into the nitty-gritty of who does the job, really

—who, physically, is there, and how many persons, in a vast area,

quite apart from the variety of topics.

So, we would like to be supportive, and I raised the question just

to make certain we all understand requests that you’ve made, and

the importance of that.

Now, second, getting outside the United States, for the last few

years we’ve had close coordination with Great Britain and France

on Sudan issues, but much poorer coordination with China, Russia,

the Arab League, the African Union. And these latter actors in the

drama have considerable opportunity, obviously, for influence with

the Sudan Government. What additional policy tools are available

to us in diplomacy—that is, working with these actors, who may

have disparate views of this and of their role with regard to

Sudan—so, describe the international situation and its promise or

difficulties.

What is the situation, at this point, of oil deliveries

to China? In the past, allegations have been made that the

Chinese were less interested in cooperation because of the unusual

ties they had for energy needs in China. Presumably those needs

continue, and perhaps the flow of oil, but can you describe what the

situation is on that front?

Well, thank you very much, Ms. Page.

Let me just commence the questioning by following up on your

suggestions.

Clearly, the information that could come from the focus groups—

perhaps already has—as well as the findings, as you will publish

them and discuss them, are critical for these referendums. As you

suggest, this information should help to bring about decisions in

which citizens have confidence, or even more importantly, that informs

them so that they do not engage in violence because of what

they perceive to be either incompetence in administration or fraud

and abuse.

The National Democratic Institute and the Republican Institute

have cooperated for many years in Latin American in the elections,

and I can recall vividly the attempts made, really just to help print

ballots that were clear, or signals of signs to persons who were illiterate

as to what the choice might be, in terms of movements or political

parties, quite apart from the counting suggestions of people

sitting around a table with each ballot being raised and everybody

examining it, procedures that we would find, in the United States

now, to be very tedious and beyond the point. But, in the case of

first elections in many Latin American countries, this was critical

in terms of the credibility, because all of us are looking toward

those elections as indicators. Clearly the amount of education about

the numbers of positions to be filled, and who, in fact, is going to

be up for election—and so, I ask you, what sort of resources do you

or other groups have to make that kind of information available in

the 25 states of Sudan? Even that is a daunting figure as one considers

all the differentiations.

Well, I think this is an important part of this

hearing, to illuminate that process, because these are action steps,

finally, and decisions to be made by citizens. And the information

they have, opportunities they have for choices, integrity of the process,

is just tremendously important.

Mr. Ahmed, let me ask you—as so many Americans appreciate

your own contribution and humane services to people as a physician,

likewise your observations about Darfur, what are the prospects

for the many groups within Darfur? Many of them have been

involved in contests of their own for authority, or at least for turf,

as the case may be. Leaving aside the rest of Sudan, within Darfur,

what are the prospects for unity and for at least a healthy Darfur,

even if the rest of the world would leave it alone at this point?

Would you respond?

But—that’s encouraging, the progress among

groups in Darfur to look for unity, but you’re suggesting, on occasion,

this is obstructed by the government——

And these meetings and these reconciliation

attempts are frustrated.

Yes.

Professor Shinn, I was intrigued with your

thought that neighbors of Sudan, even recognizing the referendums

that are about to occur, as well as other phenomenon, all things

considered, would like to see one Sudan, one united Sudan, as

opposed to a Southern faction or some other split-up. And you even

suggested, in the worst-case analysis, I suppose, that there might

be more than two Sudans, there could be a fractionated country.

First of all, I’m just curious, why would other countries worry

about that? Why does this affect their foreign policy, one way or

another? And furthermore, is this a unified feeling of the neighbors,

or do other countries have various agendas, perhaps, that

work better with a fractionated Sudan? Can you illuminate that

situation a bit more?